



Manchester People First

Information for everyone

How we can make your documents easier to understand

The image illustrates the concept of making documents easier to understand. It features three main elements:

- Complex Document (Red X):** A yellow form titled "SECTION 1: IDENTIFYING INFORMATION" and "SECTION 2: OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION". It contains fields for "Given name(s)", "Registration number", "Last name", "Work address", "Work e-mail", and "Work phone". A large red 'X' is overlaid on this form, indicating it is difficult to understand.
- Easy Read Document (Green Checkmark):** A grey form titled "Please fill in this easy read form". It has large, simple text and icons. Fields include "Your name" (with a person icon), "Address" (with a house icon), and "Phone" (with a mobile phone icon). A large green checkmark is overlaid on this form, indicating it is easy to understand.
- People:** Three people are shown interacting with documents. On the left, two women are looking at a red folder. In the center, a woman is holding a colorful document. On the right, a man is holding an NHS "Your Vaccine Appointment" card, which includes a vaccine bottle icon and the text "It is your turn to have the vaccine for Covid-19".



just info

Accessible information by Manchester People First

Who we are and what we do

Manchester People First is a self-advocacy group.

We were started, and are run by, a group of adults with a learning disability who wanted to have more control of our lives.

Having a learning disability can make it harder to understand and remember complex or new information.

To make real choices it is important to have information in a way we can understand. So in 2004, we set up a project called Just Info to make written documents more accessible.

We do this for ourselves and for other people.

This booklet tells you how we can help you make your information more accessible too.



The sorts of documents we make

- Letters
- Leaflets
- Questionnaires
- Reports
- Newsletters
- Posters
- Signs
- PowerPoint Presentations
- Promotional items – stickers, postcards etc.
- Other things – ask us!



Please tick the box

I am filling in this form myself

I am filling in this form for someone else

1 Please tick all the tests you have had

Blood test

X-ray

Scan such as MRI, CT etc.

Other tests – Please tell us what sort

2



Who we have done work for

We have worked for many national, regional and local statutory and voluntary organisations such as:



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL



Greater Manchester
POLICE

Greater
Manchester
Health and
Social Care
Partnership



**Manchester Local
Care Organisation**

Leading local care, improving lives in Manchester, with you



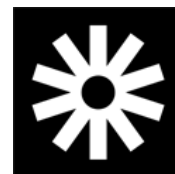
GMCA GREATER
MANCHESTER
COMBINED
AUTHORITY



Manchester Health & Care
Commissioning



ambition
for
ageing



Greater
Manchester
Coalition
of Disabled
People



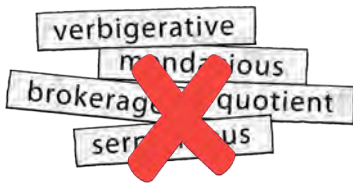
Learning Disabilities Mortality Review
(LeDeR) Programme

and many more.

Our services

We can produce for print or web use.
We can arrange printing if needed.

We usually call our documents 'more accessible'. This means:



- Short documents that are to the point
- Clear, plain, everyday words
- Short, easy to follow sentences
- No jargon – clear explanations
- Pages so they are easier to see

'Easy Read' uses pictures and simple text together, so people who have issues with reading can understand written information.

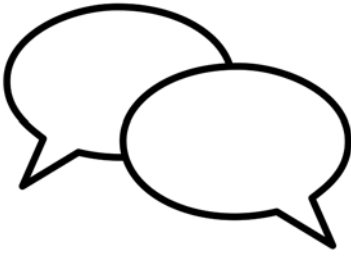


We can advise you how accessible your documents are and give you tips on how to make them easier to understand.

We can also put on training so you can produce your own accessible information.

We can follow your branding and follow accessibility guidelines from the Plain English Campaign, RNIB and MENCAP.

What people say about our work



We try to be helpful, friendly, quick and give good value for money. This is what some of the people we have worked with have said about us.



Manchester People First are great to work with. Their work is of high quality and on time. Not only is communication excellent, it works out good value for money as it's harder than you might think to make easy read materials!



– Orla, GM Coalition of Disabled People



They are a great partner for any project. Responsive, quick, and so easy to work with. They always meet deadlines and are our go to source for adapting documents to meet our customer's needs. They are also happy to give suggestions, support and guidance. Working with them has improved our team's understanding of producing high quality written documents.



– Charlotte, NTAF



Manchester People First's work is always superb, they take complex information and make it into meaningful well illustrated versions. We often recommend that if people want to quickly grasp one of our documents MPF's accessible version is ideal as it is concise and communicates all the important facts.



– Rick, GM Disabled People's Panel

Why you should make information accessible



Equality Act 2010

It is the law. The Equality Act 2010 says service providers must make 'Reasonable Adjustments' so a disabled person is not put at a big disadvantage to a person who is not disabled. It says having information in accessible formats is a Reasonable Adjustment.



Care Act 2014

The Care Act 2014 says Local Authorities must make information and advice about a service accessible to people who get that service.



The Accessible Information Standard was introduced in 2016. Any organisation which offers NHS or adult social care, must keep a record of people's communication needs and give them information in a way that meets those needs.



It is the right thing to do

Most organisations know it is wrong to put physical barriers in the way of people. But people should not face barriers getting and using information either.

You should make your information accessible not because you are made to, but because it is the right thing to do.



Making your information accessible:

- Tells people you value everybody
- Helps everyone be part of what you do
- Helps your organisation benefit from the skills and experience disabled people have.



Who needs accessible information?

Make your information more accessible to all groups, including:

- People with lower levels of literacy
- People with conditions such as dyslexia
- People with a visual impairment
- People with English as a second language
- People who are translating information into another language, or explaining information to someone else.
- People who have better things to do with their time than wade through long, boring documents.





All for one, one for all

Our documents look good. They can follow your brand guidelines and not look like a 'child's version' of another document.



Instead of making special simplified versions of documents for particular groups, it is better to make one version of a document that is useable by most people.



For example, The Royal National Institute for the Blind's 'See it Right' guidelines say text should be between 14-point and 16-point size. This is also the size Mencap recommend for text in their 'Making Myself Clear' advice for documents for people with a learning disability.



Making all your documents accessible is better because:

- It is closer to the social model of disability that is about removing barriers, than the medical model of disability that sees people's needs as a problem.
- Having a simple written document makes it easier to do versions in other languages and other formats such as audio versions.





- Producing one version that is suitable for as many people as possible is cheaper.
- We can edit, re-write and design documents from scratch, which saves you these costs.
- If you cannot make all your documents more accessible, we can advise you which ones need to be.
- We can do 'straight' design work as well as producing more accessible documents.

Why write?

The printed, written word is often the most reliable and useable way to get information from one person to another.



Even if a person has difficulty reading themselves, they may have someone they can show the information to, who can help them understand it.

People who need accessible information may not use email, or may find texts difficult to understand.

Giving more detailed information verbally face-to-face, or in a phone call can be unreliable, especially if people have to pass the information on.



How we work



Contact us – email is best:
mcrpeoplefirst@gmail.com
Tell us what you want us to do.
Let us know any timescales you have.

Please plan ahead and allow a realistic amount of time. Producing an easy read version involves editing, rewriting and designing a document.



We work quickly but if it has taken you two months, please do not expect us to do it in two days. You need to give yourself time to review what we have done and tell us any changes you want.

Send us the document you want making more accessible.



We can give you general advice about your document for free. We will give you a free, no obligation quote.

Co-production

For an extra charge, a group of our members who are experts by experience, can look at your documents and work with you to make them more accessible.

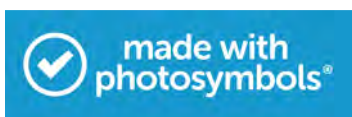




Pictures

If you have graphics such as logos or photos, send them ideally as separate image files JPEGs etc. not Word documents.

Make sure you have the right permissions to use images. Do not steal them off the internet.



We subscribe to Photosymbols, a specialist disability centred image library. We do not charge for these.



We can get other images from Adobe Stock or other picture libraries, at an extra cost.



Document formats

We can accept work in most formats. We usually give you your finished document as an unlocked pdf file, unless agreed otherwise before we start work.



For no extra cost we can give you pdf files that are suitable for web use or printing on desktop printers and pdfs that are ready for use by commercial printers.

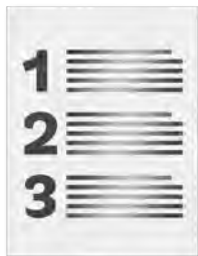
Practical tips on how you can make your documents easier to read

You can make our life easier and your bill cheaper by doing some of the work yourself when writing your documents.



- Do not go into too much detail if it is not needed
- Stick to the point. Only give background information if you have to
- Give information in small 'bite-size pieces'
- Simplify information – Do you have to say "57%" or is saying "more than half" or "most" enough?

Sentences and punctuation



- Keep sentences short – about 15 words
- One idea = One sentence
- Break down complex sentences and paragraphs into bullet points
- Use simple punctuation such as commas and full stops, not colons and semi-colons, try not to use brackets
- Do not let sentences run over to the next page

The words you use



- Think about what you call documents and groups in the first place. Call a 'strategy' a 'plan', so you do not have to tell people the disability strategy is a plan about disability.
- Try not to use jargon, technical words or foreign expressions such as 'etc.'
- Explain precise terms such as legal or medical phrases if you have to use them.
- Speak directly: 'You' and 'We' not 'Greater Manchester Police' and 'members of the public'.
- Be consistent, use the same word. Say 'delegate' not 'delegated', then 'attendee', then 'participant'.
- Give numbers as figures not words, '3' instead of 'three'.
- Do not use contractions. Write 'do not' instead of 'don't'.
- Use simple, everyday words – 'help' not 'assistance', 'take part' not 'participate'.

123

,

Alternative words



The Plain English Campaign has free guides such as 'The A to Z of alternative words' which gives examples of easier ways of saying things:

additional = **extra**

advise = **tell**

commence = **start**

complete = **fill in**

comply with = **keep to**

consequently = **so**

ensure = **make sure**

forward = **send**

in the event of = **if**

on request = **if you ask**

particulars = **details**

per annum = **a year**

purchase = **buy**

regarding = **about**

www.plainenglish.co.uk/free-guides

Acronyms



Explain acronyms as you go, do not hide them in a glossary at the back. Explaining is not just saying that "CCG stands for Clinical Commissioning Group", but what a CCG is and what it does.



Our address:

Manchester People First
3 Broughton Street
Cheetham Hill
M8 8RF

Phone or fax: 0161 839 3700

Email: mcrpeoplefirst@gmail.com

www.manpf.org

made with
photosymbols[®]

