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For Immediate Release:

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Wisconsin Literacy Awarded \$250,000 to Modernize Statewide Health Literacy Assessment

Two-year project will strengthen health education for adults earning high school equivalency credentials

MADISON, Wis. — Wisconsin Literacy, Inc. has received a \$250,000 grant from the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment to modernize the health literacy assessment and related learning resources used by adults pursuing high school equivalency credentials in Wisconsin.

The two-year Wisconsin Health Literacy Assessment Modernization Project will update and validate the health literacy exam used in Wisconsin GED, High School Equivalency Diploma, and credit-recovery programs. The current Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction-approved exam expires in 2027 and has not been formally validated against the updated 2024 National Health Education Standards.

“This investment will help ensure Wisconsin’s adult learners have access to a health literacy assessment that is accurate, equitable, and relevant to their lives,” said Jake Gorges, executive director of Wisconsin Literacy. “It will also give educators stronger tools to help learners make informed health decisions, prepare for employment, and reach their educational goals.”

During the first year, the project team will analyze approximately 2,500 past assessment results and hold four regional community sessions with adult learners, educators, health professionals, and community partners. The sessions will help identify barriers and improve the assessment’s cultural relevance, readability, and connection to real-life health decisions.

During the second year, the team will revise 80 existing assessment questions, develop 20 new questions informed by community input, and pilot the updated assessment with approximately 200 adult learners.

The project will also produce a plain-language instructional toolkit for educators and a data dashboard to help state and local partners monitor results and support continued improvement.

Wisconsin Literacy will lead the project in partnership with the MCW Institute for Healthcare Advancement, Mission Neighborhood Health Center, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

The updated assessment will strengthen Wisconsin’s adult education system by giving learners and educators a more accurate measure of health knowledge and practical decision-making skills. The project will also support stronger instruction, workforce readiness, and long-term health equity across the state.

The project was selected for funding by the Advancing a Healthier Wisconsin Endowment at the Medical College of Wisconsin.



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About Wisconsin Literacy

Founded in 1985, Wisconsin Literacy, Inc. is a statewide coalition of more than 80 literacy organizations serving communities across Wisconsin. Its members include community-based literacy programs, libraries, technical colleges, correctional education programs, and other organizations that provide adult basic education, English language learning, workforce preparation, family literacy, and health literacy services. Wisconsin Literacy and its member agencies served more than 14,000 adult learners and their families last year. Through training, partnerships, advocacy, and statewide initiatives, Wisconsin Literacy works to ensure that every Wisconsin resident has the literacy skills needed to succeed in life, work, education, and health. Learn more at [WisconsinLiteracy.org](https://www.WisconsinLiteracy.org) and [WisconsinHealthLiteracy.org](https://www.WisconsinHealthLiteracy.org).