WHERE: What part of the world is the website coming from? Statistics and treatment information may not be relevant to the UK. Look at the web address information as this will often indicate the country of origin and type of organisation. The URL (web address) will also give clues. See below for examples:

.nhs or .nhs.uk = NHS organisation

.au = Australia

.ca = Canada

.de = Germany

.com or .co = a company

.org = an organisation or charity

.ac = an educational site

.gov = a government site

Further information

Here are some sites you might like to explore on the subject of sourcing reliable information:

Staying safe online:
https://www.learnmyway.com/subjects/online-safety/

MedlinePlus guide to healthy web surfing:
https://medlineplus.gov/healthywebsurfing.html

Contacting us

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Patient Relations

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This information can be made available in another language or format upon request.

NHS
Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Finding quality health resources online

Advice for patients, relatives and carers

The internet is a wonderful resource but not everything found on it is trustworthy, accurate, reliable or up to date. Anyone can put information on it but there is no editor checking for inaccuracies or out of date information. It is up to the user to decide how relevant the information is and to determine the reliability of what they find.

The purpose of this leaflet is to help you find quality and trustworthy sources of health information online.

If you do not have a computer or mobile device you can use your local public library. If you take this booklet with you, they can help you access the websites listed.

Finding trustworthy web information

The following general health websites have evidence-based expert information:

NHS Website www.nhs.uk/
Trustworthy information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare.

Patient UK https://patient.info/
Includes over 4,000 information leaflets, symptom checker and discussion forums.

Healthtalk.org
www.healthtalk.org//
Information and support on a range of health issues based on real life experiences.

Royal College of Psychiatrists
www.rcpsych.ac.uk/expertadvice.aspx
Information on all aspects of mental health.

Mind www.mind.org.uk
Information & advice for people with a mental health condition or their carers

Rethink www.rethink.org/
Free factsheets and advice on all aspects of mental health.

Health on the Net quality standard
The quality standard "Health on the Net" logo may appear on sites that are not certified. To check certification, click on the HON logo. You should be directed to a page that includes the HON code number for the site. Website: https://www.hon.ch/en/

Health on the Net logo

What about health websites that do not have a quality standard?
When you are looking at a website, remember **WWW**:

WHO: Who is the author or publisher of the site and what are their credentials? Are they fair in what they say? What are their reasons for publishing, for example, are they trying to give you information or sell you something? Do other websites link to them? Look at the "About Us" section on the site. This should give you some of this information.

WHAT: What is on the site? Does the information seem accurate? Is it relevant and up to date? Do they link the information to evidence? Do they tell you where the information has come from? Look at the last updated information (usually at the bottom of the web page). This will tell you when the information was added. Look for references or links to the evidence. Also check if the links to other information/sites work. Too many broken links may indicate the site is no longer being maintained.