



## Using AI to Support Health Literacy

Health literacy means helping people find, understand, and use health information to make informed decisions. For public health professionals, that means writing clearly, avoiding jargon, and creating materials that resonate with all audiences—especially those with lower literacy or limited English proficiency.

### ChatGPT can support this work by helping to:

- Simplify complex or technical content
- Adapt materials for diverse audiences
- Review messages for clarity, tone, and bias
- Generate variations that increase understanding and reach.

### Gathering the following information first can improve ChatGPT's results:

- The original health message or topic
- Your target audience (e.g., teens, older adults, non-native English speakers)
- Any terms that should be avoided or simplified
- Preferred tone (e.g., reassuring, direct, friendly)
- Any cultural, geographic, or linguistic context

### Sample prompts to use with ChatGPT:

These examples align with key health literacy tasks and show how to get stronger, more tailored results from ChatGPT.

#### → Simplify Health Information

- “Act as a public health educator. Explain what anxiety is in plain language for a community wellness flyer aimed at adults. Avoid clinical terms and focus on everyday experiences like sleep, concentration, and daily stress. Keep the tone calm, supportive, and relatable.”
  - Follow-up tip: “Can you add a short sentence encouraging people to reach out for support?”
- “You are writing a health department newsletter for a general audience. Describe what high blood pressure is and why it matters, using simple language and examples. Avoid jargon and keep the tone informative but friendly.”
  - Follow-up tip: “Can you suggest a one-line call-to-action for readers to talk to their doctor?”

#### → Create Inclusive, Responsive Content

- “Act as a culturally responsive health communicator. Adapt this list of mental health support resources to better reflect the needs of immigrant families and non-native English speakers. Use simple, welcoming language and consider adding bilingual terms or cultural references where helpful.”
  - Follow-up tip: “Can you identify any visuals or symbols that might make this easier to understand across languages?”
- “You are creating a diabetes prevention handout for adults in rural communities. Rewrite this content using plain language and relatable references—like daily routines, farming, or family meals. The tone should be down-to-earth and encouraging.”
  - Follow-up tip: “Can you offer a slogan or headline that would feel familiar in a rural setting?”



# AI IN PUBLIC HEALTH



## → Test for Clarity and Readability

- “Act as a plain language specialist. Provide three plain-language versions of the phrase ‘mental health crisis’ for different audiences: teens, older adults, and caregivers. Keep each version under 10 words and in everyday language.”
  - Follow-up tip: “Which of these would work best in a text message or social post?”
- “You are writing for a community health brochure on diabetes prevention. Suggest simpler alternatives to the phrase ‘lifestyle modification’ that are more conversational and easier to understand.”
  - Follow-up tip: “Can you rank them by clarity for audiences with a 6th–8th grade reading level?”

## → Review for Bias, Accuracy, and Clarity

- “Act as a health equity advisor. Review this paragraph about depression for stigmatizing or dismissive language and suggest edits to make it more supportive, hopeful, and strengths-based.”
  - Follow-up tip: “Can you rewrite the paragraph using people-first language?”
- “You are reviewing an educational message about preventing chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease. Identify any unintentionally judgmental or shaming language—especially around personal responsibility—and rewrite it to be more empowering and inclusive.”
  - Follow-up tip: “Can you provide a quick checklist of phrases to avoid in future materials?”

