

Pictures, symbols in discharge instructions aid Rx compliance

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(HealthDay)—Using discharge instructions that employ pictures and symbols rather than words can improve hospital discharge medication compliance in illiterate patients, according to a study published in *BMJ Quality Improvement Reports*.

Matthew Clayton, from Services Hospital in Lahore, Pakistan, and colleagues evaluated factors contributing to the poor adherence of [hospital discharge](#) medication regimens in their facility.

The researchers found that 48 percent of all the hospital's patients were illiterate, and only 5 to 12 percent of these patients were able to interpret their handwritten discharge prescription after leaving the [hospital](#). The follow-up clinics reported very poor adherence. By designing a new

discharge prescription proforma which used pictures and symbols, rather than words, to convey the necessary information, repeated surveys showed large relative increases in comprehension of the new proformas among illiterate patients. Roughly 23 to 35 percent of illiterate patients understood the new proformas.

"The new proforma increased the number of illiterate patients who can understand their discharge medication threefold but it is important to recognize that there is still room for improvement," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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