Opella.

Ipsos bva

Health Literacy Barometer 2026.

Key takeaways from the report.

Introduction. Health information is everywhere. Clarity is not.

Every day, millions of people rely on self-care to manage common health concerns. But having access to information does not make it easier to know how to action it.

Health literacy helps turn information into understanding, confidence, and action, ultimately equipping people to navigate every step of the self-care journey.

To understand just how equipped people really are to put self-care into action, Opella and Ipsos surveyed 13,000 consumers and 500 pharmacists online across 10 countries. The study looked at where self-care breaks down and the role of trust to uncover what drives self-care confidence in a changing health landscape.

The 10 countries surveyed: France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Poland, United States, Mexico, Brazil, India, Vietnam, and the Philippines.

Clarity is Care.

Opella's global program to improve health literacy and help people make more confident self-care decisions.

“Only 1 in 3 people can successfully navigate every step of the self-care journey.”

Self-care is about knowing your choices and owning your health. The self-care journey involves recognizing a symptom, understanding it, choosing the right solution, and managing it appropriately.

Each of these steps hinges on health literacy: that is, the knowledge that equips people to understand a symptom, navigate available self-care options, and make a confident choice.

And health literacy in turn requires clarity at every step.

The Opella Health Literacy Barometer 2026.

It shows that clarity can break down across the four steps of the self-care journey.

Recognize.

Only **29%** can identify both their symptoms and the underlying condition when a health issue first appears.

Understand.

Only **56%** report understanding what is causing their symptoms and their condition.

Choose.

Only **38%** feel confident choosing a self-care solution on their own at the shelf.

Manage.

Only **37%** report following the product's recommendations as intended.

The result.

Only 1 in 3 people successfully navigates every step of the self-care journey.

In today's health information paradox, human-led trust is the epicenter of self-care.

Health information is more accessible than ever, and people are finding it in new ways. Digital tools are expanding how people find and navigate health information. But human trust remains central to confident self-care.

65%

use digital sources to understand symptoms and conditions.

31%

regularly use AI for health information or advice.

And yet...

67%

trust pharmacists more than AI for reliable health information.

44%

cite pharmacists as helping build confidence when choosing a product.

Closing the self-care gap. With pharmacists on the front line of care.

Pharmacists are often the first point of contact to help people understand their symptoms, evaluate information, and make safe and informed decisions. They act as a critical bridge between health information and self-care action.

Self-care confidence increases **1.4x** when pharmacists are involved in decision-making.

Confidence through clarity.

38%

Feel confident choosing a self-care solution alone at the shelf.

54%

Feel confident making a choice with pharmacist support. A conversation can help build clarity.

66%

Feel confident bringing up their health issue with a pharmacist.

71%

Feel confident understanding a pharmacist's explanations.

Trusted human guidance can help turn health information into confident self-care decisions.

Introducing. **Clarity is Care.**

In November 2026, Opella launched Clarity is Care, a global health literacy program to help people build the knowledge and confidence they need to take action on their health.

The program works across the full self-care journey through three interconnected pillars.

Clarity in our products.

Making packaging, instructions and product information clearer, so people can more easily understand what a product is for and how to use it.

Clarity in our ads.

Creating campaigns that build understanding, not just awareness, giving people useful knowledge to support everyday self-care.

Clarity at the counter.

Partnering with pharmacists to enable clearer self-care conversations, helping people access trusted guidance when making health decisions.

↘ Opella's commitment.

50 million

Improve the health literacy of 50 million people annually.

200,000

Partner with 200,000 pharmacists by 2030.

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