# Improving comprehension of 25 infection prevention terms at B1 language level:

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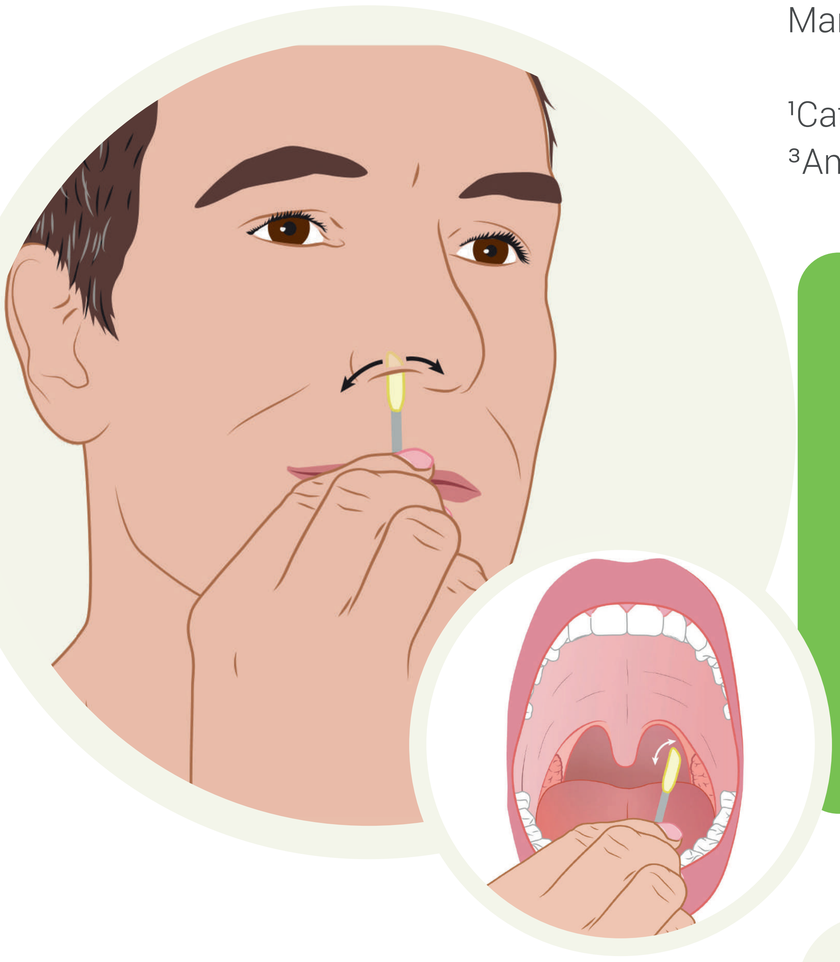
## rewording and testing with low-literacy participants

Marieke Ernest[1], Thea Duijnhoven[2], Thera Habben Jansen[3]

[1]Catharina Hospital, Eindhoven, [2]Pharos, Dutch Centre of Expertise on Health Disparities, Utrecht, [3]Amphia Hospital, Breda, Netherlands



## Introduction

In the Netherlands, one in three people has limited health literacy, and one in five struggles with reading and writing. This hinders the understanding and application of health-related information, such as infection prevention guidelines.

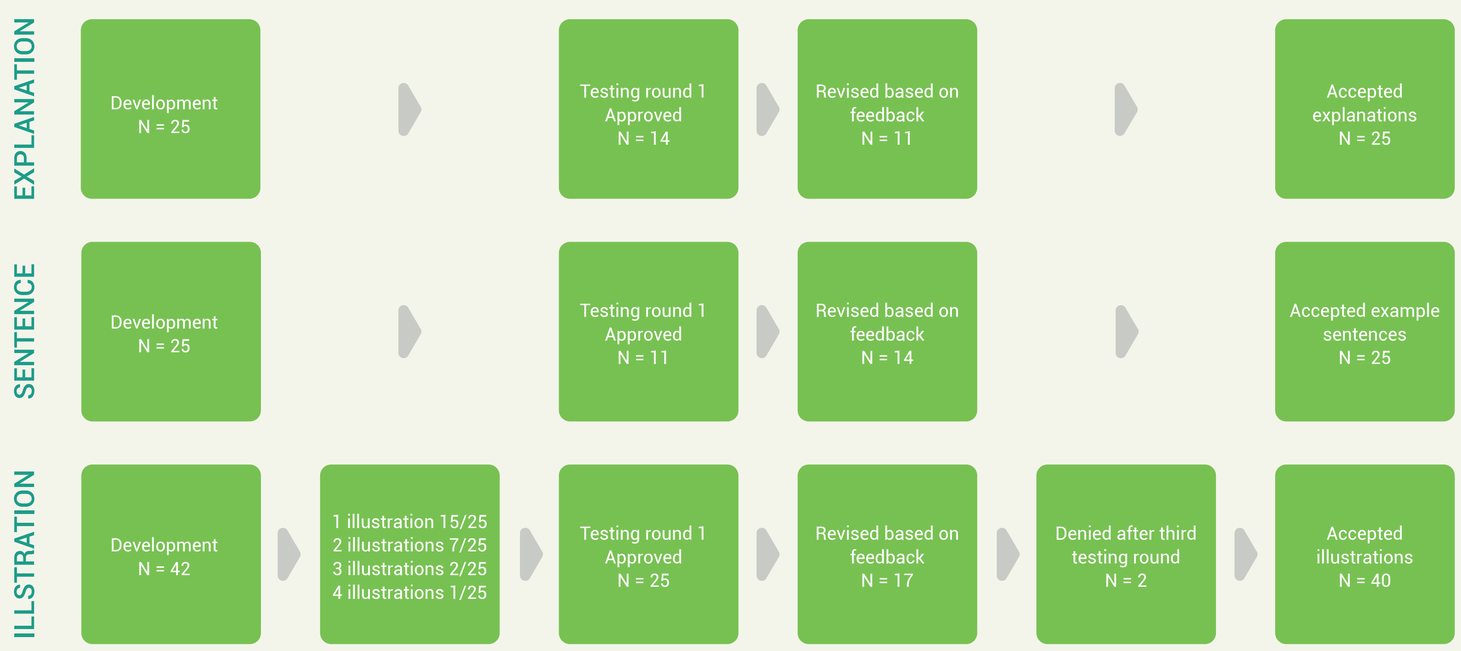
## Objective

To evaluate the comprehensibility of 25 infection prevention words, their B1-level explanations, example sentences and illustrations.

## Method

Six hospitals analysed 114 patient letters and 120 brochures to identify 25 frequently used infection prevention words. For each word, a B1-level explanation and example sentence were developed, along with 42 illustrations to support the explanations. Comprehensibility was tested through structured interviews with four individuals with low literacy skills.

**Figure 1: flowchart of testing 25 infection prevention words, explanations and corresponding images**




## Results

- 14 Explanations, 11 example sentences, and 25 of 42 illustrations were accepted in the first round.
- 11 Explanations, 14 example sentences, and 17 illustrations were revised.
- For “resistant” and “multidrug-resistant microorganism," all illustrations remained unclear after three rounds and were not used for the final set.

## Conclusion

- A toolkit was developed with 25 infection prevention words, each with a B1-level explanation, example sentence, and for 23 words, one or more illustrations.
- Testing revealed that 19 of the 25 original terms were not understood by participants, highlighting the challenges faced by individuals with low literacy in interpreting medical information and communicating with healthcare providers.

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