

I. WATKINS, B. XIE. **eHealth literacy interventions for older adults: A systematic review of the literature.** *Gerontechnology* 2014;13(2):304; doi:10.4017/gt.2014.13.02.206.00 **Purpose** eHealth resources play an increasingly important role in how people obtain health information and interact with the healthcare system¹. eHealth literacy describes the “set of skills and knowledge that are essential for productive interactions with technology-based health tools”². Problematically, many older adults lack sufficient skills and knowledge to benefit from these resources³. Prior reviews evaluated eHealth literacy interventions, but no known study provides a systematic review of the literature on eHealth literacy⁴ interventions for older adults. We intend to address this knowledge gap in the literature. **Method** Four rounds of selection were performed in January 2013 to identify relevant publications. These rounds included: (i) database selection, which included 28 databases from nine relevant fields; (ii) keyword search of the titles and abstracts using the keywords: (‘health literacy’ OR ‘eHealth literacy’ OR ‘e-Health literacy’ OR ‘information literacy’ OR ‘computer literacy’) AND (‘old* adult*’ OR ‘senior*’ OR ‘elder*’ OR ‘aging’ OR ‘ageing’ OR ‘babyboomer*’ OR ‘retiree*’); (iii) screening of titles and abstracts to confirm that each study evaluated an intervention; and (iv) screening of the full text. Next, we evaluated characteristics of the selected studies for theory, research design, measures, sample characteristics, outcomes, and use of tailoring. **Results** The final sample contained 23 articles. *Table 1* presents the results. **Discussion** The interventions from the sampled articles used eHealth literacy as an outcome of interest, applied learning theories, included web-based and non-networked, computer-based interventions, and were staged in informal learning settings such as public libraries or senior centers. These results indicate that a significant gap exists in the literature on eHealth literacy interventions. This gap requires researchers to investigate the effect of eHealth literacy interventions on specific health outcomes in addition to eHealth literacy. Further, evaluating eHealth literacy interventions in clinical settings could clarify the effects of environmental distractions that are present in informal learning settings.

References

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Table 1. Results of systematic review by study characteristics

Characteristic	Outcome
Theory	12 studies (52.2%) applied no theory
Research design	4 studies (17.4%) used randomized controlled trials
Measures	13 studies (56.5%) had no eHealth literacy measure
Sample size	Sample sizes ranged from n=11 to n=909
Outcomes	10 studies (43.4%) targeted a specific health outcome
	13 studies (56.5%) targeted eHealth literacy as the outcome
Tailoring	4 studies (17.4%) tailored interventions