Audio-Visual Materials to Improve Health Literacy in Older Adults with Low Vision

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Introduction

Health Literacy and Accessibility
- Health literacy involves the ability to locate, comprehend, and use health information.
- Low vision, caused by conditions like AMD, glaucoma, and diabetic retinopathy, often reduces access to health information.

Impact of Low Vision on Functional Health Literacy
- Low vision impedes reading and interpreting health materials, crucial for medication management, chronic disease management, and hospital readmissions.

Gaps in Accessible Health Education
- Current materials often fail to meet the needs of individuals with low vision.
- Limited research exists on the use of audio-video media to bridge this gap.

Purpose
- This study explores the potential of accessible media to improve functional health literacy and health outcomes for adults with low vision.

Methods

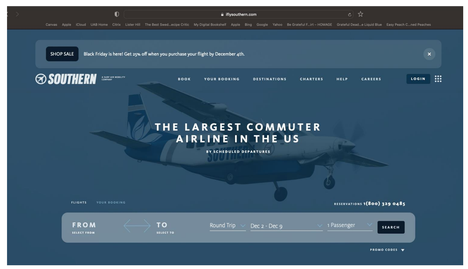
Accessible educational materials were collaboratively developed by an occupational therapy student, a site mentor, and audio-video consultants to support individuals with low vision. These resources included audio-video and written content covering:

- Common low vision diagnoses
- Environmental recommendations
- Community resources
- The role of occupational therapy in low vision rehabilitation

Key Features of Materials:
- **Written Materials:** Designed with large, high-contrast text and uncluttered layouts for readability (Figure 1).
- **Audio-Video Materials:** Scripts created by the student and reviewed by the mentor ensured clarity, accuracy, and relevance, with high-resolution visuals and clear narration.

The resources were disseminated through an updated website, a newly established YouTube channel, and the site's Facebook page, making them accessible to individuals with low vision, their caregivers, and healthcare practitioners.

Results



Example of inaccessible website due to poor contrast and overlaid background imagery.

Example of accessible website due to high contrast and integrated accessibility features.

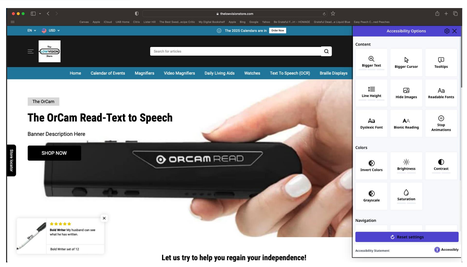


Figure 1:
Readable and visible brochure created for low vision patients .

Discussion

Low vision significantly impacts an individual's ability to access health information, making functional health literacy a critical concern for this population. Traditional methods of health communication, such as small, text-heavy resources, often exclude those with low vision, leading to negative health outcomes. This project addresses these challenges by developing tailored, accessible educational materials designed for individuals with low vision and their caregivers.

Discussion (Cont.)

The initiative emphasizes inclusivity by directly involving patients in the creation process and by updating digital platforms, such as the CLVR website to house these resources. Materials include evidence-based content on low vision diagnoses, environmental modifications, community resources, and the role of occupational therapy.

Conclusion

This project highlights the importance of accessibility in healthcare communication and the broader need for health systems to prioritize inclusive strategies. By fostering an environment where individuals with low vision can access and understand health information, the initiative promotes better-informed decision-making, enhances health outcomes, and sets a standard for accessible health literacy efforts.

References

Please scan QR code for a list of references associated wit this project.

Acknowledgement & Contact information

Thank you to the optometrists and occupational therapists at the UAB CLVR for allowing me to film them and learn from them. Thank you to my faculty advisor, Dr. Jason Vice, for his collaboration throughout this project. Thank you to Doctoree McDade at the Learning Resource Center in UAB's School of Health Professions for his film expertise and equipment.
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