

Accessible information matters

Everyone should be able to make informed decisions about their health and care. All information, digital tools and communication should be accessible.

Under the Equality Act 2010 it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of disability¹. You should consider the equalities impact of every new and updated resource. Public sector bodies should meet accessible information standards^{2,3}.

Make information easy to understand

5 million adults cannot find relevant data in standard health information⁴. PIF advises aiming for a reading age of 9-11. To make your information more accessible you can:

- Involve users
- Use clear subheadings
- Use sans serif fonts
- Avoid all caps and italics
- Use plain language
- Keep sentences concise
- Use the best format for your audience



Top tip:

Provide transcripts and captions on videos. Follow guidance on making documents accessible.

Information on how to make sure you are meeting requirements for accessible websites is available in our Web Accessibility Quick Guide⁵.

Multiple formats

Wherever possible, provide information in multiple formats. These may include:

- Audio recordings
- Sign language
- Plain text
- Large print
- Braille
- Easy read



Top tip:

Accessibility checkers flag problems with hyperlinks or poor colour contrast.

SCULPT accessible content

S	Structure – Use heading styles such as H1, H2, H3.
C	Colour contrast – Use an online colour contrast checker.
U	Use of images – add alternative text to briefly describe your image.
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/accessible-information-standard
3. gov.wales/accessible-communication-and-information-standards-healthcare-html
4. Rowlands G, Protheroe J et al, 2015. BJGP, 65(635): e379-e386. bjgp.org/content/65/635/e379
5. pifonline.org.uk/resources/how-to-guides/web-accessibility-a-quick-guide