

Accessibility statement for Public Health Agency (PHA) Northern Ireland

This page explains how accessible the Public Health Agency Northern Ireland (PHA NI) website is and what is being done to improve accessibility.

We are committed to ensuring the information on our websites is accessible to everyone, including those with disabilities. We aim for a high level of usability for everyone across all of our websites, following best practice accessibility guidelines where possible.

This statement outlines our ongoing efforts to maintain a website that conforms to the [international WCAG 2.1 AA accessibility standards](#), developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), and complies with relevant legislation in the European Union.

Below is information about our websites, including ways to help increase accessibility for all our users.

Using our website

Our website is designed to meet accessibility standards as defined by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

This website is run by the Public Health Agency Northern Ireland (PHA NI). It is designed to be used by as many people as possible. The text should be clear and simple to understand. You should be able to:

- change colours, contrast levels, and fonts
- zoom in up to 300% without problems
- navigate most of the website using just a keyboard
- navigate most of the website using speech recognition software
- use most of the website using a screen reader (including the most recent versions of JAWS, NVDA and VoiceOver)

Links

We aim to ensure all text links are written, so they make sense when read out of context.

This statement applies to content published on the <https://www.publichealth.hscni.net> domain.

How accessible this website is

Parts of this website are not fully accessible, for example:

- some document attachments are not clearly written
- some heading elements are not consistent
- some error messages are not clearly associated with form controls
- some of the features within the site are not fully accessible by keyboard
- some documents are in PDF format and are not accessible
- some images may include text on the image

We've also made the website text as simple as possible to understand.

[AbilityNet](#) has advice on making your device easier to use if you have a disability.

Feedback and contact information

PHA is always looking to improve the accessibility of this website. If you find any problems not listed on this page or think the site is not meeting accessibility requirements, contact us by:

Email: pha.web@hscni.net

If you need content on the PHA website in a different format use our [contact us](#) form or emails us at pha.web@hscni.net and advise:

- the web address (URL) of the content
- your name and email address
- the format you require, for example audio CD, braille, BSL or large print or accessible PDF

We will consider your request and get back to you as soon as we can. We are committed to addressing any concerns and ensuring a positive user experience for all visitors.

Changing the font size on our website

You can change the text size in most browsers by holding the Ctrl (Cmd on Mac) key on your keyboard and using the plus and minus keys.

Navigating using keys

You can navigate around this website using the tab key on your keyboard.


Using ReachDeck

We want this website to be easily navigated and understood by everyone, whatever their device or browser. We understand that some people may need help to get the most out of the site. ReachDeck lets you customise our website to make it easier to use. It offers a host of features, including reading and translation support, to allow you to access and understand our website.

ReachDeck adds speech, reading and translation support tools to online content [ReachDeck Accessibility Toolbar](#). It works on all major browsers and platforms, including mobile phones and tablets. Simply click on the ReachDeck icon located at the top right on all web pages and you will see it dock to the top of your screen. Then click on the first 'pointed finger' icon on the toolbar and hover your mouse pointer over any text on our website to hear it read out loud.

- **Text-to-speech:** click on or select any text to hear it read aloud
- **Translation:** translate content into over 100 languages
- **Text magnification:** enlarge text and hear it read out loud
- **MP3 generation:** convert selected text into an MP3 audio file
- **Screen mask:** reduce glare with a tinted mask
- **Web page simplifier:** remove clutter from the screen. Display only the main text
- **Picture dictionary:** displays pictures related to text selected on the page
- **Settings:** customise options to suit individual needs or preferences

View the [ReachDeck Toolbar Video](#).

 Click on the ReachDeck launchpad logo that appears on the bottom of your screen.

This will launch the ReachDeck toolbar. Then simply click on any text to hear it read out loud or choose your language to translate our website.

All the features are accessed from this easy-to-use, floating toolbar - allowing you to drag and drop it anywhere on screen.

[How to translate information on the PHA website using ReachDeck and translations](#)

Enforcement procedure

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) is responsible for enforcing the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 (the 'accessibility regulations') in Northern Ireland. If you're not happy with how PHA respond to your complaint, contact the [Equality Commission for Northern Ireland \(ECNI\)](#)(external link opens in a new window / tab).

Technical information about this website's accessibility

We are committed to making this website accessible, in accordance with the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#).

Compliance status

This website is partially compliant with the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1](#)(external link opens in a new window / tab) AA standard, due to the non-compliances listed below.

Non-accessible content

The content listed below is non-accessible for the following reasons.

Non-compliance with the accessibility regulations

The content that is not accessible is outlined below with details of:

- the accessibility problem(s)
- where it fails the success criteria, and
- when PHA NI plan to fix it.

Developer issues

A number of accessibility issues are related to the underlying Drupal content management system (CMS) and will require developer and web design input.

These include but not limited to the following:

- colour contrast interface elements (WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 1.4.11)
- some elements have insufficient colour contrast (WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 1.4.3)
- accessible names in some instances don't match visible labels (WCAG 2.1, Level A, 2.5.3)
- elements use colour to convey meaning which is not accessible to assistive technologies or users with low vision (WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.4.1)
- there are some instances where focus state was not visible throughout the site (WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 2.4.7)
- dynamic content inaccessible to keyboard users (WCAG 2.1, Level A, 2.1.1)
- inconsistent structure and layout of website (WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 3.2.3)

Our underlying content management system is planned for upgrade in December 2024. It is our intention to address these issues during that upgrade which is expected to be completed by January 2025.

Page structure

There are a number of pages which:

- do not use a consistent or appropriate use of headings. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.3.1 (info and relationships). We plan to repair these pages within the next 6 months, by June 2025.
- have a missing language attribute. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 3.1.1 (language of page). We plan to repair these pages within the next 6 months, by June 2025.
- may not be adequately structured. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.3.1 (info and relationships). We plan to repair these pages within the next 6 months, by June 2025.
- have interactive content that is not marked up correctly. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 1.4.13. We plan to repair these pages within the next 6 months, by June 2025.
- do not warn the user they are about to open in a new window, download a pdf, or an excel spreadsheet. Some links to internal pages do always open in the same window and some pages include broken or empty links. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 2.4.4 (link purpose (in context)) and WCAG 2.1, Level A, 3.2.2 (on input). We plan to repair these pages within the next 6 months, by June 2025.
- have warnings and errors within the source code. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 4.1.1 (parsing). We plan to repair these pages within the next 6 months, by June 2025.

Documents

Some documents are non-accessible for a number of reasons which may result in a loss of meaning for users of screen readers or present issues for users with moderately low vision. For example, some documents:

- do not have a language attribute set. This is a failure of WCAG 2.1, Level A, 3.1.1 (language of page)
- have incorrectly tagged headings and document titles. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 2.4.2 (page titled) and WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.3.1 (info and relationships)
- have areas of insufficient colour contrast or have used colour to convey meaning but do not also have a text alternative. This is a failure of WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 1.4.3 (contrast (minimum)), WCAG 2.1, Level AA 1.4.11 (non-text contrast) and WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.4.1 (use of colour)
- do not have a correct reading order. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.3.1 (info and relationships) and WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.3.2 (meaningful sequence)

- do not have alternative text for images. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.1.1 (non-text content)
- use images for text. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 1.4.5 (images of text)
- have tables, charts and figures which are not marked up correctly. This fails WCAG 2.1 Level A, 1.3.1 (info and relationships) and WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.1.1 (non-text content)
- have links not marked up correctly. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.3.1 (info and relationships) and WCAG 2.1, Level A , 2.4.4 (link purpose in context) and WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.4.1 (use of colour)
- have missing bookmarks. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 2.4.5 (multiple ways)
- are not responsive when page zoom is enabled and set to 400 per cent - this is a failure of WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 1.4.10
- have merged cells within some spreadsheets. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.3.1 (info and relationships)

It is planned to repair some documents within the next 6 months, by June 2025, however some historical documents fall under the disproportionate burden section – see below.

Any new PDFs or other documents we publish will meet the required accessibility standards.

If you require one of our non-accessible documents please see the How to Request an Accessible Document section above.

Images and video

- some images do not have a text alternative (alt text), and some decorative images are not marked up correctly. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.1.1 (non-text content). We plan to repair this within the next 6 months, by June 2025.
- a small number of complex images and charts do not convey meaningful information and cannot be described in a text alternative. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.1.1 (non-text content) and WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.3.1 (info and relationships). We plan to repair this within the next 6 months, by June 2025.
- the colour used in some graphs and charts do not have sufficient colour contrast against the background. This fails WCAG 2.1 Level A, 1.4.1 (use of colour) and WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 1.4.3 (contrast (minimum)). We plan to repair this within the next 6 months, by by June 2025.

- some images include text which do not have sufficient contrast against the background. This fails WCAG 2.1 Level A, 1.4.1 (use of colour) and WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 1.4.3 (contrast (minimum)). We plan to repair this within the next 6 months, by June 2025.
- a small number of pages have embedded video content without text alternatives, closed captions or audio descriptions. This may prevent users from adapting the material through any sensory modality (for example, visual, auditory or tactile) to match their needs. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.2.1 (audio-only and video-only (pre-recorded)), WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.2.2 (captions (pre-recorded)), WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.2.3 (audio description or media alternative (pre-recorded)) and WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.2.5 (audio description (pre-recorded)). We plan to repair this within the next 6 months, by June 2025.
- some gifs have no control for the user to pause, stop or hide the gifs. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 2.2.2 (pause, stop, hide). We plan to repair these pages within the next 6 months, by June 2025.

Tables

- a small number of pages have tables which do not have row or column headers, restrict orientation, are not responsive and are non-accessible. This fails WCAG 2.1, Level A, 1.3.1 (info and relationships), WCAG 2.1, Level AA, 1.3.4 (Orientation). We plan to repair these pages within the next 6, by December 2024.

Disproportionate burden

Having carried out a detailed check of publichealth.hscni.net, we've assessed that it would be a disproportionate burden within the meaning of the No. 2 Regulations to fix all older PDFs published since 23 September 2018.

The website contains over 700 pdf documents which fall into this category. The majority of these are statistical reports which contain tables and charts that are very time consuming to make fully accessible. Most of these reports have been and will again be superseded by newer versions over the next 12 months. As such many haven't been viewed over the last year, therefore are not negatively impacting users with disabilities or impairments. For this reason we don't believe the cost of time, effort and resource to fix all the historical documents published since September 2018 is justified and would be a disproportionate burden.

It is our intention to work towards ensuring the newer version of the reports are fully accessible.

Content that is not within the scope of the accessibility regulations

As a website published before 23 September 2018, we are required to comply with the web accessibility regulations from 23 September 2020.

However, some of our content is exempt from the accessibility regulations:

- pre-recorded audio and video published before 23 September 2020
- heritage collections
- PDFs or other documents published before 23 September 2018 - unless required for the use of a service, for example a form
- maps
- third party content that is not within our control, for example, embedded video players like Vimeo or YouTube, and embedded Google Maps.

PDFs and other documents

Many documents are non-accessible in a number of ways including missing text alternatives and missing document structure.

The accessibility regulations do not require us to fix PDFs or other documents published before 23 September 2018 if they're not essential to providing our services.

Any new PDFs or other documents nirect publishes will meet the required accessibility standards.

Preparation of this accessibility statement

This statement was prepared on 22 November 2020. It was last reviewed on 20 November 2024.

This website was and is currently being tested for compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 level A and level AA, and Microsoft accessibility guidelines. These tests have been carried out externally and independently.

PHA used the Website Accessibility Conformance Evaluation Methodology (WCAG-EM) approach to deciding on a sample of pages to test, as well as selecting specialised pages on our website, including interactive content.

What we're doing to improve accessibility

Maintaining an accessible site is an ongoing process and PHA is continually working to offer an accessible and user-friendly experience.

We are:

- continuing to train and provide support to our staff to create accessible documents
- checking new documents uploaded are in line with accessibility regulations
- running our own accessibility checks bi-annually and targeting any issues found.

We plan to identify and fix issues according to the timescales shown for each area above. We aim to resolve any outstanding accessibility issues by June 2025.

[Print](#)