**Ten more answers about health literacy**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. | People with low health literacy are more likely to have accidents at work.  ***There is a lot of US research that confirms this.*** |
| 2. | 59% of adult New Zealanders have low health literacy.  ***This is the figure for Australia. In NZ it is 56.2% (1.6 million people).*** |
| 3. | People with low health literacy are more likely to visit emergency departments.  ***There is a lot of US research that confirms this.*** |
| 4. | Writing health resources in simple language builds patients’ health literacy skills.  ***Plain language may make them easier to read but more action is needed to build health literacy. You need to highlight key information and explain why people should read the resources.*** |
| 5. | People with low health literacy are more likely to have problems with their medicines.  ***There is a lot of US research that confirms this but there is recent NZ research that shows low health literacy isn’t always a factor in not taking medicines.*** |
| 6. | People with low health literacy are less likely to get their children immunised.  ***There is a lot of US research that confirms this.*** |
| 7. | People with low health literacy are more likely to live in rural areas.  ***Statistically this is true in New Zealand but don’t forget everyone, whether they live in rural or urban areas, are likely to suffer from low health literacy at some time in their lives.*** |
| 8. | Young people have better health literacy than older people.  ***In fact statistically younger people (18-24 years) have the same low levels of health literacy as older people (50-60 years).*** |
| 9. | People with low health literacy skills are less likely to ask questions of their health professionals.  ***There is some small scale US research that confirms this but it is not a reliable indicator someone has low health literacy.*** |
| 10. | Māori have the worst health literacy of any population group in New Zealand.  ***Māori and Pacific peoples do have poor health literacy skills, but on a population basis Pakeha have the worst health literacy of all ethnic groups in New Zealand.*** |