

## **Health literacy and its impact on health care**

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The structures of health systems today are highly complicated, both for current users of health services and for future users. Health systems require individuals to adopt new roles – becoming informed about the services offered, being knowledgeable about their responsibilities and rights within the system, and being able to make decisions about their own health. At this point, then, it is important that people become “health-literate”. This is necessary because it is clear that changing health systems require improvements in the health literacy levels of society. The work initiated in the 1950’s in Turkey on “Health Literacy” entered the medical literature in 1974. Although there is a considerable volume of research and scientific studies that have been undertaken outside of Turkey on this subject, health literacy is a relatively new concept in Turkey and Turkish testing and research related to this concept are still inadequate. It is for this reason that it is difficult for the public to reach and access data on health literacy. This study reviews the scientific studies on health literacy in Turkey and evaluates the significance of the concept in terms of patient well-being and health professionals.