Developing Written Information for Patients Toolkit

AUCKLAND
DISTRICT HEALTH BOARD
Te Toka Tumai

Patient Information Soft Copy Folders

There is one main National Women's Written Information folder:

N:\Groups\Everyone\NW written information for women

This folder has sub-folders including Maternity, Gynaecology, Services and Health Professionals.

Each information resource is documented in a resource tracking spreadsheet.

7 Steps to creating an effective Patient Information Resource

Step 1	**Writing**	1. Identify purpose and key messages 2. Identify your audience(s) 3. Use plain language 4. Mandatory requirements
Step 2	**Design**	1. Branded templates 2. Image use
Step 3	**Consumer feedback**	1. Consult your audience 2. Translations
Step 4	**Distribution**	
Step 5	**Women's Health Department approval**	
Step 6	**Review**	1. Reviews every three years 2. Archiving
ASK	Contact the Women's Health Information Officer on hiws@adhb.govt.nz for further information.	

Step 1

Writing

1. Writing content

Identify the purpose and key messages
- Keep the amount of content down – sometimes 'less is more', people can be overwhelmed by too much information.
- Give reasons for information i.e. by going smokefree, you reduce your risk of a preterm baby
- What do you suggest your reader to do?

Identify your audience
– What is the tone and feel of your resource?
– Aim to reflect the cultural, ethnic and disability diversity of your audiences

Use plain language
– Aim to have your resource readable to a 12 year old. Writing in plain language is **not unprofessional**. It's **not "dumbing down"** the message or "talking down" to the audience.
When you write clearly and get to the point, you get your message across more quickly and increase the chance the information will be understood and used.

Use strengths-based language
- Write with positive language i.e 'maintain a healthy lifestyle' rather than 'you must lose weight'.

Top tips
1. Write from the consumers' point of view.
2. Assume basic or little knowledge of the subject.
3. Present information in small chunks.
4. Using technical terms only when necessary, and explain their meaning
5. Using active verbs and personal pronouns (e.g. I, you, we, they, them, etc.)
6. Using bullets, tables, and other design features that break up the text and add visual interest
7. Using short sentences and paragraphs (Sentences should average 15-20 words)
8. Using acronyms and abbreviations sparingly

Include consumers in the development process as early as possible.

Your resource needs to work for your primary audience. It needs to capture their attention with relevant and meaningful messages in a way that would appeal to them.

1.1 Mandatory Document requirements

When producing an official or public document, please ensure you include the following information, usually on the inside front or back covers:
1. **Author** (directorate)
2. **Current review date**
3. **Contact email** (use a generic email rather than an individual one. If one is not available, use hiws@adhb.govt.nz)

Step 2

Design

2. Design

All ADHB patient information should be created using the approved templates available on the Branded templates page on HIPPO.

If you would like help with this, please contact Emily Clark on hiws@adhb.govt.nz

If you have more high level requests, it may be recommended that you contact the Auckland DHB graphics team. This will incur a cost.

2.1 Images

The use of photos, tables and graphs within your resource can be very effective for illustrating and enhancing text but should only be used if relevant to the content.

Patient photos

You are welcome to use patient pictures but **you must obtain people's informed consent before using their images in any Auckland DHB communication**. You can download a customisable consent form from HIPPO.

Stock photos

If using photograph libraries (e.g. Gratisography, Pixabay, iStock, Veer, Getty Images, Adobe Stock, etc) perform a **'Reverse Image Search'** (right click to select) to check that the image(s) you've chosen is has not been used elsewhere for anything that may be deemed inappropriate or where it would have a negative impact to the Auckland DHB brand. **Make sure copyright has been granted or that the image(s) is royalty free.**

There is a stock of photos under N:\Groups\Everyone\NW written information for women\Pictures.

Step 3

Consumer feedback

3. Consult your audience/consumer feedback

As a rule, a minimum of three consumers must be consulted for feedback on your material.
Try to speak to people of different ethnic backgrounds - ideally these people with represent your top 2-4 ethnicities but should always include Māori and Pacific women.

- Have your resource tested in clinics/appointments, and have it talked through with patients. Ideally the person testing will be independent to the pamphlet author to reduce risk of biases.
- Consult with fellow practitioners

Contact the Maternity Quality and Safety Programme coordinator or the Women's Health Information Officer on hiws@adhb.govt.nz if you would like assistance with this.

Alternatively, the material can be reviewed by the *Patient Information Consumer Review Panel*. For this option, complete a PICRPR Request form and email it together with the document to patient.information@adhb.govt.nz

3.1 Translations

Auckland DHB provides an internal translation service that sits with the **Interpreting and Translation Services** under **Clinical Support Services** offering:

- Access to 75+ dialects and languages
- Document translations

There is a cost involved. For further assistance about the services provided refer to their website ADHB Interpreting Services (ADHB Intranet site).

Step 4

Distribution

4. Distribution and Communication Strategy

Your consultations and investigations will provide opportunities to consider:

- how your resource will reach your target audience
- any distribution requirements (delivery, on-going supply and storage or your resource)
- training necessary for staff, agencies and organisations (as applicable) who will circulate and assist with the on-going distribution of your resource piece.

Once approved, the information resource may be distributed. It is important that the information resource is easily accessible to consumers. Ensuring the publication of your health resource through a range of channels will allow you to reach a greater number of potential users. Written information can be printed, emailed to consumers and/or published on the National Women's web or social media sites (where appropriate).

Step 5

Management approval

5. Women's Health Department Approval

All written information for patients must be sent to the Maternity Consumer Information and Guidelines Committee (MCIGC) with the completed Document Development and Review form found on Hippo. The group meets on the third Tuesday of each month and you will be notified if you need to attend to present your resource/document.

Following approval by the MCIGC, the resource/document will be signed off by the appropriate clinical director and presented at the next Maternity governance meeting.

The MCIGC has representatives from midwifery, quality, communications, consumers, anaesthetics and obstetrics.

Step 6

Review

1. Reviews

The Business Owner may select the next review date for the information resource provided it is reviewed at least once every 3 years. If no date is selected the default date will be 3 years from the publication, sign-off or review date.

An email reminder will be sent to the owner (or delegate) of the information resource.

1.1 Archive

If a publication is no longer in use, the document owner or delegate must notify the Women's Health Information Officer on hiws@adhb.govt.nz. We will update the Patient Information Register and move the document into an obsolete files folder.