

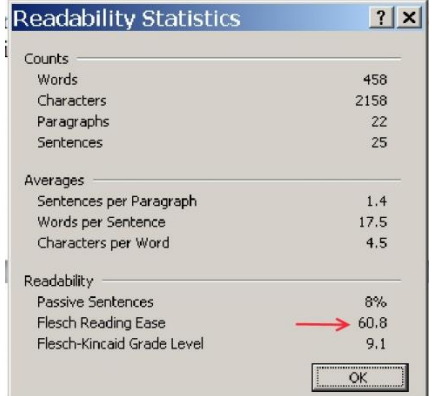
Brief contributor guidelines

Language guidelines: key points at a glance

- Keep it short, clear and concise.
- Avoid medical jargon and clinical terms that the public does not use. Use fewer abbreviations and acronyms.
- Use plain English. If it is essential to use clinical language, always explain it in plain English as well.
- Avoid elaborate heading styles or complex numbering.
- Use New Zealand or UK English spelling (not US or Australian English).
- Do not use capital letters for things that are general descriptions. For example, community, iwi, health sector, nursing. Do not use capital letters for job roles and titles in the flow of text. For example, group manager, clinical director, consultant, physiotherapist.
- Use capital letters for the names of services, departments, specialities, facilities and committees. For example, Planning and Funding, Urology Department.
- Keep bullet-pointed lists to 6 items or fewer – break up longer lists or rewrite.
- Aim for a 1,000-word limit for any topic (page). Also need to keep in mind that 800 words is about the limit for a 2-sided PDF. If it is longer, break it into several smaller topics.

The site is aimed at the general public so we must use language the general public can easily understand. All topics should have a minimum Flesch Reading Ease score of 65 to 70 (the higher the better). This score shows how easy text is to understand. 65 to 70 means someone with a reading age of 12 can understand it. 50 to 55 means you need a university-level reading age to understand it. If text has a score lower than 65, we will rewrite it.

To access the Flesch Reading Ease score within Word, go to File > Options > Proofing. Click “Show readability statistics” on. Your readability statistics will show once you complete a spelling and grammar check.



Readability Statistics	
Counts	
Words	458
Characters	2158
Paragraphs	22
Sentences	25
Averages	
Sentences per Paragraph	1.4
Words per Sentence	17.5
Characters per Word	4.5
Readability	
Passive Sentences	8%
Flesch Reading Ease	60.8
Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level	9.1

You can also use these web-based tools to check readability: hemingwayapp.com or readable.com.

For more detailed advice on writing style, see *Contributor guidelines on writing style* on healthinfo.org.nz.

To better understand HealthInfo style, read some existing HealthInfo pages.

General content guidelines

Sources

Other health professionals want to know where your information has come from. Provide sources as follows:

- Where possible, follow the APA referencing style. There are many overviews of APA referencing. See [University of Canterbury APA Style](http://www.library.uct.ac.za/uct/apa/) for one of them.
- Format for referencing websites. *Organisation name – Document title (with a hyperlink on the document title), retrieved month year*. For example, Podiatry NZ – [Orthotics](http://www.podiatrynz.org.nz/orthotics/), retrieved June 2016. The hyperlink should be to the page you sourced the information from, not the home page.



- Format for unpublished sources. *Author's name, title, document name, purpose* (for example, patient information leaflet) followed by *(unpublished)*. If the author does not give permission for this, HealthInfo may not be able to use it as a source.

Photos, diagrams and illustrations

- If you are providing photos, please provide the original jpeg file.
- We need written or emailed permission from the copyright holder to use photos or illustrations. This is usually the photographer, artist or publisher. Otherwise, we cannot use photos or illustrations from other publications or websites. We can link to the web pages they appear on without permission.
- We may not be able to use your photo or illustration if the quality is too low or if it does not fit the HealthInfo format. But we may be able to create our own illustration based on what you provide.
- HealthInfo does not publish graphic clinical photos – the general public is squeamish!
- If it is your photo and the subject is identifiable, make sure you gain their written or emailed consent to publish it on HealthInfo. Store that consent safely. We will ask you to confirm you have consent.

Referencing other websites

- If we reproduce text or images from other websites on HealthInfo, we need permission.
- We do not need permission to simply link to another website.
- HealthInfo does not normally link to or provide endorsement for commercial websites. But we can if they are the sole provider of a product or service. We also can if they have a Te Whatu Ora contract to provide that product or service.

Local, practical content

HealthInfo is for the people of Canterbury, South Canterbury, Southern and the West Coast. Try to include links to and contact information for local services. Check that the advice is consistent with advice on HealthPathways.

Practical content is good. Make sure people can actually use the information you provide. Do not include too much academic detail. We want to help people self-manage their conditions. But we also include advice about when to seek help and from who.

Accessibility to multiple audiences

Keep an eye out for resources in the following formats:

- Video – Look out for videos that can be embedded in a page or linked at the bottom of the page.
- Multiple languages.
- Easy-read and other formats for people with disabilities. For example, deafness, blindness and learning disabilities).

Best practice versus evidence-based

Where possible the advice given should be evidence-based. Include the evidence, reference or guideline as one of the sources. Where there is no reliable evidence base, use local expert or best-practice guidelines. Again, list sources where possible. If there is controversy or treatments that are not publicly funded, it can be useful to address this. But include a clear explanation and alternative options.

If you have any questions, please email info@Healthinfo.co.nz for advice.

Written by HealthInfo clinical advisers. Last reviewed September 2024.