

Look at the last updated information (usually at the bottom of the web page). This will tell you when the information was added. Look for references or links to the evidence.

Check if the links to other information sites work. Too many broken links may indicate the site is no longer being maintained.

Where: What part of the world is the website coming from? Statistics and treatment information may not be relevant to the United Kingdom.

Look at the web address information as this will often indicate the country of origin and type of organisation. The URL (uniform resource locator) will give clues. See below for examples:

.au = Australia

.ca = Canada

.de = Germany

.com or .org = an organisation

.ac = an educational site

.gov = a government site

Contacting us

Hampshire Healthcare Library Service

See our website:

www.hantshealthcarelibrary.nhs.uk/

Tel: 01962 824420

E-mail: hantshealthcarelibrary@nhs.net

Further information

Here are some sites you might like to explore on the subject of sourcing reliable information:

Staying safe online:

<https://www.learnmyway.com/subjects/online-safety/>

MedlinePlus guide to healthy web surfing:

<https://medlineplus.gov/healthywebsurfing.html>

Based on the original created by Carol-Ann Regan @ Musgrove Park Hospital NHS Trust

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Finding quality health resources online

Advice for patients, relatives, carers and Trust staff

The internet is a wonderful resource but not everything found on it is trustworthy, accurate, reliable or up to date. Anyone can put information on it but there is no editor, checking for inaccuracies or out of date information. It is up to the user to decide how relevant the information is and to determine the reliability of what they find.

So how can you decide what to trust?

Quality Standards

Health on the Net—Code of Conduct

HON is a non-governmental organisation, internationally known for its work in the field of health information ethics and was founded to encourage the dissemination of quality health information.

Please note that the “Health on the Net” logo may appear on sites that are not certified. To check certification, click on the HON logo.

You should be directed to a page that includes the HON code number for the site.

Website:

<https://www.hon.ch/en/>



Patient Information Forum—PIF TICK UK-wide Quality Mark for Health Information.

When you see the PIF TICK on leaflets, websites, apps or videos it shows an organisation's health information has been gone through a professional and robust production process. To be awarded the PIF TICK an organisation must show its health information



production process meets 10 criteria.

Website: <https://pifonline.org.uk/pif-tick/>

Finding trustworthy web information

The following general health websites have evidence-based expert information:



NHS Website (formerly NHS Choices)

Trustworthy information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare.

Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/>

Patient.co.uk

Patient.co.uk is the UK's leading independent health site, established for over 15 years. With more than 8 million visits a month, it is a trusted source of information for both patients and health professionals nationwide. The site contains over 4000 health information leaflets, a wellbeing centre, a free health check, and thousands of discussion forums. It is accredited by HoN.

Website: <https://patient.info/>

NICE Evidence

Selected, authoritative evidence in health, social care and public health.

Website: <https://www.evidence.nhs.uk/>

Behind the Headlines

A guide to the science behind the latest health news stories.

Website: <https://www.nhs.uk/news/>

What about health websites that do not have a quality standard?

When you are looking at a website, remember **WWW**:

WHO: Who is the author or publisher of the site and what are their credentials?

Are they fair in what they say? What are their reasons for publishing, for example, are they trying to give you information or sell you something? Do other websites link to them?

Look at the “About Us” section on the site. This should give you some of this information.

WHAT: What is on the site? Does the information seem accurate? Is it relevant and up to date? Do they link the information to evidence? Do they tell you where the information has come from?