

# Health literacy : a neglected European public health disparity

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# Propositions

## Health literacy: the neglected European public health disparity

Kristine Sørensen

1. Limited health literacy is an underestimated public health challenge in Europe (this dissertation).
2. The European health literacy divide where almost one in two possesses limited health literacy calls for action (this dissertation).
3. Due to the rapid developments and vast amount of information; the role of health professionals as knowledge brokers are as equally important as using and boosting the potential of health literacy embedded in the population (this dissertation).
4. An increased focus on health literacy is expected to qualify healthcare, disease prevention and health promotion at large... however, it will require not only the profound interest in health literacy from stakeholders involved, but also the power, priority and leadership to change the status quo (this dissertation).
5. The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being (WHO's European Office in 'Health 2020').
6. We are coming to understand health not as the absence of disease, but rather as the process by which individuals maintain their sense of coherence (i.e. sense that life is comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful) and ability to function in the face of changes in themselves and their relationships with their environment (Aaron Antonovsky).
7. Health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and love. Health is created by caring for oneself and others, by being able to take decisions and have control over one's life circumstances and by ensuring that the society one lives in, creates conditions that allow the attainment of health by all its members (Ottawa Charter on health promotion, 1986).
8. Determinants of health, their surveillance and related methodological issues are demanding questions that most naturally, practically and effectively are developed in a European collaboration, not by any single Member State acting alone (The Finnish presidency on Health in All Policies, 2006).
9. If one is truly to succeed in leading a person to a specific place, one must first and foremost take care to find him where he is and begin there (Søren Kierkegaard).
10. Know Thyself (Apollo Temple in Delphi).
11. When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills (Chinese proverb).