

Accessibility matters

Everyone should be able to make informed decisions about their health and care. All communications, information and digital tools should be accessible with the option to personalise.

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of disability¹. You should consider the equalities impact of every new resource. Public sector bodies should meet the Accessible Information Standard².

Making information easy to understand

5 million adults cannot find relevant data in standard health information³. To help overcome this you can:

- Use clear subheadings to 'chunk' information
- Aim for a target reading age of 9-11
- Use plain language
- Keep sentences short
- Involve users



Top tip:

Think about how people use content. Provide transcripts and captions on videos. Make downloadable documents accessible.

Information on how to make sure you are meeting WCAG 2.1 requirements for accessible websites is available in our Web Accessibility Quick Guide⁴.

Alternative formats

Wherever possible, information should be provided in alternative formats. These may include:

- Audio recordings
- Large print
- British Sign Language (BSL)
- Braille
- Easy read



Top tip:

Microsoft Word has an accessibility checker which flags issues like unclear hyperlinks or poor colour contrast.

SCULPT accessible content online

S	Structure – Use heading styles in your document such as H1, H2, H3
C	Colour contrast – Use strong colour contrasts
U	Use of images – Provide alt text
L	Links – Describe your link
P	Plain language – Use plain language
T	Table structure – Use simple tables without merged or split cells

References

1. legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents
 2. [england.nhs.uk/ourwork/accessibleinfo](https://www.nhs.uk/ourwork/accessibleinfo)
 3. Rowlands G, Protheroe J et al, 2015. BJGP, 65(635): e379-e386. bjgp.org/content/65/635/e379
 4. pifonline.org.uk/resources/how-to-guides/web-accessibility-a-quick-guide
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