PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, February 2, 2016

Contact: Jose L. Cruz
Phone: 619-574-1641 ext. 103
Email: jcruz@literacysandiego.org

The ABCs of Better Health: Health Literacy San Diego releases a collaborative plan to improve health communications in San Diego County

The challenge of low-health literacy results in communications breakdowns that affect the healthcare of patients and the ability of healthcare providers to serve them. These breakdowns put patients at risk and increase the cost of health services for all. To address this challenge, *Health Literacy San Diego (HLSD)*, a project of Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP) and the San Diego Council on Literacy (SDCOL), has produced a new report titled*, Improving Health Communications: A Collaborative Plan to Address Health Literacy in San Diego County*.

Health literacy is the degree to which individuals have the skills and context needed to obtain and understand basic health information and services that help them make appropriate health decisions. Patient literacy abilities, language, age and culture affect the ability of the healthcare system to fully communicate with patients about their conditions, therapy, and medications.

The new report updates the 2007 health literacy report, *When Words Get in the Way: A Collaborative Plan to Address Health Literacy in San Diego County*. "This updated report provides recommendations to improve health communications from both the provider and patient perspective, which will ultimately make an impact on overall health outcomes," said Kristin Garrett Montgomery, CEO of CHIP. "It also provides a review of recent major federal policy initiatives for improving health literacy and innovations and promising practices being used by providers and health care systems to address health literacy."

The production of this report was led by the HLSD taskforce, which consists of representatives from health and literacy organizations. This report was funded by the Alliance Healthcare Foundation, with additional support from Molina Healthcare.

The HLSD Taskforce and Alliance Healthcare Foundation are hosting a forum in association with the release of the report.

The Health Literacy Forum will take place as follows:

When:	Thursday, February 25, 2016
Time:	8:30AM – 10:30AM
Where:	United Way of San Diego County, 4699 Murphy Canyon Road, San Diego, CA 92101

"We are excited to roll this report out in our community," said Jose Cruz, CEO of SDCOL. "The panel will cover some of the new topics in the report including an overview of health literacy, populations most impacted by low health literacy, best practices to address low health literacy, cultural competency, and the impact of technology on healthcare communications."

The panel speakers will include Dr. Nora Faine, Medical Director, Molina Healthcare; Jose Cruz, CEO, SDCOL; Valerie Hardie, Literacy Program Administrator, READ/San Diego Adult Literacy Program – San Diego Public Library; and Ismael Cortez, Program Coordinator, Project SHINE with Cuyamaca College. The panel will be moderated by Kristin Garrett Montgomery, CEO, CHIP.

###

About Community Health Improvement Partners
Community Health Improvement Partners (CHIP) is a San Diego non-profit organization with the mission of advancing long-term solutions to priority health needs through collaboration and community engagement. CHIP focuses on bringing partners together to tackle relevant and pressing health issues. Other CHIP programs include the San Diego County Childhood Obesity Initiative, Suicide Prevention Council, Resident Leadership Academy, Independent Living Association, Lemon Grove HEAL Zone, and REACH Chula Vista. For more information, visit www.sdchip.org

About The San Diego Council on Literacy
The San Diego Council on Literacy unites the community to support literacy through advocacy, partnerships, resources, and coordination. It provides support to its network of 29 affiliated youth, adult, and family literacy programs. Combined, these programs serve annually 170,000 residents of all ages, at no cost. For more information, visit www.literacysandiego.org

About Health Literacy San Diego
Health Literacy San Diego is a joint effort of Community Health Improvement Partners and the San Diego Council on Literacy with the mission to improve healthcare communication by addressing literacy abilities, language barriers and cultural differences. For more information, visit www.sdchip.org or contact Emilie Dang at edang@sdchip.org or 858.609.7966.

About Alliance Healthcare Foundation
Alliance Healthcare Foundation is a San Diego-based nonprofit which works with nonprofit, government and community agencies to advance health and wellness throughout the San Diego and Imperial Counties. AHF works to serve the most vulnerable – the poor, working poor, children and homeless by providing grants, advocacy and education to support its region.

To learn more about AHF and available grants visit http://AllianceHF.org.

C H I P
COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS
making a difference together

San Diego Council on LITERACY