

Making digital services more accessible

Leigh Mortimer, Senior Product Manager, NHS Digital @mortimer_leigh

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Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Read our pages on <u>coronavirus</u> for health information and advice. See the <u>government response to</u> <u>coronavirus on GOV.UK</u>.

Last updated on: 05/03/2020 at 16:15:24



Health A to Z

Your complete guide to conditions, symptoms and treatments, including what to do and when to get help.

Medicines A to Z

Find out how your medicine works, how and when to take it, possible side effects and answers to your common questions.



Design and build digital services for the NHS

Use the service manual to build consistent, usable services that put people first. Learn from the research and experience of other NHS teams.

What's new

In February 2020 we talked about our work in a <u>public</u> <u>show and tell on YouTube</u>.

NHS service standard

Check you're working to best practice from the start.

Design system

Build consistent, accessible user interfaces.

Content style guide

How to write for digital NHS services.

Accessibility

Make NHS services accessible for everyone.

Design principles

These principles guide all of our design.

Community

Help grow and improve the service manual.

Make sure everyone can use the service

Make sure people with different physical, mental health, social, cultural or learning needs can use your service, whether it's for the public or staff.

And people who do not have access to the internet or lack the skills or confidence to use it.

- accessibility
- health literacy
- writing content that's easy to understand
- inclusive language

"The power of the Web is in its universality. Access by everyone regardless of disability is an essential aspect."

Tim Berners-Lee, W3C Director and inventor of the World Wide Web

Services that people with a disability can use as easily as people without.

This includes people who have auditory, cognitive, neurological, physical, speech and visual impairments.

Accessible services are easier for everyone

We also have legal and policy obligations

Our legal obligations

Equality Act 2010

"provision of a service to the public or a section of the public (for payment or not) must not discriminate against a person requiring the service by not providing the person with the service."

The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and mobile applications) (No.2) Accessibility Regulations 2018

Digital access needs are many and varied

1 in 5 people in the UK have some form of disability

Everyone is impaired at some time





In 2019, we did an accessibility review of the NHS website



Key issues

- Basic issues on core NHS website pages
- Insufficient accessibility knowledge across our teams
- No accessibility testing included in quality assurance
- The NHS website will have to publish an accessibility statement soon which would currently be a long list of issues.

What we did first

- removed barriers, like carousels of moving content
- over 90 hours of research with 272 people
- spoke with national charities and support groups
- tested our changes with people with a range of disabilities
- developed accessible designs and added them to the NHS digital service manual

Three stages of work

- testing, using automated, manual and usability testing methods
- analysis and training workshop
- writing up recommendations and guidance for the service manual

We've published accessibility guidance in the service manual



We've made some posters...



Available soon to download



Accessibility lab



Design for everyone

.....



Home

Everyone needs to know

What all NHS services need to do about accessibility

How to make digital services accessible

Getting started with accessibility

Accessibility guidance for:

Product and delivery

User research

Content

Design

Development

Testing

Accessibility

How to make digital services in the NHS work for everyone.

Your service must be accessible to everyone who needs it. If it is not, you may be breaking the law.

Everyone who works on NHS digital services has a role to play in making them accessible and inclusive.

- accessibility
- health literacy
- writing content that's easy to understand
- inclusive language





Struggle with typical health information

Struggle with typical numerical health information

People with low health literacy are:

- more likely to have unhealthy lifestyles
- at higher risk of sickness and premature death
- less likely to use preventive services
- more likely to attend A&E

Old content High cholesterol

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Reading age

Reducing the reading age did make things easier to read but...

Starting from scratch also:

- reduced reading time
- made it easier to pick out and recall information
- made calls to action clearer
- made it simpler to navigate ...

... for everyone

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How we write

Voice and tone

Inclusive language

A to Z of NHS health writing

Health literacy

How to write good questions for forms

Numbers, measurements, dates and time

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PDFs

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Content style guide Health literacy

NHS services are for everyone. But many adults in the UK have low health literacy skills. This means they struggle to read and understand medical content intended for the public.

What is health literacy?

Health literacy is about a person's ability to understand and use information to make decisions about their health.

A user with low health literacy will generally struggle to:

- · read and understand health information
- know how to act on this information
- · know which health services to use and when to use them

Research shows that:

- accessibility
- health literacy
- writing content that's easy to understand
- inclusive language



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Content style guide

How to write for digital NHS services.

This style guide is for anyone creating content for the NHS, to help make things clear and consistent across all of our services.

It's meant as a guide, not a rulebook. You're welcome to adapt a style pattern if it does not meet your users' needs.

Check the <u>GOV.UK A to Z style guide</u> and <u>GOV.UK content design guide</u> for any points of style that you do not find here.

If it's not there, talk to colleagues on the <u>#content channel on the service</u> <u>manual public Slack</u> or <u>email the service manual team</u> to see if anyone has any experience of or research insight into the issue.

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Content style guide

A to Z of NHS health writing

Words and phrases we use to make our content about health and the NHS easy to understand.

<u>A</u>	B	<u>c</u>	D	E	E	G	H	1	ī	K	L	M	N	<u>0</u>	P	Q	<u>R</u>	<u>s</u>
I	U	V	W	X	Y	Z												
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We use "A&E". You don't need to spell out "accident and emergency".



pee

We use the nouns "pee" and "urine". We know that everyone can understand "pee", including people who find reading difficult. Most people also understand and search for "urine", for example in phrases like "blood in urine".

We don't use "wee" because it can confuse people who use voice technologies or screen readers.

We use "pee" for the verb, not "urinate" or "pass urine". We know that the people who use NHS digital services talk about and search for "peeing more often" and "peeing at night".

persist

We use "carry on" or "keep going".



- accessibility
- health literacy
- writing content that's easy to understand
- inclusive language

People are not likely to get the health information, care and treatment they need if they:

- don't understand that a service is for them
- don't feel respected and included

But some things are difficult to get right.

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How we write

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- Age
- Disabilities and conditions
- Mental health
- Race, ethnicity, religion and nationality
- Sex, gender and sexuality

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We use:

Content style guide **Inclusive language**

Writing for and about people in a way that is inclusive and respectful.

Age

Only include age if it's relevant, for example, with vaccination, screening or testing programmes for particular age groups. An example of this is chlamydia testing as tests are free for under-25s.

Here are some of the terms we use for different stages of life with some guidance about the ages they relate to.

When you need to be more specific, for example if you're writing about medicines dosage, give the actual age. For example, "teenagers aged 16 and over".

Sex, gender and sexuality

The language around sex, gender and sexuality changes all the time and it's an area that people hold strong and differing opinions about. We try to make sure that we are in touch with the communities we are writing for and we update this guidance regularly. This section should help you get started but the best thing is to test your content and services with the people who use them.

Only mention sex, gender or sexuality if they're relevant, for example, to signpost people and help them get the health information and access to treatment they need.

When to use "sex" and when to use "gender"

Many people think that sex and gender are the same but they mean different things. It's important to be clear about the difference.

- accessibility
- health literacy
- plain English
- inclusive language

And we are continuing to develop our guidance

We are keen to:

- hear feedback
- learn from users
- encourage contributions

Find out more at service-manual.nhs.net

We have made a film to help raise awareness.





Thank you, any questions?

Presented by Leigh Mortimer, NHS Digital leigh.mortimer@nhs.net