Checklist of Key Considerations for Inclusive Health Care Communications

Refer to this summary of inclusive communications strategies for diverse stakeholders when developing RETAIN internal and external communications.

Audience

Tailor communications for the audience. Consider:

Identity

Ability and disability
Age
Gender and sexuality
Nationality
Race, ethnicity, and religion

Literacy levels

Primary spoken language

Input when feasible

Images

Represent diverse genders, races, ethnic groups, and people with visible disabilities.

Always avoid using traditional/cultural dress images, depicting inequity in status, perpetuating unhealthy body images, or using racial and ethnic minority group caricatures.

Use cultural artifacts only when they are relevant to the communications.

Language and Formats

Avoid using adjectives such as *vulnerable*, *marginalized*, or *high risk*. Choose terms that focus on systems and how/why some groups are more affected.

Use person-first language. Avoid dehumanizing language.

Be as specific as possible when referring to groups and remember that there are many types of subpopulations.

Avoid terms with violent connotations (tackle, combat) when referring to people, groups, and communities.

Avoid terms that may be unintentionally blaming.

Use straightforward, easy-to-understand language.

Consider appropriate formats for your audience: audio, video, braille, large print, visual/graphic imagery, languages, American Sign Language, closed captioning, plain language.

Inclusive Communication

References and Resources

- American Medical Association & Association of American Medical Colleges. (2021). *Advancing health equity: Guide on language, narrative and concepts*. https://www.ama-assn.org/equity-guide

- American Psychological Association. (2021a). *Equity, diversity, and inclusion framework*. https://www.apa.org/about/apa/equity-diversity-inclusion/framework.pdf

- American Psychological Association. (2021b). *Inclusive language guidelines*. https://www.apa.org/about/apa/equity-diversity-inclusion/language-guidelines.pdf

- APA Style. (2019, September). *General principles for reducing bias.* https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/bias-free-language/general-principles

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, December 9a). *Health communication gateway*. https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/index.html Provides links to the Health Equity Guiding Principles, featured CDC partner campaigns, example training, tools and templates, and a resource section for writers.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, December 9b). *Health equity guiding principles for inclusive communication.* https://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/Health_Equity.html

- General Services Administration. (n.d.). *18F content guide.* https://content-guide.18f.gov/our-style/

- General Services Administration. (n.d.). *Section508.gov*. https://www.section508.gov/ Provides resources on website accessibility, including creating accessible meetings and digital products.

- Institute on Disabilities, University of New Hampshire. (n.d.). *Person-first language: A partial glossary of disability terms.* https://iod.unh.edu/person-first-language-partial-glossary-disability-terms

- Plain Language Action and Information Network. (n.d.). *Plainlanguage.gov*. https://www.plainlanguage.gov/ Provides guidelines, examples, resources, and trainings on incorporating plain language into communications.

- Quiet Press. (n.d.). *Conscious style guide*. https://consciousstyleguide.com/about/