scope

Factsheet 3 - Considerations for your Easy English project

3.1 Who is your audience?

Many documents are developed to cater for multiple audiences. This results in an overload of information being included and this makes it difficult for readers with low English literacy.

Before you develop a document, decide who your audience is.

- Is the audience professionals? There may not be a need for Easy English.

- Is the audience the broader community? Easy English will benefit the 44% of Australians, who have Pre-Level 1, Level 1 and 2 literacy skills. (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013)

- Is the audience a specific group of people? This may include people with a disability, people with mental health disorders, people with acute health issues, older people or people who have English as a second language.

When you have identified the audience, you can decide what information to include in each format you prepare.

> How will your audience know your Easy English resource exists?

3.2 What formats will meet the varied needs of your audience?
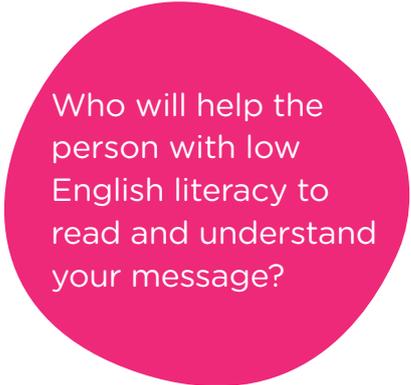
You may need to make your documents available in multiple formats to accommodate different accessibility needs. The following options would meet the needs of your audience with low English literacy skills.

- An original version and an Easy English version. This supports the reader with low English literacy and a support person/friend/family member can get more information, if needed

- An Easy English version only

- An Easy English version and the Easy English translated into community languages

When you produce documents for websites, consider developing formats so that they are accessible online (e.g. accessible PDF and text only versions for screen readers).

> Who will help the person with low English literacy to read and understand your message?

3.3 Distribution

Will the Easy English version be available at the same time as the original version?
If not, people who have low English literacy skills will not have access to your message at the same time as other readers.
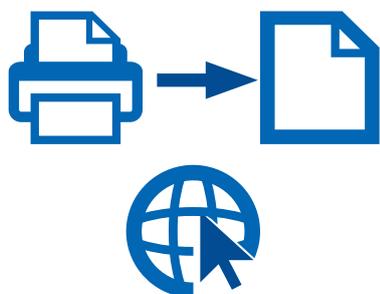
> **Easy English works best for print.**
> People with low English literacy may not have access to a computer or the Internet at all. For more information, refer to our Factsheet 1 –
> What is Easy English (1.5 Print vs website) at www.scopevic.org.au

Online
If your document is only available online, people with low English literacy may be dependent on others to access the information for them. Documents will often have to be printed by a friend, family member or support person because it easier to read printed information vs online.

> **"Because the text is more difficult to read on-screen, people often read slower, comprehend less, recall less and do less in response."**
> Jonathon & Lisa Price. www.webwritingthatworks.com

Print
Printed information can be displayed easily or provided directly to a person, as an alternative to the original version. A person with low English literacy who receives a printed Easy English document may still need assistance to read and understand it (for tips, please see page 3).

> **When you print, choose a paper that is not see-through (at least 100gsm).**
> **Use matt paper. Shiny paper can make a document more difficult to read.**

3.4 Consumer testing

Many organisations already have a 'reference group' or 'advisory group' available for consultation. For example, if a hospital wants to test an Easy English document with their 'disability reference group' – do the group members actually have reading difficulties? Will the hospital get the right kind of feedback on the document? It is important to ensure Easy English is tested by people with low literacy.

(03) 9843 2000
(03) 9843 2033
circ@scopevic.org.au

scopevic.org.au
disability support services

Tips for person assisting the reader

✔ Familiarise yourself with the Easy English Document and supporting information

✔ Consider the 'reader' and their individual skill level, life experience and existing knowledge that may be useful to draw upon when discussing the document

✔ Choose an environment that will be distraction free and comfortable for the reader

✔ Go slowly through each page. The person may read silently, read aloud or you may need to read aloud

✔ Observe and listen for questions

✔ Encourage discussion and provide examples that are relevant to the reader

✔ Note any concerns or anything you can't answer for follow up

✔ Be clear about when and from whom additional information will come