Optimizing Your Website for Consumers and Partners Job Aid

Purpose: Navigator program leaders can use this job aid to optimize your Navigator program website for outreach and enrollment.

> **Note**: All website content must be reviewed and approved by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). Your website must also be compliant with the Navigator program roles and responsibilities federal statute. For questions on what can be included on your website, review the Navigator Program Guide and contact your Project Officer.

Why prioritize website optimization?

Maintaining an up-to-date, responsive, clear, and accessible website for your Navigator program allows you to highlight your services, schedule consumer appointments, share resources for consumers and partners, promote upcoming events, and more — all in one place.

The most effective websites are clear, concise, and easily accessible for both consumers and community partners.

Promising Practices: Content

Consider adding the following types of content to your website to meet audience needs:

Calls to Action

Look at how your website content is motivating consumers to take action. What do you want consumers to notice first on your website? What is the main action you want them to take?

- Use buttons and banners to highlight calls to action on your site, such as:
  - Make an appointment with a Navigator today!
  - Explore coverage options for your family.
  - Update your tax information.

- You may want to change calls to action throughout the year to align with the enrollment cycle and meet people where they are. For topic ideas, watch Transform Health's Creating an Annual Timeline of Events webinar on REGTAP.

For additional guidance on developing calls to action, watch Transform Health's Calls to Action and Appointment Setting webinar on Zoom and review accompanying slides.

Appointment Scheduling

Make it easy for consumers to schedule an appointment with a Navigator:

- Embed online scheduling tools within your website, if possible, or use a button to link to the scheduling tool.
- Include an appointment phone line for consumers who prefer scheduling over the phone.

Resources

Call out helpful resources for both consumers and partners:

- Consumers want to know important dates and deadlines for coverage, definitions of key terms, and what to bring to an appointment. They also may be interested in additional community resources or other services your organization provides. Check out the CMS Coverage to Care website for ideas on health insurance literacy resources to share with your community.
- Partners may benefit from a resource hub with materials they can customize, download, and share, such as flyers, social media posts, etc.

Consumer Stories

Add stories or quotes from consumers to illustrate key points and build credibility. Ensure you have consent to share stories with personally identifiable information (PII). Otherwise, use composite stories that don't identify any one individual.

For additional guidance on story collection and consent, watch Transform Health's Client Stories webinar on Zoom and review the accompanying slides.

About

Include basic information about your program:

- Who are you?
- What is your mission?
- Who are your partners?

Ask partners if you can include their logos on your website to show the reach and breadth of the program.

Images and Videos

Add visual interest on your website with images and videos. These types of media also offer alternative ways to convey information to consumers.

- For photos, check if your organization has a media library of original and/or stock photos and look for relevant images to put on your site.
- For videos, if your organization has any relevant videos posted on YouTube or other video-sharing sites, you can embed them on your website.

Social Media

Promote any active social media accounts with icons in your website header and/or footer. Use social media to amplify your key messages and drive traffic back to your website.

Contact Information

Add a main contact email and phone number. You can also add contact information for specific Navigators.

Add a physical address if relevant, and be aware of and plan for any safety concerns.

Funding Disclaimer

Navigator program websites are required to include a disclaimer, which you can add to your website footer so it is visible on every page. Customize this sample language with your funding amount:

- This website is supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling $XX,XXX with 100 percent funded by CMS/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CMS/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

Sample Content

You can find timely language to use on your website throughout the year in Transform Health's Marketing and Communications Guide. Updated regularly, this guide contains key messaging and information on Open Enrollment, eligibility, tax credits, Special Enrollment Periods, and more. You may want to adapt the content to best meet the needs of your community.

Promising Practices: Technical Design

Consider the following functionality to make your website more user-friendly.

Responsive Design

Many consumers will access your website from a phone or tablet. Responsive design ensures your site loads correctly on devices of different sizes.

Go through your website on a desktop computer, tablet, and phone, and check for the following:

- Can you access all pages and easily move through the navigation?
- Is the font size appropriate and easy to read?
- Do images and videos show up in the right place and at the right size?
- Are all embedded tools (e.g., appointment scheduling) showing up and functioning correctly?

If you have any concerns, talk to the person who manages your program's website or your IT department.

Accessibility

How is your website meeting the needs of your community? Consider physical and intellectual disabilities, literacy levels, and different languages to ensure an accessible website:

- Follow website accessibility guidelines set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), such as adding alt text (i.e., descriptions) for images, putting captions on videos, and ensuring sufficient color contrast throughout the site. You can also look into web accessibility widgets to add on to your site.
- Follow the federal government's plain language guidelines, using short, simple sentences easy for anyone to understand.
- Look into translation tools to serve the language needs of your consumers. Consider how you will translate embedded content, such as appointment scheduling tools and videos, which may not be automatically translated, depending on the service. Be cautious with free translation tools as they may be inaccurate and not reflect specific dialects or reading levels of your consumers.

Search Optimization

When individuals conduct online searches on topics like "how to get health insurance near me," you want to make sure your program shows up in the search results. Search engine optimization (SEO) and generative engine optimization (GEO) are approaches to optimize your web content to display accurate and prominent results when individuals conduct online searches through traditional search engines or generative artificial intelligence (AI) engines.

Learn more on Digital.gov, and work with your marketing and/or IT department to implement these practices.

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