

Filling a Gap in Spanish-Language Materials Assessment

Background

The National Library of Medicine, with assistance from Communicate Health, conducted research to ensure that MedlinePlus en Español health information follows health literacy best practices.

Via transcreation, NLM developed the Spanish language version of the Health Education Materials Assessment Tool (HEMAT) in order to evaluate Spanish-language content.

Methods

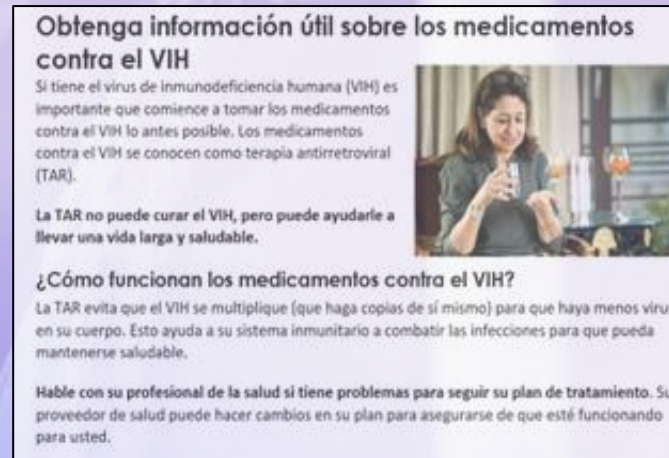
- Conducted an environmental scan of existing assessment tools for Spanish content
- Conducted interviews with Spanish-speakers
- Evaluated three Spanish-language fact sheets on lead poisoning prevention, HIV medicines, and opioid disposal
- Participants included adults with limited health literacy skills (preferred language is Spanish)

Results

- No tools for assessing Spanish-language health materials identified
- Fact sheets clear and easy to read for participants
- Participants described the fact sheets as:
 - Informative and important
 - Easy to understand and simple
 - Educational and organized
- Participants stated that the additional resources and clarifications in the fact sheets helpful

Conclusions

- The materials aligned with the English-language HEMAT were clear and easy to understand, suggesting the HEMAT is sufficient for designating Spanish-language materials as *easy-to-read*.
- Findings suggest the HEMAT should be the same in both English and Spanish, with minor adjustments.
- The use of *common/everyday language* includes:
 - Choosing neutral terms that are understood across cultures
 - Including synonyms for terms that are likely to be unfamiliar to people in some regions or cultures



Portion of fact sheet on HIV medications



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