

# 8 Communications Tips for Supporting Patients with Low Health Literacy



## How you write

01

- **Use simple words:** Easy for everyone.
- **Keep it brief:** Stick to the essentials.
- **Speak clearly:** For all ages to grasp.
- **Use "you" & "we":** It connects us.
- **Use bullet points:** They keep us on track.
- **Be direct:** Get straight to the point.

**TOP TIP:** Read your text out loud. Does it sound human or formal and robotic?

02

## Involve your patients

- **Involve patients early:** Ask for feedback right from the start.
- **Test your comms with patients:** Sense-check first drafts and messaging.
- **Co-create content:** Develop health information with patients.
- **Respect preferences:** Tailor your language and descriptions carefully.

03

## Websites & Digital tools

- **Make accessible:** Support screen readers and language translation on both your website and digital consultation tools.
- **Underline links only:** Avoid confusion and underline clickable links only.
- **Think mobile-first:** Make sure your website and digital tools looks and works seamlessly on mobile before desktop. Most patients use mobile.

04

## Be inclusive

- **Reflect diversity:** Use realistic photos and images that represent your community and patient populations.
- **Context matters:** Ensure representation is appropriate for the material.

## Infographics

- **Text is important:** Crafting a top-notch infographic takes serious skill. It's not just about the visuals, but also the text.
- **123...testing:** Both the visuals and text need some patient testing. Let's keep it clear and easy to grasp!
- **Don't over-do it:** Too much information crammed into an infographic, it can get confusing real quick!

05

## Use the NHS medical readability tool

- **Know your age:** This tool calculates the UK reading age of your text, so you know how easy it is for patients to understand.
- **Keep it simple:** It highlights any complicated sentences and words to improve your writing.
- **Timing is key:** It also advises how long it takes to read your document.

06



## Design & Layout

- **Size matters:** Use as large a type size as you can. Size 12 as a minimum.
- **Paint it right:** Choose a good contrast between the colour of your text and the background - [we use this tool](#).
- **Space it out:** White space should make up half of the page.

07

## Using images

- **Visualise it:** Photos, illustrations, and infographics can all help capture your reader's attention and break up the text.
- **Have purpose:** People like images that have a purpose and explain the text.
- **Quality matters:** Don't just use any old image. Make sure they're high-quality and appropriately-sized.

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## Need more help?

For help with communications specifically aimed at patients with low literacy levels including easy-read, talk to our team and visit our website: [www.primarycarecommsclinic.co.uk](http://www.primarycarecommsclinic.co.uk).

