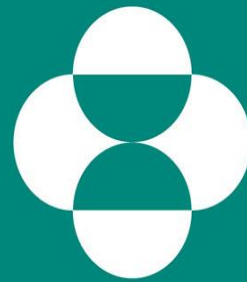


The Importance of Health Literacy – Perspectives from a Pharmaceutical Company

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VP, Global Population Health

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MERCK

INVENTING FOR LIFE

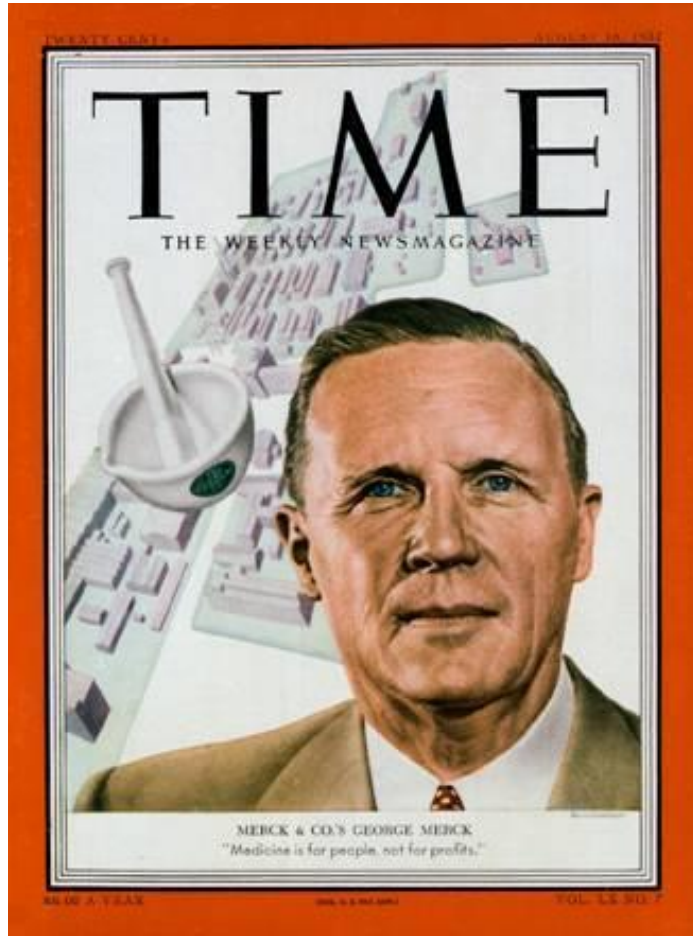
Agenda

- My experience
- Why our company cares & what we are doing
- Why health literacy matters

My Experience

- Pharma – U.S.
- Consultant
- Adherence Specialist
- Pharma – Global

Patient Focus



“We try never to forget that medicine is for the people. It is not for the profits. The profits follow, and if we have remembered that, they have never failed to appear.”

“How can we bring the best of medicine to each and every person? We cannot rest until the way has been found with our help to bring our finest achievements **to everyone.**”

- *George W. Merck, 1950*

Merck

Merck's is committed to being the premier research-intensive biopharmaceutical company.

Our mission is to save and improve lives.

Patients and caregivers play a critical role.

Health literacy is vital to achieving the best possible results from medical care, medicines and vaccines.

Our Company's Focus

Internal objectives:

- collaborate
- influence
- advance

External objectives:

- scientific leadership and impact
 - ✓ National Academies Health Literacy Roundtable
 - ✓ Invited presenter, FDA labeling conference
 - ✓ Invited member, EU Lay Summaries Taskforce
 - ✓ IHA national health literacy award for research
 - ✓ Presentations and publications to share best practices

Why our company cares so deeply

Low health literacy is a global challenge^{1,2} which³

- Increases the risk of disease and poor health management
- Decreases the likelihood of health-promoting behaviors like vaccination and mammography

Health literacy helps to attain the full benefits of medical innovation

- Correct use increases the likelihood a medicine will work, and reduces the risk of side effects
- Patient understanding can help increase adherence and promote safe and appropriate use of medicines

¹US Dept Health & Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention & Health Promotion.
<http://www.health.gov/communication/literacy/issuebrief/>. Accessed on 11/12/13

²Sorensen K et al. (2015), Health literacy in Europe: comparative results of the European health literacy survey (HLS-EU); Eur J Public Health 25;6:1053-1058)

³Nielsen-Bohlman, L., Panzer, A. M., & Kindig, D. A. (Eds.). (2004). *Health literacy: A prescription to end confusion*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

Opportunities to communicate with patients

Clinical trials (when a new medicine is being developed)

- Informed consent
- Materials given to patients during trials (i.e. dosing)
- Targeted messaging to underrepresented populations
- Lay summaries of each trial on a public website (Europe, 2019)
- Emerging: patient input into trial design and outcomes

After product approval

- Packaging
- Disease information
- Patient information/leaflet
- US: Direct advertising to consumers

Why Health Literacy Matters

Multi-stakeholder engagement – examples

- Employee benefits
- Antimicrobial resistance
- Zika epidemic
- Global policy impact

THANK YOU

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