

Content Policy

CONTENT | 2014 | updated July 2015



Content policy

At all times, content produced by HealthLogix must comply with the following standards.

Standards for content

1. All content must be relevant, valuable and medically accurate.
2. Content should be innovative, engaging and readable.
3. Portal, including HealthByte, content should cover:
 - health news (e.g. recent and upcoming events, topical issues)
 - health interests (e.g. areas of interest that might not directly impact one's health)
 - lifestyle-related information (e.g. exercise, smoking, alcohol)
 - screening and prevention facts (e.g. check-ups)
 - medical topics (e.g. disease definitions, prevention, and management).
4. All content (excluding news reports) must be consistent with relevant, reputable guidelines, which could be national, regional or global. The writer must use his or her discretion, but generally preferred sources include the target audience's national guidelines (e.g. Australia's NHMRC or Department of Health and Ageing), the World Health Organisation, and professional colleges, associations and other bodies of similar standing.
5. Any content that is not considered common knowledge or is subject to dispute must be referenced in text. If in doubt about what constitutes common knowledge, writers must consult the Editor and/or Medical Director. As a general rule, statistics, guidelines, studies and opinions must be attributed in text. All references used, regardless of whether they are cited in text, must be mentioned in a reference list (or footnotes).
6. Plagiarism is not acceptable.
7. Where appropriate, a caveat on the reliability of claims must feature prominently. For example, one study seldom proves anything. Writers must report the results of a study within the right context.
8. Writers must strive to obtain their information first hand, from, for example, peer reviewed journals. Start with a press release or news article, but work back to the original source. Where primary sources cannot be obtained, secondary sources must be acknowledged (e.g. Jo Brown told *The Herald Sun*).
9. Where appropriate, writers should use the most recent resource available.
10. All content must be culturally appropriate.
11. Articles from third parties (excluding clients) must carry the following statement: "Published with the permission of The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of HealthLogix. For individual advice, consult an appropriate health professional."
12. Content must not "instruct" a reader to take any course of action, but should state (explicitly or implicitly) the reasons certain actions may be preferable to others, or useful overall. Writers must take reasonable steps to ensure any advice given or implied is unlikely to harm the user. Where necessary, users must be encouraged to seek individual advice from an "appropriate health professional".

MEAA Code of Ethics

The following Code of Ethics for journalists comes from the Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance. All writers of HealthLogix must strive to uphold these values.

Respect for truth and the public's right to information are fundamental principles of journalism. Journalists describe society to itself. They convey information, ideas and opinions, a privileged role. They search, disclose, record, question, entertain, suggest and remember. They inform citizens and animate democracy. They give a practical form to freedom of expression. Many journalists work in private enterprise, but all have these public responsibilities. They scrutinise power, but also exercise it, and should be accountable. Accountability engenders trust. Without trust, journalists do not fulfil their public responsibilities. Alliance members engaged in journalism commit themselves to

Honesty

Fairness

Independence

Respect for the rights of others

1. Report and interpret honestly, striving for accuracy, fairness and disclosure of all essential facts. Do not suppress relevant available facts, or give distorting emphasis. Do your utmost to give a fair opportunity for reply.
2. Do not place unnecessary emphasis on personal characteristics, including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, family relationships, religious belief, or physical or intellectual disability.
3. Aim to attribute information to its source. Where a source seeks anonymity, do not agree without first considering the source's motives and any alternative attributable source. Where confidences are accepted, respect them in all circumstances.
4. Do not allow personal interest, or any belief, commitment, payment, gift or benefit, to undermine your accuracy, fairness or independence.
5. Disclose conflicts of interest that affect, or could be seen to affect, the accuracy, fairness or independence of your journalism. Do not improperly use a journalistic position for personal gain.
6. Do not allow advertising or other commercial considerations to undermine accuracy, fairness or independence.
7. Do your utmost to ensure disclosure of any direct or indirect payment made for interviews, pictures, information or stories.
8. Use fair, responsible and honest means to obtain material. Identify yourself and your employer before obtaining any interview for publication or broadcast. Never exploit a person's vulnerability or ignorance of media practice.

9. Present pictures and sound which are true and accurate. Any manipulation likely to mislead should be disclosed.
10. Do not plagiarise.
11. Respect private grief and personal privacy. Journalists have the right to resist compulsion to intrude.
12. Do your utmost to achieve fair correction of errors.

Guidance Clause

Basic values often need interpretation and sometimes come into conflict. Ethical journalism requires conscientious decision-making in context. Only substantial advancement of the public interest or risk of substantial harm to people allows any standard to be overridden