Australian Government
Australian Digital Health Agency

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Brand Guidelines

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Australian Digital Health Agency Brand Guidelines

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About the Agency

The Australian Digital Health Agency is tasked with improving health outcomes for all Australians through the delivery of digital health technologies.

The Agency is the System Operator of My Health Record, which provides a secure online summary of a healthcare recipient's key health information.

The Agency is also responsible for implementing Australia's National Digital Health Strategy in collaboration with partners across the community.

To ensure trust, understanding and consistency when communicating about the Agency, we have developed these brand guidelines to inform the style for the Agency's corporate brand, as well as products, services and initiatives that have distinct brands.

Vision
A healthier future for Australians through connected healthcare.

Purpose
Better health for all Australians enabled by connected, safe, secure and easy to use digital health services.

Brand hierarchy

The Agency's corporate branding is the primary visual identity that represents the organisation and its products, services and initiatives. As Agency staff, you will be using visual and textual elements that convey this identity. The corporate branding comprises the Agency logo, trade marks, colours, textures, iconography, the Agency strip, and imagery.

The Agency logo leads the brand hierarchy. Use it consistently and prominently on all materials that communicate the Agency's role, purpose and activities.

Certain products, services and initiatives owned by the Agency have their own distinct identity and purpose. Their logos have design elements, colours and fonts that reflect their specific characteristics and audiences. Examples of these logos include My Health Record, Healthcare Identifiers Provider Service (HIPS), Provider Connect Australia™ (PCA™) and Clinical Learning Australia™ (CLA™).

These products, services and initiatives are part of the Agency's portfolio and fall under its remit. They are not separate organisations or entities, but rather extensions of the Agency's vision and purpose. Therefore, the Agency's logo should always be the lead in any materials that communicate the Agency's role, purpose and activities, with the product logo treated as a product (therefore secondary to the Agency's logo).

Style

As an Australian Government agency, we follow the Australian Government Style Manual. Our communication style uses the principles of plain language so that writing is clear, direct and user-friendly. All communications from the Agency are also accessible, straightforward and respectful, enabling us to connect effectively with the diverse audiences we serve.

In all your writing for the Agency, you will need to consider aspects of structure, word choice, short forms, tone and voice and sentence length. This guidance will help you convey our message in the most effective manner possible.

Structure

Structure is how your text is organised. Readers will more quickly understand the text if:

- the most important information is first
- the text uses a standard grammatical structure of subject–verb–object (also called active voice)
- sentences are short.

You can also use formatting to help readers navigate the structure of a text through headings and lists.

Word choice

Use words that most people will know. You can explain technical terms in text as well as providing a glossary for reference. Pictures and diagrams can also help people understand complex ideas.

Identify the keywords that are often used with your topic and make sure they are explained clearly. For words and phrases that are not the key words in your subject area, use plain language alternatives. For example:

| approximately | ⟶ | about |
| as a consequence of | ⟶ | because |

Short forms

In your writing for the Agency, you will probably use short forms to communicate ideas quickly to your readers. Short forms can be:

- acronyms, where the word made up of initials is said as a word (Qantas)
- initialisms, where the initials are sounded out (USB)
- abbreviations, where the word or phrase is cut short in some way (Agency for Australian Digital Health Agency).

In general, do not introduce new short forms in documents unless there is already wide industry acceptance. For example, HI Service (as a shortened form of Healthcare Identifiers Service) is accepted in the industry, although the full term should still be given on the first mention.

Do not use the initialism 'ADHA' for the Australian Digital Health Agency in external documents or the abbreviation 'Digital Health'. Spell out the name in full the first time, then use the abbreviation 'the Agency'.

Tone and voice

Readers will get a sense of who the Agency is and how we are addressing them through our tone and voice. The modern government tone is direct, calm and understated. We aim to be polite, sensitive and respectful and to understand who we are writing for and what our readers need to know and do. You can:

- use active voice (subject–verb–object)
- use first and second person (we, us) instead of third person (he, she, it and they)
- decide whether contractions should be used (depends on the material)
- consider how formal the text needs to be.

Like this (active voice):
The committee (subject) campaigned (verb) to lower diabetes (object).
Not this (passive voice):
The lowering of diabetes was campaigned for by the committee.

Like this (first and second person):
Tell us if you have trouble with your account.
Not this (third person):
If the subscriber is having difficulty accessing their account, the finance team can provide further guidance.

Sentence length

Keep sentences to around 15 words, and don't make them longer than 25 words. Each sentence aims to convey one main idea. A sentence that is too long may show that the aspects we looked at above (structure, word choice and tone and voice) need to be improved. Longer sentences often have a non-standard grammatical structure, use more complex words and have more formal tone and voice. They are more difficult for readers to scan and understand.

Accessibility

Our digital content must be accessible to all users no matter how they are accessing it, whether they use a mouse, keyboard, touch screen, voice command, screen reader or other assistive technology. Across our documents and websites, the technology we use now supports content being accessible. As content authors, we can focus on aspects of styles, tables, images and colour contrast.

Styles

In MS Word, InDesign and website software such as Confluence, content can be styled to indicate its structure and function. You apply styles to headings, paragraphs, lists, captions and other elements to make it easier for users to navigate the text by:

- using the built-in styles in your software
- following heading hierarchy (don't go from Heading 1 to Heading 3, for example)
- using lists to group related options; numbered lists are for when the order is important
- keeping text formatting to a minimum by only using bold for emphasis.

Tables

Tables can present data or information in a structured way, but if they are designed poorly they become confusing to understand. You can make tables accessible by:

- only using tables for information that has a tabular relationship between the columns and rows; ask yourself if it is actually a set of bullet lists
- keeping them simple; break a complex table into 2 or more tables if necessary
- using table summaries as alternative text (alt text) in table properties to provide an overview or context for the table
- making sure that related styles and elements are used: header row repeat, table header style and table text, captions

Images

Images add visual interest to digital content, helping to break up text and convey some messages more quickly than can be done in text. But images are not read out by assistive technologies unless additional content is provided, and the ability to 'see' images can also be affected by disability and internet bandwidth. Make sure all users have access to the information conveyed by the image by:

- providing alt text for all images, describing its content and function; use the alt attribute in HTML or the alt text feature in your word processor or web editor
- making the text meaningful but concise, describing what is in the image, including any text
- ensuring images are scaled to the size and quality needed so they load quickly and display clearly on different devices.

Colour contrast

The difference in brightness and hue between the text or image and the background behind it is called the colour contrast. When text does not have enough contrast, it is very difficult for some users to perceive and distinguish it. Ensure sufficient contrast between information and its background by:

- using accessibility tools in your software or online to check contrast
- using colour as an enhancement rather than to convey meaning; for example, don't say 'the blue cells show the highest values'.

Contact us
if you have any questions about the Agency's brand

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