Tip Jar for PHSA web & POD editors

In this issue

Always "save as PDF" to ensure that people of all abilities can see the information in your document. This month, use our checklist to optimize your PDFs.

PDF versus webpage

PDFs should only contain information that you want people to print. Important information should be on the web page, not a PDF.

PDFs are not intended to be the primary vehicle for online information, as they:
- Are not mobile friendly, meaning if people view your PDF on their phone or tablet, the text is small
- Lack navigation elements like menus
- Don't have coding to help search engines understand your content
- Are not readable by people using assistive technology, search engines and virtual assistants

Ensure that key information is on your web pages, which are mobile-friendly and optimized for online reading.

Plan and create your PDF

If you do need to create a PDF, use the following guidelines.

- Place important information at the top.
- Use headings that are meaningful and clear to organize your information.
- Write in plain language.
- Use your program's brand colours and logo (internal link).
- Give your document a concise file name with keywords separated by hyphens.

Improve your PDF's accessibility

- Add alternative text to images.
- Use descriptive link names.
- Run a PDF accessibility checker.
    - Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat have this option.
    - PAVE is a web-based tool created by the Zurich University of Applied Sciences where you can upload your PDF for assessment.
- Use "save as PDF" to create your document. **Do not** use "print as PDF" as this creates an image. That image is not readable by assistive technology, search engines and virtual assistants.

Maintaining your PDF

- Check that there is only one version of each document in your document library.
- Remove old versions of documents to ensure search engines don't find them. Removing a link on a page does not remove the document from the website. Learn how to find, replace or delete documents in the document library.

Your action this month

Use an accessibility checker on your PDFs, and use our other guidelines to ensure you have optimized your PDFs.

Also, would you like to use plain language on your web page but you're not sure where to start? Email us at webhelp@phsa.ca. We're looking for a web page to improve and feature in a future edition. We'll help you improve the content for patients or clients!

Created by the Web Strategy Team (PHSA Communications)

No longer a POD or web editor? Questions or comments? Please email webhelp@phsa.ca

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