



August 1, 2019

Stephanie Santana, Public Health Analyst
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
1101 Wootton Parkway
Rockville, MD 20852

Dear Ms. Santana:

On behalf of the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), which represents 134,600 family physicians and medical students across the country, I write in response to the [solicitation for written comments](#) on an updated “Health Literacy” definition for Healthy People 2030 as posted in the June 4, 2019 *Federal Register*.

The Secretary’s Advisory Committee on National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives for Healthy People 2030 proposes to use the following working definition:

“Health literacy occurs when a society provides accurate health information and services that people can easily find, understand, and use to inform their decisions and actions.”

The AAFP’s [health literacy](#) definition is:

“Health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health care decisions. The AAFP champions the promotion of health literacy throughout all aspects of the healthcare system including but not limited to strategic and organizational design, research and quality improvement metrics and provision of direct patient care, especially to patients with low health literacy. Family physicians, medical staff, residents and medical students should receive training on health literacy and communication strategies to improve patient engagement and self-management.”

The AAFP does not object to the proposed definition, however we urge HHS and other stakeholders to join the AAFP in championing the promotion of health literacy throughout all aspects of the healthcare system.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment. Please contact Robert Bennett, Federal Regulatory Manager, at 202-655-4908 rbennett@aafp.org with any questions.

Sincerely,

Michael Munger, MD, FAAFP
Board Chair

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