



Family Nursing & Home Care

Standard Operating Procedures

**Signposting Patients/Clients to
Health and Care Information**

3 August 2022

Document Profile

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Version Control / Changes Made

Date	Version	Summary of changes made
June 2022	2	<p>Previous Guidelines transferred to SOP template.</p> <p>Content reviewed and revised.</p> <p>Previous NHS England Information Standard now replaced by NHS Digital Standard for Creating Health Content</p> <p>Previous NHS App Library has now been decommissioned</p>

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Introduction

Technologies such as the internet and mobile applications ('apps') offer easy access to health and care information for staff and patients alike. However, the difficulty for users is determining which sites or apps can be trusted to provide information that is clear, accurate, evidence-based, current and easy to use. This can be challenging, given what is readily available, especially through online platforms and applications.

Healthcare professionals have a duty to signpost patients and clients to reliable, high quality information. Standard 3.3 of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) Code states that Registered Nurses must "act in partnership with those receiving care, helping them to access relevant health and social care, information and support when they need it".

Standard 5.1 of the Jersey Care Commission Standards for Home Care (2019) states that "People will be presented with information that is based upon current best practice and evidence to enable them to make informed choices".

These Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) has been developed to help staff source good quality and reliable information which they can share with patients/clients. Staff using information from uncertified sources need to ensure that it meets quality standards and are accountable for their decision to use such information.

Only information accessed through the use of information technology is within the scope of this document. The use of medical apps (used to diagnose, support diagnosis or make calculations to determine diagnosis or treatment) is not within its scope and staff should refer to the Family Nursing & Home Care (FNHC) Mobile Devices Policy regarding use of these.

SOP 1 Information on the Internet/Websites

Purpose

This SOP provides staff with information on quality marks to help ensure that healthcare information sourced from the internet/websites has been quality assured.

Scope

This applies to any member of staff who may signpost patients/clients to health and care information

Core Requirements

Health On the Net (HON)

The HON Foundation was created in 1996 to promote the deployment of useful and reliable health information online and to enable its appropriate and efficient use. The HON Code is the oldest and most valued quality marker for online health information.

To help with decision making, staff can look to see if the information has been accredited by the Health on the Net (HON) Foundation. If it is, it will have the HON Code logo (see below). HON offers another quality mark that staff can use for assurance of the information's quality.



HON has also published a patient information leaflet (appendix 1) which provides advice on judging the reliability of medical information available on the Internet.

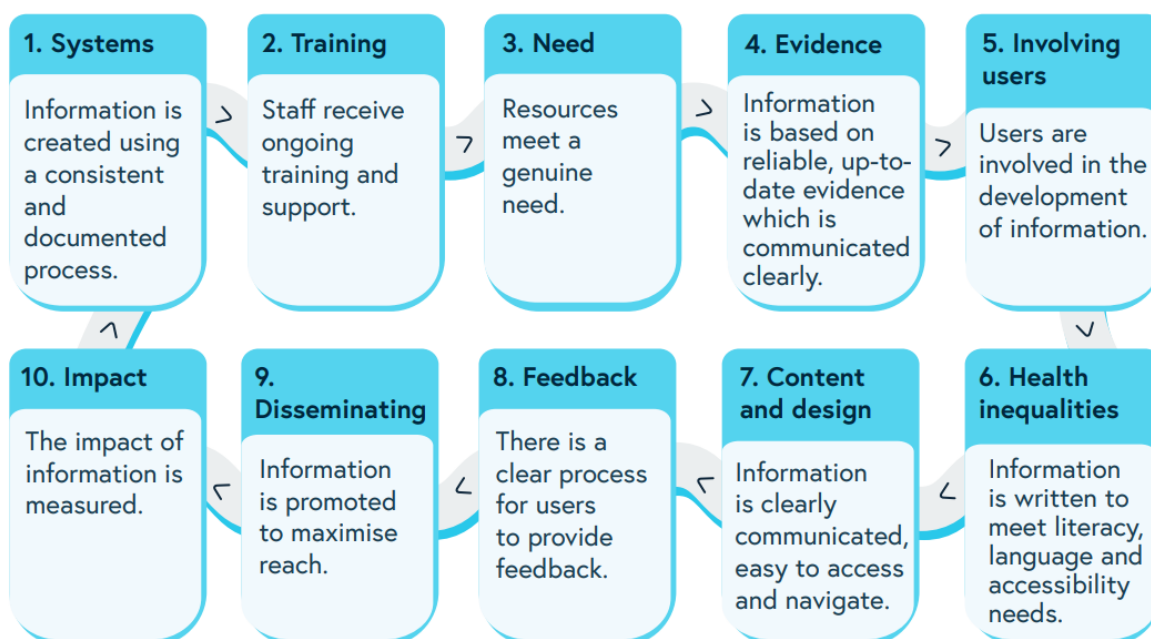
Patient Information Forum (PIF)

PIF represents more than 300 organisations across the NHS, voluntary, academic, freelance and commercial sectors and supports the production of high-quality health information in order to provide an improved healthcare experience for patients and the public.

The PIF TICK (Trusted Information Creator) logo is the UK-wide Quality Mark for trustworthy health information and is open to NHS, charity, voluntary and private sector organisations who create and publish health information.



To be awarded the PIF TICK an organisation must show its health information production process meets ten criteria, which are also reassessed annually:



SOP 2 Information on Mobile Applications

Purpose

This SOP provides staff with information to help them ensure that healthcare information sourced via mobile applications has been quality assured.

Scope

This applies to any member of staff who may signpost patients/clients to health and care information

Core Requirements

The use of mobile applications (apps) has grown considerably in recent years. As well as providing another source of information, they provide new options for healthcare provision.

Broadly speaking, apps used in healthcare fall into two categories; those that are classified as medical devices and those that are not.

For apps that are medical devices staff should follow the FNHC Mobile Devices Policy 2021 and FNHC Medical Devices Policy 2022. Both contain a section about using mobile applications (apps) in clinical practice.

Apps that are not medical devices can be used by staff, however the need for quality assurance measures applies equally to apps as it does when web links are used/recommended.


In addition, apps require further measures for quality assurance. These include:

- ensuring the latest version is used
- monitoring for alerts indicating that the app is no longer being supported
- checking it works effectively in the 'flight-safe' mode, as some apps are adversely affected when WI-FI connectivity is lost

The NICE Evidence Standards Framework for Digital Health Technologies (updated 2021) states that "Any information or advice to users (of Digital Health Technologies) concerning health, healthy living, lifestyle, diseases, illnesses or conditions must be correct and relevant". This should be evidenced through endorsement via accreditation or recommendation by NICE, NHS England, a relevant professional body or recognised UK patient organisation. Also acceptable is evidence that the information content has been validated through an independent accreditation.


Appendix 1 HON Patient Information Leaflet

FINDING A HONCODE-CERTIFIED WEBSITE



- 1 On a site, look for the **HONcode** seal, often on the bottom of the page.
- 2 Add the term **HONcode** to a **Google** search.
- 3 Use **everyone.khresmoi.eu**, a search engine bringing together **certified sites**.

HEALTH AND MEDIC@L INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET



BE VIGILANT!

What is the Health On the Net Foundation?


The Health On the Net Foundation (HON) is a non-governmental organization with the objective of promoting the development and application of new information technologies, notably in the medical and health domains.

The Foundation has consultative status with the World Health Organization (WHO).

ALWAYS HAVE THE INFORMATION VALIDATED BY A DOCTOR.

The Internet is an inexhaustible source of health and medical information. This document provides some tools to guide you in your search for information that is reliable, useful for your health, and allows you to make informed choices.


DO YOU HAVE A COMMENT OR A SUGGESTION?
REACH US AT

www.hon.ch  Health on the Net Foundation

STAMP OF THE DOCTOR

WITH THE SUPPORT OF: UNION FRANÇAISE POUR UNE MÉDECINE LIBRE
www.ufml-asso.org

ASK YOUR DOCTOR FOR ADVICE




Do not buy drugs over the Internet and do not base your medical decisions solely on information found on the Internet.

Before changing your strategy for care, talk to your doctor.


Visiting a website or obtaining information online does not replace a doctor's visit.

THE 8 HONCODE PRINCIPLES:



- 1 **AUTHORITATIVE**
Who authored the content?
- 2 **COMPLEMENTARITY**
What is the site's mission? Who is its audience?
- 3 **PRIVACY**
How is data treated?
- 4 **ATTRIBUTION**
What are the sources of the content? How old is the information?
- 5 **JUSTIFIABILITY**
Is all information presented equally?
- 6 **TRANSPARENCY**
Is the contact information correct and complete?
- 7 **FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE**
How is the site paid for? Have the authors reported any conflicts of interest?
- 8 **ADVERTISING POLICY**
Are ads clearly identifiable?

@ GIVE PRIORITY TO THE WEBSITES OF PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS AND LEARNED SOCIETIES




For example, websites belonging to hospitals, universities and government agencies.

Or those that have obtained **HONcode** certification.

<http://www.healthday.com/>
<http://www.webmd.com/>
<https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/>
<https://labtestsonline.org/>
<http://www.heart.org/>
<http://www.diabetes.org/>

LOOK FOR THE HONCODE SEAL



When the seal is present on a health or medical website, this means that it meets specific standards for ethics and transparency.

References

Health On the Net (2022) *Health and Medical Information on the Internet*. Available at: [HON-depliant-patient_en.pdf](#) Accessed 28th June 2022

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2018, updated 2021) *Evidence Standards Framework for Digital Health Technologies*. Available at: [Section A: evidence for effectiveness standards | Evidence standards framework for digital health technologies | Guidance | NICE](#). Accessed 28th June 2022

Patient Information Forum (2020) *The PIF TICK*. Available at: [The PIF TICK | Patient Information Forum \(pifonline.org.uk\)](#). Accessed 28th June 2022