



Testing the usability of the Health Rights Information Scotland website (HRIS)

Published January 2009

Testing the usability of the Heath Rights Information Scotland website

Tests carried out by Information professionals

Six information professionals were involved in the usability testing of the Heath Rights Information Scotland website (HRIS).

They were all experienced web users some spending as much as four hours per day on the Internet. All bar one had used the HRIS website previously. One person had used it over 'a number of years'.

Testing involved the participants carrying out a number of tasks related to use of the site. The tasks were provided by HRIS. Participants were asked to explain their responses and say what they were thinking as they worked through each task. Their observations and actions regarding these tasks were noted as they carried them out.

In addition they were asked what their general impression of the site was.

Answering the questions:

Most of the participants in the testing were able to complete the tasks - although, some took longer than others. One participant abandoned two of the tasks and another participant could not find information about 'Accessibility'.

The task that caused most difficulty was finding how to complain and who to complain to.

The tasks that were completed most easily were 'How to Contact' and 'Keep up to date with news'. Satisfaction was expressed regarding these areas.

Summary of most important points from the Usability tests involving information professions

Positives from the tests

- Most participants had a positive response to the design of the website and said they found it easy to use, liked the colours and found it well organised.
- Almost all tasks were completed successfully by all participants, i.e., only three from 48 tasks were not completed.
- Participants had a particularly positive response to the contact page. They found it quickly and were generally happy with the options provided. However, the lack of text messaging option was mentioned by two participants.

Possible usability issues with the HRIS website

- The task related to making a complaint proved to be the most difficult to complete; in particular who to contact and how to contact them. This was exacerbated by the 'clickable' map not working during the task for one of the participants. The content on the page appeared to be confusing for some participants.
- The search engine did not consistently generate useful results when used. Two participants used the search engine as their preferred strategy for completing the tasks; both remarked on the weakness of the search engine.
- Some participants expressed confusion as to the difference between 'Patient Information' and 'Members of the Public', as both of these links took them to the same page.
- The graphic showing the different languages looks like it should be clickable but on the one occasion that a participant tried to click it it did nothing.
- Accessibility information could be found by most participants; though most looked for it at the top of the page first (it was at the bottom).
- Participants noted that the content of the accessibility page was not user friendly and contained too much jargon. It was remarked that it did not seem to be set up to help users access the content of the website.
- Participants were surprised the first time they clicked a link and it downloaded a PDF rather than browsing to a web page. There did not appear to be any indication that the link they were clicking was a PDF and not a standard web page.
- Most participants expressed a preference for a web page over a PDF for the information they were looking for.
- When content was provided in both PDF and web page format, participants only found the PDF version and remained unaware that there were also web pages providing the same information.
- Only one participant noticed that information relating to the tasks could be found on links in the left-hand navigation area.

Summary of results from usability test

The chart below shows the number of tasks completed and not completed for information workers, and notes related to each task.

Questions related to participants web experience, experience of HTIS website and general impressions of the HRIS website

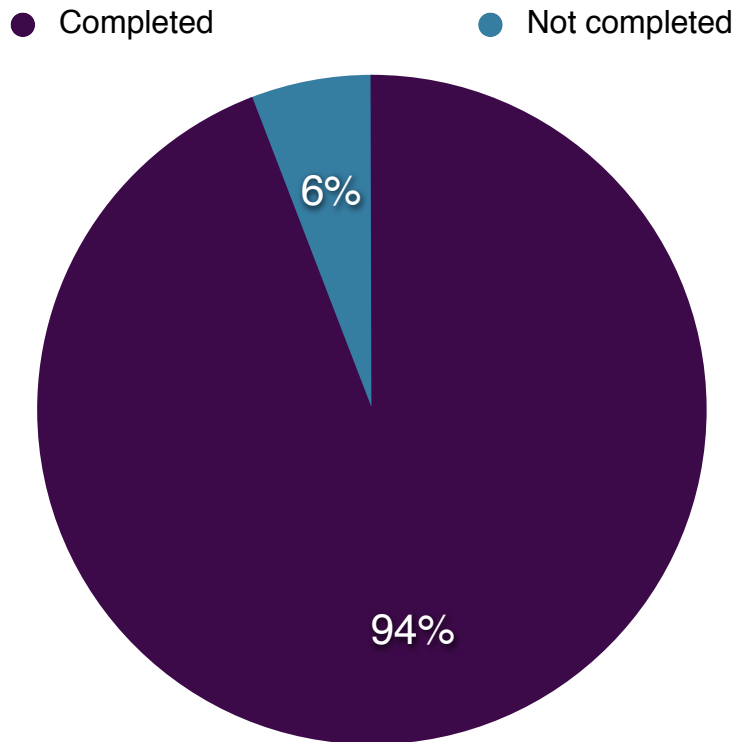
Participant	Web Experience	General views about HRIS website
Participant 1	Around 5 hours a day	“Clean, not loads of stuff. Some pages more writing than others. I like the white – no riot of colours. Most things seem to be logically placed but some problems.”
Participant 2	Around 2 hours a day	Knows the website already. [But] “would go through SHOW Scotland UK website for this type of information.”
Participant 3	Around 1 hour per day	Has used the site over a number of years. “Fine, but front pages has too much information. Toolbar could be more prominent.”
Participant 4	Around 2 hours per day but more recently.	Familiar with the site has used several times. “Good site. Easy to manoeuvre about. Finds other sites more difficult.”
Participant 5	Around 2 hours a day.	Has used this site four or five times. “Really clear and easy to see. Like the colour and easy to use. Text is too small. Search facility not as clear as it could be.”

Participant	Web Experience	General views about HRIS website
Participant 6	4 hours daily	Used the site before (once or twice a month). "Better than it used to be, not so cluttered." "Categories with info going to same page. Confusing."

On average information professionals spent 2.5 hours per day using the Web.

A summary of tasks completed successfully

From 48 tasks 45 were completed successfully and 3 not completed.



Tasks completed and notes related to each participant

Task	Participant	completed	Not completed	Notes
Accessing personal health records	Participant 1		√	wasn't sure whether to click Patient Information or Member of Public. "needed to click through too many links"
	Participant 2	√		Used Search. "Search engine is reasonable but not brilliant". Answer wasn't first result returned.
	Participant 3	√		Scans through – finds cost and time extremely quickly. Knew where to look.

Task	Participant	completed	Not completed	Notes
	Participant 4		√	Abandoned task. Confused about what we were asking him to do.
	Participant 5	√		Very quick. Choose Patient information and scrolled down immediately to Health Records and clicks link.
	Participant 6	√		Finds the leaflet and information quickly. Is ok with it being a PDF.
Finding out about free eye tests.				
	Participant 1	√		Clicked Producing Information first. When clicking the link for eye tests commented that he did not expect to be downloading a file.
	Participant 2	√		Used Search. Couldn't find information via search. Browsed for a long time and gets frustrated. "This takes you to leaflet – Shambles!!!" "Doesn't matter that it is PDF but I would use another website".
	Participant 3	√		Finds information quickly but not happy that it is a PDF. "PDF can be pain if at home would like information on the site" "

Task	Participant	completed	Not completed	Notes
	Participant 4	√		Starts by going into ' Know Your Rights.' But finds the PDF quickly after coming back out of that section.
	Participant 5	√		Tried using the search - but didn't find it. Found via 'Patient Information' after scrolling home page and Patient Information page - didn't find it easily. Wasn't happy it was a PDF, "Would have preferred another web page. "Opening PDFs makes things slower and didn't notice if it said that a PDF would be opened"
	Participant 6	√		Finds quickly - downloads the PDF - noticed that it says it is a PDF when the link is hovered over. "Think PDFs are good because can save. [But] Maybe should offer information as well" "Good at work but need to be able to print it"
Registering with NHS dentist				

Task	Participant	completed	Not completed	Notes
	Participant 1	√		Found quickly - noted that he now knows to go straight to Patient Information. Again mentioned about it being a PDF." Good that there is a PDF because can print out. If just looking on website for information but would be good to have the information on the web as well. "
	Participant 2	√		Tries search - but fails to find it. "That's rubbish. Nothing on search. Search on dentists nothing relating to dentists. Appalling!" Finds it after browsing Patient Information but criticises the layout of the page and the content. Feels there is too much general information promoting HRIS rather than just providing the details that he is after as a visitor to the site.
	Participant 3	√		Quickly finds information but notes it is a PDF. Time delay getting PDF – "Would rather information was on the website". "There could be an issue if PDF was contaminated and downloading onto my browser"
	Participant 4	√		Finds it quickly 'Saw this the last time'. Remarks that this is 'Quite a good website'.

Task	Participant	comple ted	Not comple ted	Notes
	Participant 5	√		Finds it quickly but remarks about the layout of the page - not making it easy to find or see content, ““Would be better if the information was in a list as don’t want to read everything. Like to scan over and quicker to see if in a list. Really not good.
	Participant 6	√		Chooses Patient Info link. Scrolls down and quickly finds link to information. Notes it is a PDF. Again PDF opened without warning if you don’t hover.”
Making a complaint about NHS				
	Participant 1	√		Lost of browsing different pages, and scrolling - takes quite a long time and ponders a lot. Surprise that the link this time was to another web page and not a PDF this time. Not sure who to contact - doesn’t find the content clear - still not sure after finishing the task. “Some people would already be annoyed and this adds to frustration when you are thinking about a complaint. Do they want you to complaint or are they making it difficult?” “Would phone and ask “Are you the people I complain to?”

Task	Participant	completed	Not completed	Notes
	Participant 2	√		Not happy that there is too much general information about HRIS and not just specific information designed to answer the question. Says that there is no clear information saying who to complain to. “ Presuming this is who complain to though says where you get information Not who to complain to” “Filling pages up not telling me how to make complaint”
	Participant 3	√		Finds information quickly. Goes to patient Information then Complaints.
	Participant 4		√	Doesn't want to look for the information on the website as ‘ I know you are entitled to complain – I usually go around the system”
	Participant 5	√		Found the person to approach quickly.
	Participant 6	√		Finds link to leaflet quickly. When looking for contact details finds that the map is not clickable. Doesn't find who to complain to. “Not a page for who you should complain to”
Accessibility information				

Task	Participant	completed	Not completed	Notes
	Participant 1	√		Finds information quickly, but finds the content unappealing “ This is just a big screed of information. “Well, I guess it gives information but quite off putting.” I know some of these terms because of my job but still could not say what it all means”
	Participant 2	√		Finds quickly “Scrolls through information - “No problem” “
	Participant 3		√	Doesn't find the accessibility page - and finds that the image with the different languages isn't clickable.
	Participant 4	√		Finds it quickly - looks at top of home page first.
	Participant 5	√		Can't find it initially 'I would expect it to be at top. Awfully small and at the bottom.' Remarks that there is too much information - and that is should be about how to use the site not about the W3C guidelines. “ That should be at the top. The statement with the W3C things doesn't need to be there or it should be further down. “ “It should be about accessibility and how you use the site.”

Task	Participant	completed	Not completed	Notes
	Participant 6	√		Finds information about accessibility - "Where it would be on most sites". Finds the information 'not really informative'. "Bit jargony if you are member of public" "My partner or family members would not know what this meant"
Finding a specific leaflet				
	Participant 1	√		Goes down the wrong route to start with due to home page image being about young people - and 'have your say leaflet' link on home page. Goes to Patient Information and finds leaflet quickly and downloads the PDF
	Participant 2	√		Finds leaflet quickly and notices that apart from the PDF there is also information on the menu on the left about the same thing. Interesting as no other participant noticed this. Notes, 'Didn't notice menu before on other pages?'
	Participant 3	√		Found leaflet quickly.
	Participant 4	√		Found leaflet quickly as had seen it previously.
	Participant 5	√		Searched for the leaflet and it came up number 2 on the list. Notes that 'it's another PDF'.

Task	Participant	completed	Not completed	Notes
	Participant 6	√		Clicks 'Know Your Rights' link from home page and is surprised it goes to the Patient Information page.
Finding HRIS contact details				
	Participant 1	√		Finds contact details quickly and is impressed by the content of the page.
	Participant 2	√		Sees contacts immediately. "That's okay – would send email"
	Participant 3	√		but mentions that there is no text phone - and notes that as there are many young people who prefer SMS messaging now.
	Participant 4	√		Looks at the bottom of the page first but then checks the top of the page and finds it quickly.
	Participant 5	√		Finds the page quickly - but notes that ' Quite nice – gives options" "However, no type talk or anything"
	Participant 6	√		"Really good contact box" "Good all contact details".
Keeping up to date				
	Participant 1	√		Click the news bulletin first - then finds newsletter link.

Task	Participant	completed	Not completed	Notes
	Participant 2	√		Clicks on news and events - happy to see the subscribe form.
	Participant 3	√		Finds quickly
	Participant 4	√		Clicks on links and doesn't find, goes to contact page and doesn't find. Eventually clicks the news link and finds the subscribe form
	Participant 5	√		Finds quickly "that's fine – would do that"
	Participant 6	√		"That's fine and how I would use it" "Might be better to also have on subscribe to newsletter. No title – assuming latest news and events.."