

## FOR IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE

**Amid the global pandemic, the first-ever Global Health Literacy Summit is held to discuss the urgent need to improve health literacy for all.**

*Delegates from around the world will discuss and present solutions on how academia, policy makers and health care providers can improve health literacy. Improving health literacy helps people find, understand, evaluate, and use information to inform health-related decision-making and action for better health and well-being. As such, it becomes a priority for health systems across the world to develop health literacy responsive policies, strategies and practices which ensure equitable access to health information and services.*

- **Health literacy saves time, saves cost, and saves lives.** European research suggests health literacy limitations are a barrier for more than one in three and can negatively impact health service use and health outcomes. Moreover, health literacy is unevenly distributed within populations - adults with more resources perform better than those with less.
- **Previously, health literacy was characterized as a silent epidemic.** However, the pandemic has underscored health literacy's importance and highlighted the challenges and opportunities that public faces when dealing with the complexity and uncertainty generated by shifting health data, guidelines, and demands for behavioural change.

**The Global Health Literacy Summit is the first of its kind.** The goal of the Global Health Literacy Summit is to present new research, policy and strategies, and promote action that will advance health literacy for all.

Organized by the International Health Literacy Association, the Global Health Literacy Summit will be held **virtually 3-5 October 2021** in collaboration with the Chung Shan University Hospital and Taiwan Association for Health Literacy & Communication.

- **The Global Health Literacy Summit features a variety of health literacy topics** including cancer literacy, vaccine literacy, health literate hospitals, oral health literacy, diabetes literacy, health literacy in school settings, health literacy at work, etc. presented by more than 160 keynote presentations, 100 poster presentations, 20 workshops and symposia, 12 interest groups, and 10 masterclasses.
- **To date over 400 experts in policy, research and practice from 42 countries are registered to attend.**

**Dr Kristine Sørensen, president of the International Health Literacy Association @k\_srensen:** *"The pandemic revealed the cracks in our health systems. Investment in health literacy is inevitable to facilitate equitable access to health and as such it is a hot political topic."*



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**Keynote speaker Dr Ruediger Krech, director of Health Promotion, World Health Organization @Ruediger.Krech:** *“During the COVID19 pandemic, leaders across the globe are witnessing first-hand the negative impacts of low health literacy of the general population. This has got to change.”*

**Keynote speaker Sir Michael Marmot, Director, UCL Institute of Health Equity @MichaelMarmot:** *“Literacy, and specifically health literacy, follow the social gradient and are important to understanding how social determinants are linked to health equity.”*

**Keynote speaker Prof Don Nutbeam, University of Sydney @NutbeamDon:** *“In the midst of a global pandemic the need for accurate, current information from a trustworthy source has never been greater. At this meeting we are committed to sharing the best science and best practical approaches to improving health literacy in our countries. Through this, our goal is to ensure health literacy for all of our citizens.”*

**Keynote speaker Prof Richard Osborne, Swinburne University of Technology @RichardOsborne4:** *“At the heart of health literacy is a person and a community's ability to access, understand, appraise, remember and use health information and health services. While frequently not formally considered in epidemiology, public health and global health, it underpins chances for a healthy lifestyle and clinical services provision.”*

**Prof Diane Levin-Zamir, IHLA Board member and chair of the Summit committee:** *“The Global Health Literacy Summit will bring together hundreds of researchers, advocates, practitioners and policy-makers to deliberate and promote health literacy's contribution to public health and healthcare outcomes. The Summit Programme will be offered on a user-friendly virtual platform, allowing registrants to participate whenever, and from wherever they choose over nearly all time-zones across the globe, making the Summit a truly global event.”*

**The International Health Literacy Association (IHLA)** is a non-governmental, not-for-profit, member-based academic/professional organization, which improves health literacy for people and societies through capacity building, policy, research, and practice.

**The sponsors of the Global Health Literacy Summit** include the Ministry of Science & Technology, Bureau of Foreign Trade, Health Promotion Administration, Taiwan; EDA Healthcare Group, I-Shou University; Merck, Sharp & Dohme Corp (MSD); Academy of Dentistry International (ADI); Asian Health Literacy Association; Taiwan Association for Health Literacy & Communication; Health Literacy Media; CommunicateHealth; Institute for Healthcare Advancement; Wisconsin Health Literacy; Health Literacy Innovations and Global Health Literacy Academy. More partners are listed on the Summit's website: <https://ihlasummit2021.org>

### More information

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