

Health Literacy: A Crucial Factor in Managing Chronic Disease in Older Adult Populations

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BACKGROUND

Health literacy plays a key role in the management of chronic diseases in older adults.

Geriatric populations with inadequate health literacy may be less likely to engage in preventative care and seek prompt medical care.

OBJECTIVES

The research aimed to encourage health literacy in older adults (65+ years)

Hypotheses:

- 1-empower individuals to actively participate in their healthcare.
- 2-to help individuals understand treatment regimens.
- 3-adhere to medication schedules.

METHODS

Design: Pre-test and post-test assessments were conducted to determine the overall impact of the program on participants' self-efficacy and health literacy.

Sample Size: Older adults with disease related chronic pain (n=260)

Sampling Method: Simple Random Sampling

Health Literacy Intervention in a chronic disease self-management physical training program in Denton, Texas.

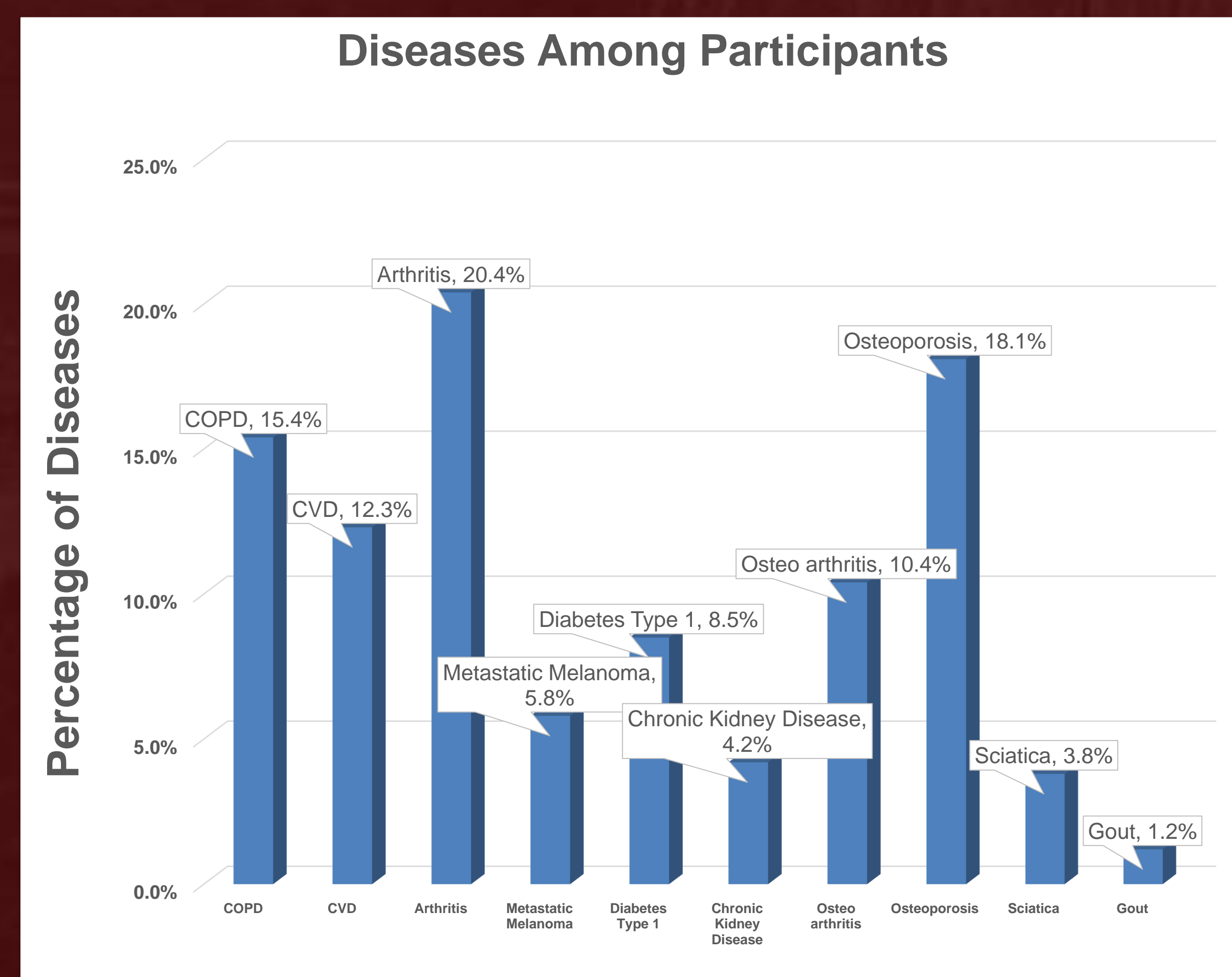
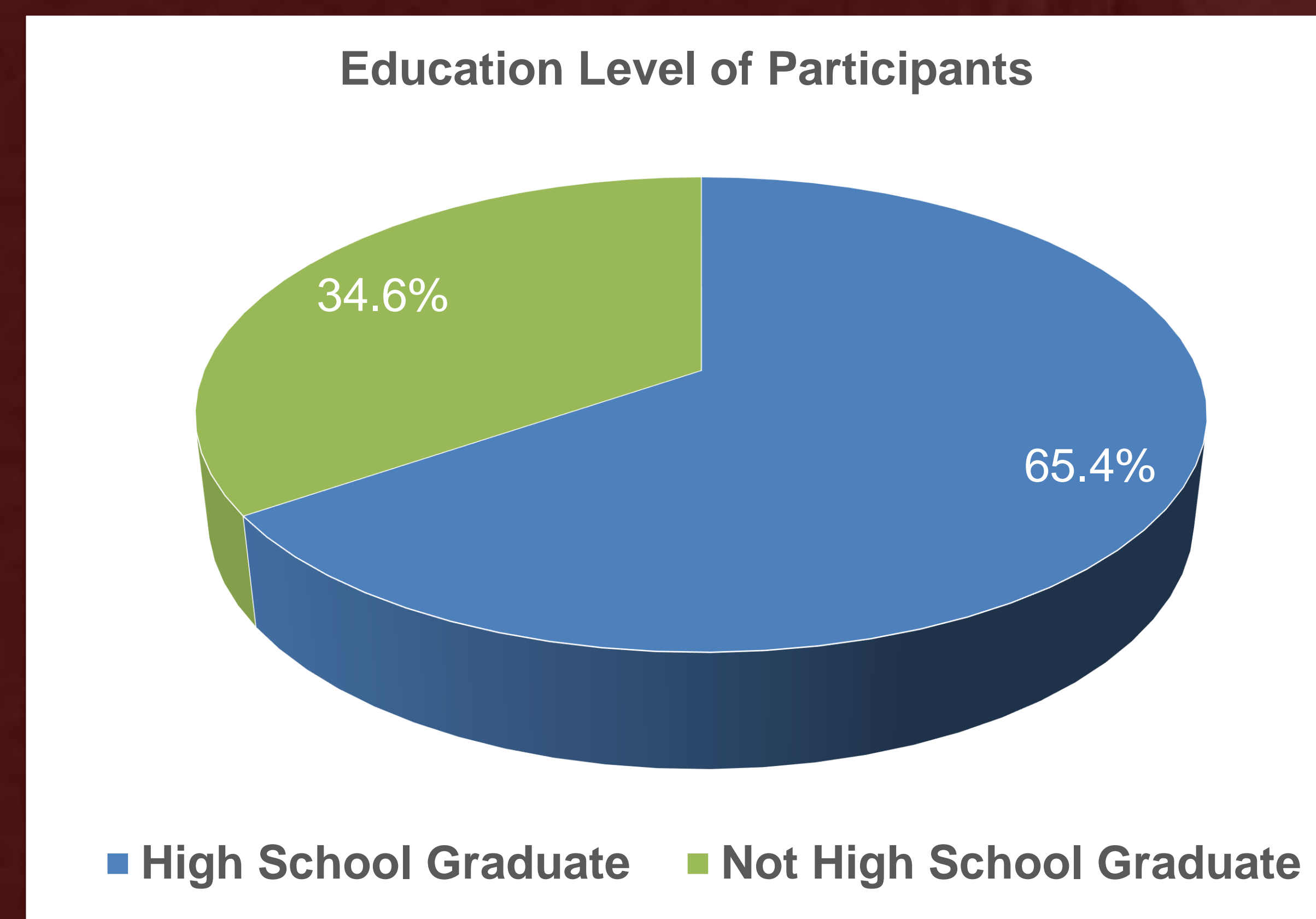
1. Short Assessment of Health Literacy - English (SAHL-E)
2. Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine - Short Form (REALM-SF)

RESULTS

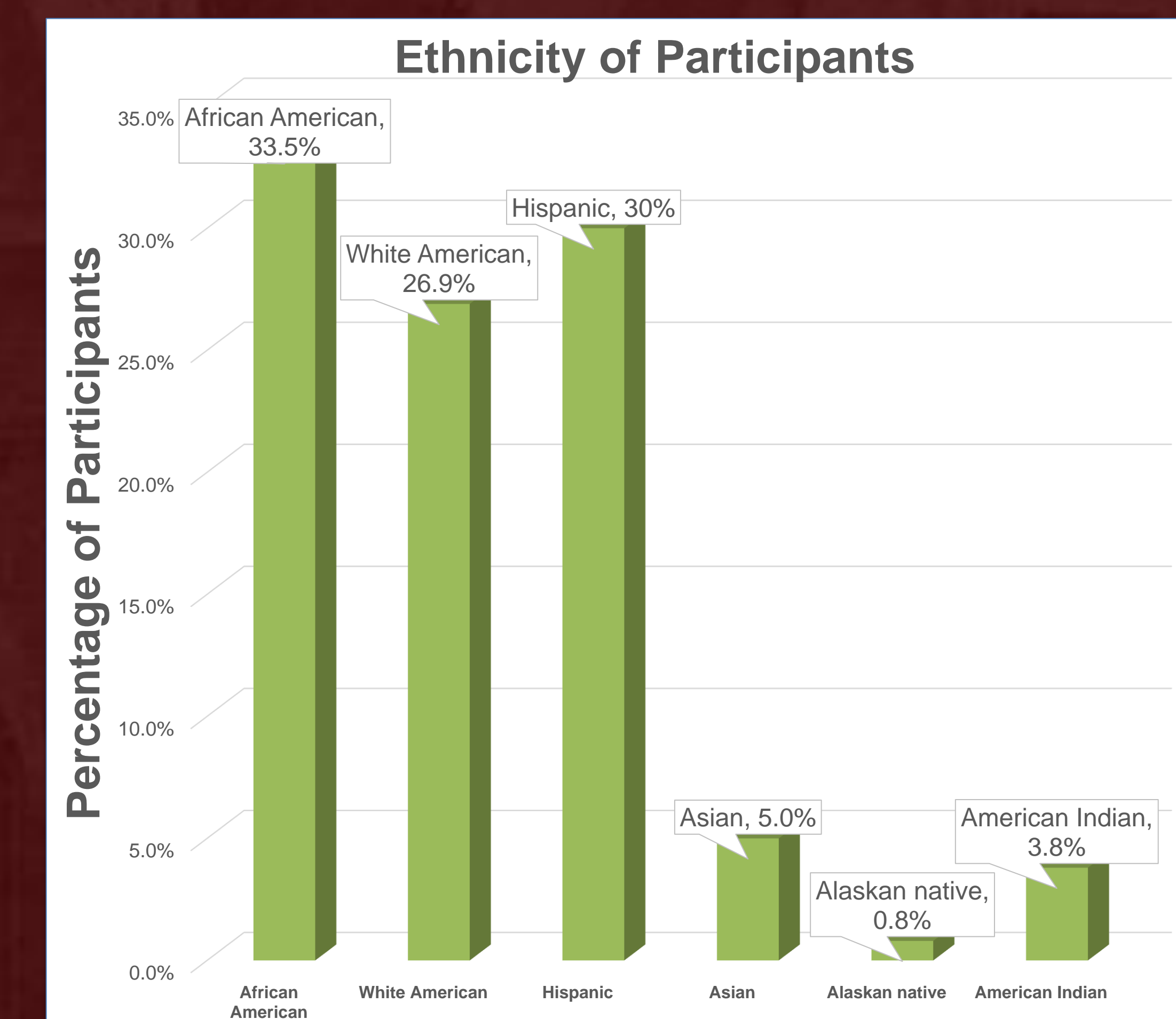
| Instrumentation | Group ^a | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| SAHL-E ^b | 1.00 | 259 | 83.610 | 5.593 | 1.250 |
| SAHL-E Post [!] | | | 78.100 | 9.409 | 2.104 |
| REALM-SF ^c | 1.00 | 259 | 4.800 | 2.191 | 0.490 |
| REALM-SF Post ^{!!} | | | 3.612 | 1.313 | 0.293 |

^a One group of older adults; ^b Short Assessment of Health Literacy (SAHL); ^c Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine Short Form (REALM-SF) [!] Mean difference pre and post of the same group significant at $p \leq 0.05$. ^{!!} Mean difference pre and post of the same group significant at $p \leq 0.01$.

Participants were assessed for health literacy through an integrated community-based intervention. There were high levels of internal consistency in both the test scores, with Cronbach's alpha values of 0.961 and 0.957, respectively. Among older adults with chronic illnesses, health literacy was strongly and favorably correlated with positive health outcomes.



| Participant Demographics | Number |
|---|--------|
| Minimum Age | 67 |
| Maximum Age | 91 |
| Mean Age | 83.1 |
| Health Literacy Intervention Participants | 259 |
| Male | 144 |
| Female | 116 |



FINDINGS

- The intervention heightened the participant levels of self-efficacy and understanding of treatment regimes
- Preventative health workshops improved community planning and community health outcomes
- Participants were more connected to the local area network of regional and local services that meet their needs.

LIMITATIONS

Findings were exclusive to a certain population group, hence, not generalizable
Insufficient involvement from the initial sample.

CONCLUSION

Health Literacy improves patients' independence, understanding of their health status and the value of targeted healthcare services.

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IRB APPROVAL

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