

Reflections on digital health literacy with focus on professional health literacy

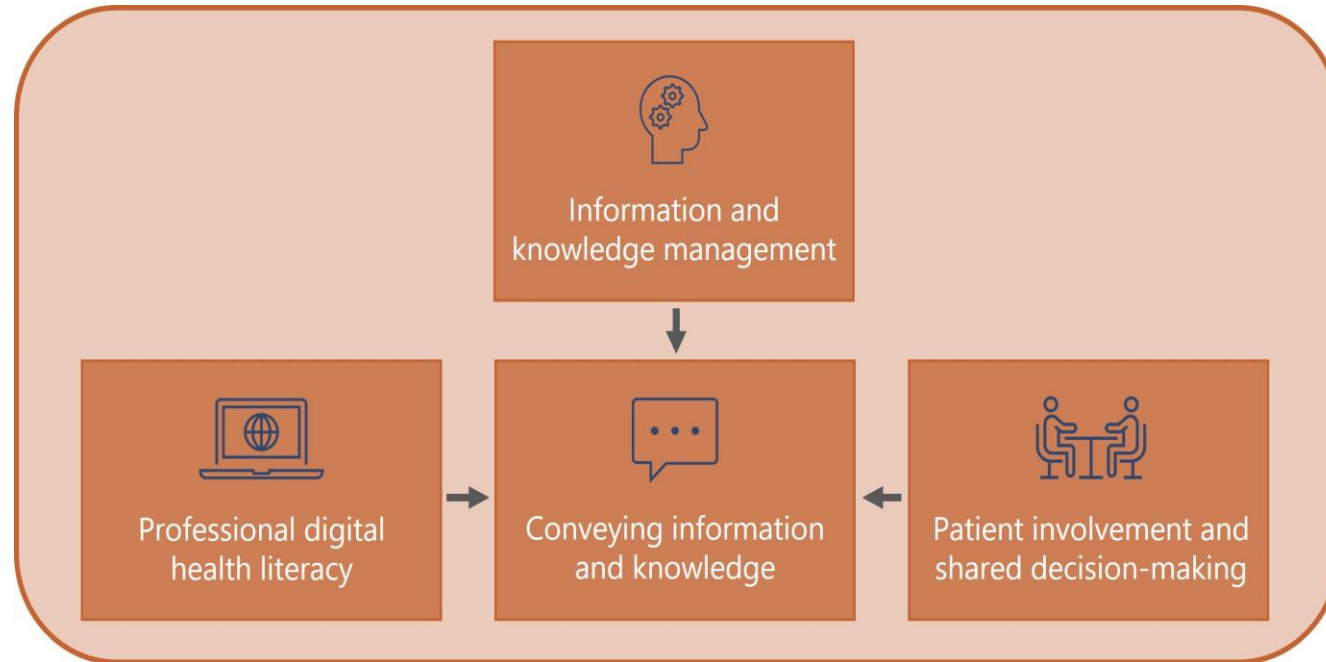
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EVPOP Workshop “Health literacy in a digital world”

Professional health literacy of health professionals

Concept



Professional health literacy (PROF-HL) encompasses the abilities of HP to strengthen the HL of their patients under given organizational conditions. It includes the skills:

- to acquire and manage professional knowledge,
- to prepare, explain and communicate health-related information in ways that patients can understand, appraise and apply,
- to engage patients and participate in decision making, and
- to support them in using digital health information (based on Schaeffer and Griese, 2023).










Schaeffer, Doris; Griese, Lennert (2023): Professionelle Gesundheitskompetenz – Konzeptioneller Rahmen. In: Professionelle Gesundheitskompetenz ausgewählter Gesundheitsprofessionen/-berufe Ergebnisse einer Pilotstudie in der Schweiz, Deutschland und Österreich (HLS-PROF). Hg. v. HLS-PROF Konsortium, Zürich – Berlin/Bielefeld – Wien

Professional health literacy of health professionals

Studies in AT, CH and DE

Pilot study

Follow-up studies in AT

	Germany 	Switzerland 	Austria (Survey 1) 	Austria (Survey 2) 	Austria (Survey 3) 
	May – June 2022	June – July 2022	May – June 2022	June – July 2023	May – June 2024
	n = 921 297 Physicians 624 Nurses	n = 1.613 309 Physicians 692 Nurses 318 Physiotherapists 294 Pharmacists	n = 3.876 808 Physicians 2.723 Nurses 345 Physiotherapists	n = 492 137 Pharmacists 178 Midwives 177 Dieticians	n = 1.001 47 Psychiatrists 509 Psychotherapists 455 clinical / health psychologists
	Online survey (CAWI)	Online survey (CAWI)	Online survey (CAWI)	Online survey (CAWI)	Online survey (CAWI)
	Convenience sample: Recruitment via online panel	Convenience sample: Recruitment via mail distribution by multipliers	Convenience sample: Recruitment via mail distribution by multipliers	Convenience sample: Recruitment via mail distribution by multipliers	Convenience sample: Recruitment via mail distribution by multipliers

<https://oepgk.at/schwerpunkte/messung-der-gesundheitskompetenz/gesundheitskompetenz-von-gesundheitsprofessionen-berufen/>

Professional digital health literacy

Results from the HLS-PROF studies 2022-2024



How easy or **difficult** is it for you ...
[proportion of "very/rather difficult" answers]

	to help patients find health information online that is relevant to them	AT 28 – 47 % of HP DE 41 % of HP CH 33 – 37 % of HP
	to help patients understand the health information they find online	AT 9 – 38 % of HP DE 44 – 47 % of HP CH 23 – 31 % of HP
	to help patients determine the trustworthiness of the health information they find online	AT 30 – 45 % of HP DE 37 – 40 % of HP CH 36 – 41 % of HP
	to help patients use the health information they find online to improve their health problems or general health	AT 21 – 42 % of HP DE 38 % of HP CH 23 – 31 % of HP

Professional digital health literacy

Results from the HLS-PROF-AT studies



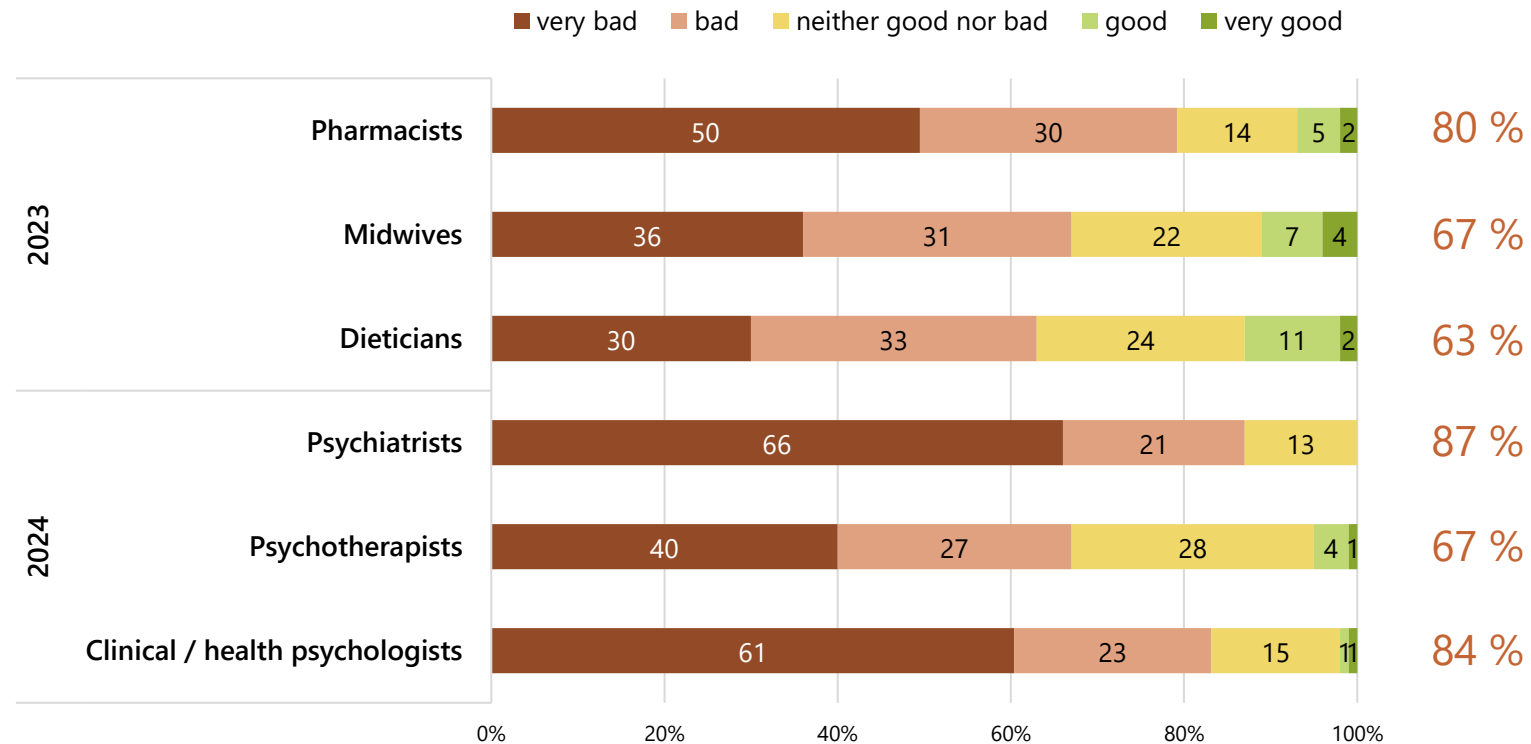
How easy or **difficult** is it for you ...

[proportion of answers with "very/rather difficult"]

to help patients use health apps / digital health applications	34 - 64% of HP
to recommend health apps / digital health applications to your patients	45 - 60% of HP
to assess the trustworthiness of websites, web portals or internet platforms on medical or health topics	37 - 55% of HP
to recommend quality assured websites, web portals or internet platforms on medical or health topics to your patients	36 - 55% of HP
to help patients find health information online that is relevant to them	28 - 47% of HP
to help patients determine the trustworthiness of the health information they find online	30 - 42% of HP
to help patients use the health information they find online to improve their health problems or general health	21 - 42% of HP
to help patients understand the health information they find online	9 - 21% of HP
to discuss information with patients that they have found online	10 - 15% of HP

Supporting patients dealing with digital information

*Preparation through professional training**



Supporting patients dealing with digital information

*% of HP who participated in further training in the last 5 years**

2023	Pharmacists	16 %
	Midwives	12 %
	Dieticians	16 %
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2024	Psychiatrists	15 %
	Psychotherapists	19 %
	Clinical / health psychologists	21 %

→ There may not be many training opportunities yet.

Conclusion

- **HP are crucial counterparts for patients** regarding health and disease-related issues. They therefore play a significant role in supporting patients in managing health information.
 - This requires specific skills, including a high level of professional digital health literacy.
- **HP need strong personal digital health literacy and communication skills**, to effectively support patients in dealing with digital health information.
- **HP do not feel sufficiently prepared for this task** by their professional training.
 - Digital health literacy should receive more attention in professional training.
 - HP need further training in this area.
- **The proliferation of digital services is currently encountering users** (both in the general population and at HP) who are **not yet sufficiently prepared for them**.

Contact information

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