Looking at GP websites

easy read

Contents
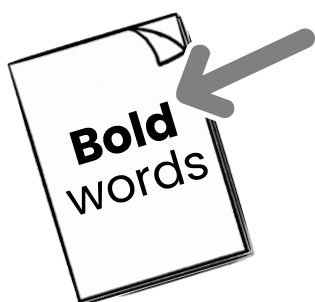
In this Easy Read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.
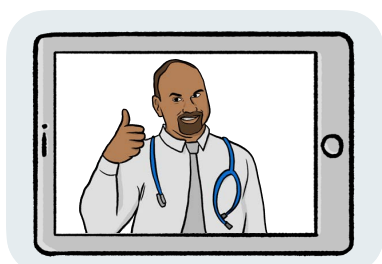
Some words are pink and underlined. These are links which will go to another website which has more information.
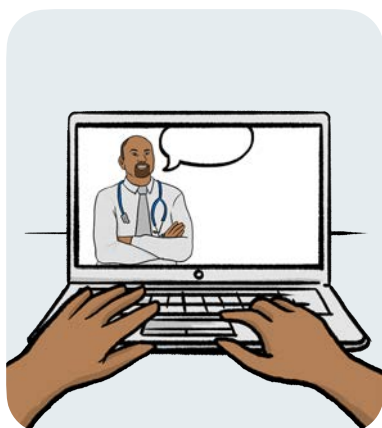
Introduction

We are Healthwatch Cornwall. We work to make sure health and care services in Cornwall are the best they can be for the people who use them.

We have been looking at **GP** websites.

A **GP** is a local doctor.

During COVID-19, GPs had to change the way they worked.

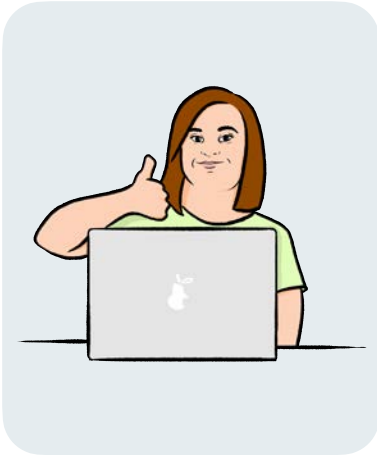This included doing more work on their websites.

Their websites were an important way of giving people information.

We looked at GP websites to find out if they were as good as they could be.

We wanted to:

- Check how easy it is to find important information that is:

  - Up to date.

  - Clear and easy to understand.

- Find out what is working well and what could work better.

- Help GPs to carry on giving people the best information and support.
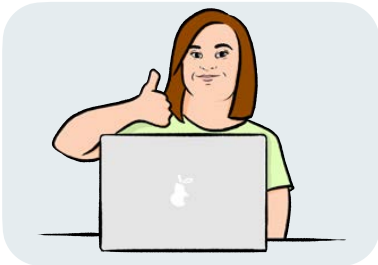
This information explains:

- What we found out.

- What we think should change.

What we found out

Finding information

It was easy to find basic information on the GP's websites.

We found it easy to find our way around most websites.

Some websites did not write information in a clear way that could be understood by everyone.
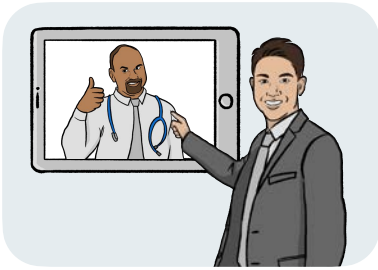
It was easier to use websites which had less writing and more pictures and videos.

Accessibility

Accessibility means whether something is easy to use and suitable for people with different needs.

Some websites had better accessibility than others.

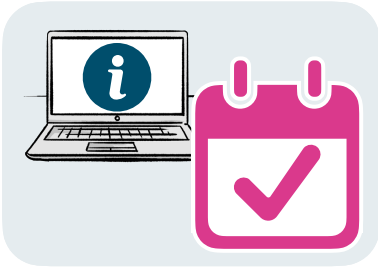We found out that we could zoom in to make writing larger on most websites.

But only some websites:

- Had Easy Read information.

- Could be used by text readers. These are computer programs that read out text for people who can't see it.

- Had information about accessibility.

Up to date information

Most websites had some information that was up to date.

Some websites didn't write the date that information had been written.

This meant that people using the website didn't know if the information was up to date.
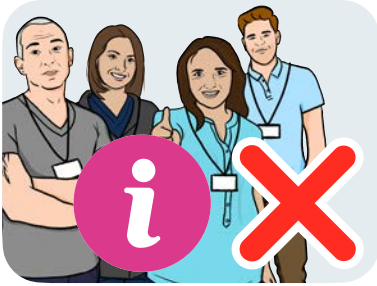
Patient Participation Groups (PPGs)

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs) are groups that involve patients and carers in helping GPs to improve.
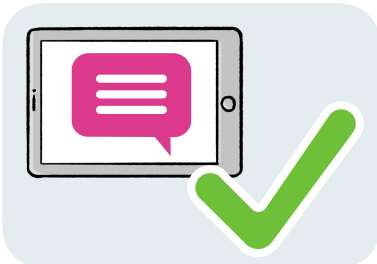
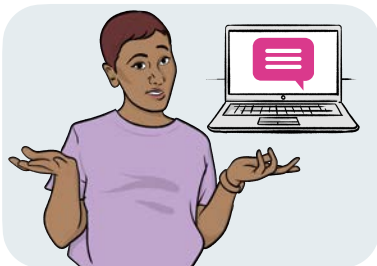Almost all websites had some information about PPGs.

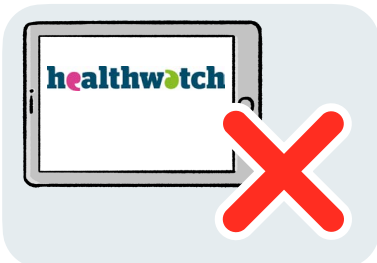Some websites did not have information about what PPGs had done recently.

Listening to people

Most websites had ways for people to let GPs know what they think.

But on some websites we had to look hard to find where people could write what they think.

Very few websites had ways to contact independent organisations like Healthwatch.

COVID-19 information

Nearly all websites had clear information about COVID-19 and what people should do.

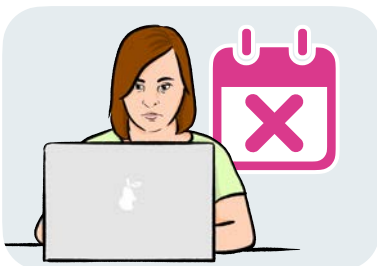Most websites had information for people with long term health conditions.

But some websites had COVID-19 information that was out of date.

Links to other websites

Some websites had lots of links to other organisations, like local groups and information for people of different ages.
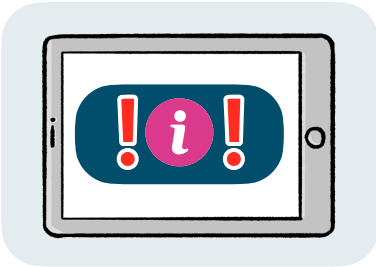
Some of the links were hard to find or out of date.

Most links to other websites worked.
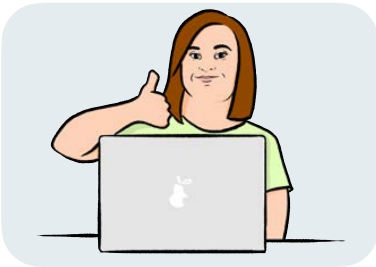
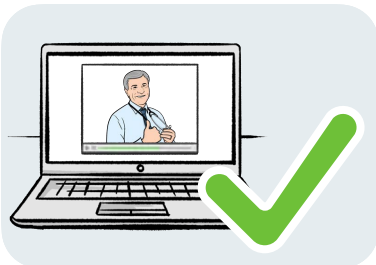# What we think should happen

Finding information

Information should be written clearly in a way that is easy for everybody to understand.

Important information should pop up on the screen when you first go to a website.

Information about opening times and going to the doctor should be easy to find.
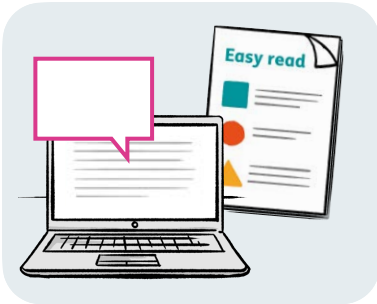
Websites should have up to date photos and videos of staff.

Accessibility

All GP websites should follow the rules, and even do more, to make their websites easy to use for everyone.
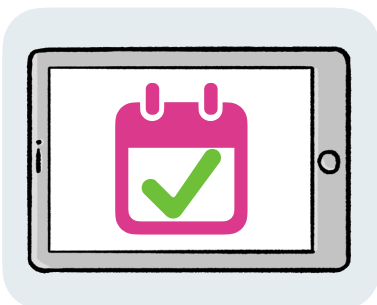
All GP websites should have the same level of accessibility, and use things like text readers and Easy Read.

Up to date information

Information on websites should be checked so that it does not go out of date.

The date the information was last checked on should be included on every page.

Patient Participation Groups (PPGs)

We would like all GP websites to give information about what PPGs are doing.

Links to other websites

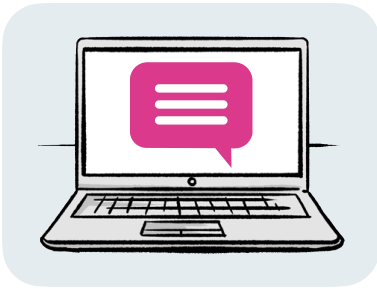Links to information on other websites should be easy to find and understand.

Links should be checked to make sure they work.

There should be a link to mental health support for people who need it right away.

Listening to people

GP websites should have clear information on how patients can tell GPs what they think.

We think GPs should have different ways for people to make a complaint, like getting in touch with:

- Healthwatch Cornwall.

- NHS England.

- The Government.

COVID-19 information

Information about COVID-19 should be easy to find at all times on the website.

Websites should include the date for each new piece of information, because information about COVID-19 changes so much.

Information about how the GP is working differently because of COVID-19 should be included.

What we will do next
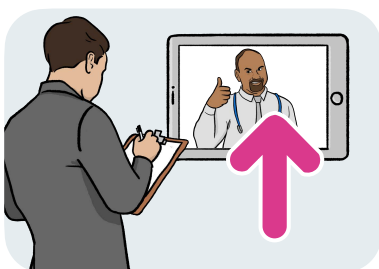
Next, we will:

- Share our report with:

  - The NHS in Cornwall.

  - GPs.

  - Healthwatch England.

- Let more people know about how important it is to have clear information on GP websites.

- Ask local people to tell us what they think of their GP's website.

- Check if GP websites are getting better.

For more information

You can look at our website here:
www.healthwatchcornwall.co.uk

If you need more information please contact us by:

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