

Organizational Health Literacy in the Brazilian Hospital Context



Francisco Valdicélio Ferreira¹ - State University of Ceará- e-mail - celionutri@gmail.com;
Virginia Visconde Brasil - Federal University of Goiás; Marina Layara Sindeaux Benevides¹;
Katarinne Lima Moraes - Faculty of Ceilândia, University of Brasília; Helena Alves de Carvalho Sampaio¹.



Background / purpose To evaluate the feasibility of applying the International Self-Assessment Tool for Organizational Health Literacy in Hospitals in the Brazilian context, considering its acceptability and implementation, and to present the results and experiences related to its translation, cross-cultural adaptation, validity evidence, and self-assessment process in Brazil.

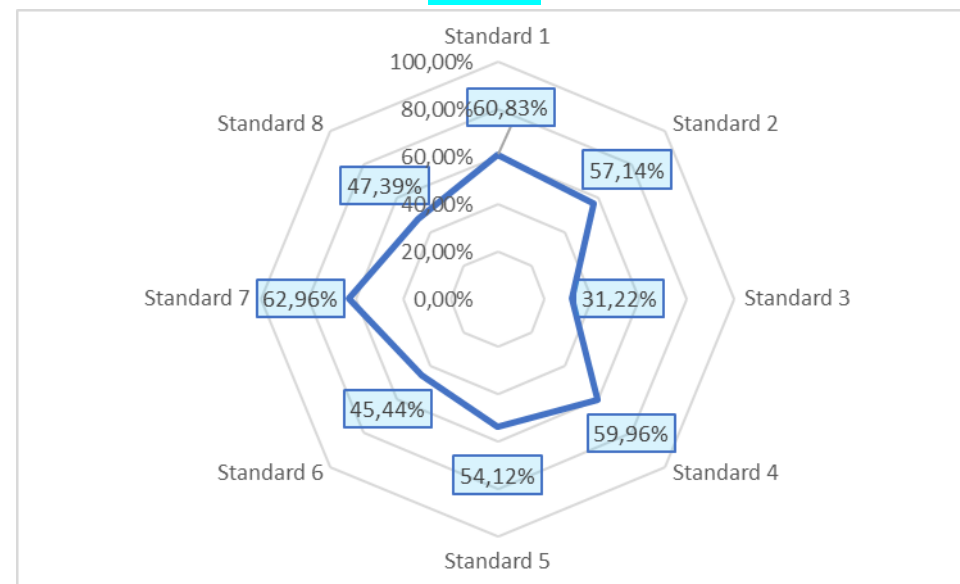
Methods

This is a methodological and pilot study involving translation, conducted in accordance with international protocols for cross-cultural adaptation and validation, including translation, back-translation, expert committee review, and pilot testing. The self-assessment was conducted between January and December 2025. The tool is structured into 8 standards (Figure 1), 21 sub-standards, and 155 indicators (including sub-indicators), or 141 indicators excluding sub-indicators. The self-assessment was carried out according to the authors' instructions. The feasibility analysis was based on the framework proposed by Bowen et al. (2009), encompassing acceptability, implementation, practicality, and integration.

Standard 1: Implement organizational health literacy best-practices across all structures and processes of the organization.
Standard 2: Develop documents, materials and services with stakeholders in a participatory manner.
Standard 3: Enable and train staff for personal and organizational health literacy.
Standard 4: Provide easy navigation and access to services, documents, and materials.
Standard 5: Apply health literacy best-practices in all forms of communication with Patients.
Standard 6: Promote personal health literacy of patients and relatives during hospitalization and after discharge.
Standard 7: Promote personal health literacy of staff with regard to occupational risks and personal lifestyles.
Standard 8: Contribute to promoting personal health literacy of the local population and to dissemination of organizational health literacy in the region served.

Figure 1: Standards for Assessing the Health Literacy Responsiveness of a Healthcare Organization.

Results



The tool demonstrated high institutional acceptability and was recognized as a relevant instrument for fostering critical reflection on organizational practices related to health literacy. Participants reported meaningful learning, although they identified challenges related to the instrument's length, the complexity of its language, and the time required for completion.

Implications for health literacy practice

The tool proved to be a promising strategy to support quality improvement, promote more accessible and responsive hospital environments, and reduce informational barriers, thereby directly contributing to the advancement of health literacy and equity in healthcare within hospital organization.