TRILLIUM HEALTH RESOURCES BRAND GUIDELINES

OCTOBER 2024

Trillium

HEALTH RESOURCES

Transforming Lives. Building Community Well-Being.

Why is this necessary?

Proprietary logos, approved typefaces, the visuals we choose and the words we use—every part of our brand is an important part of our whole brand. Following the guidelines and rules in this style guide will help us generate engaging communications, and build strong bonds with our audiences.

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Introduction

Why this Guide?

The Communications & Marketing Department at Trillium Health resources is dedicated to establishing and maintaining a high level of branding integrity by utilizing standardized guidelines applicable to all documents created, edited, and published through the department. This guidebook sets the parameters of the Trillium Health Resources editorial house style for corporate communications and publications.

Employing the principles in this guidebook establishes a standard of quality for our essential stakeholders and the general public.

This guide:
- Serves as a central resource for creation and publishing of all Trillium content
- Keeps content form, style, and appearance consistent
- Maintains quality and brand identity

Please follow Trillium's house style in all external communications and formal internal communications, including:
- News releases and media pitches
- Documents to be uploaded to SharePoint
- Content for the Trillium Health Resources website
- Screen communications, such as PowerPoint presentations
- Materials for events, such as invitations, posters, flyers, and handouts
- All marketing materials including brochures, rack cards, and informational literature

Major Style Guides

This resource employs the principles of two major style guides: AP Style and Chicago Style. Because the Communications Department handles content that is both shared with the media and published for public consumption, the use of both style guides is necessary as each addresses different editorial needs depending upon the type of document being created or edited.

- For all content which is for the website, published as a periodical, or shared with the media (news releases, newsletters, media pitches, etc.), AP Style will primarily be followed.
- For all content developed for external publications (brochures, rack cards, handbooks, etc.), the Chicago Manual of Style will primarily be followed.

While these style guides will serve as the guiding standard for each of these circumstances, there may be Trillium specific adjustments that are required to be applied to the document. Please use this content guide as your primary resource for developing content. For any issues not addressed by this guide, please refer to the most recent version of either the AP Style or the Chicago Manual of Style depending upon the type of document being created or edited.

Section 1:
General Writing Tips

This section shares information about Trillium.

- Readability
- Person-first Language
- Gender-inclusive Language
- Reference to Specific Departments, Job Functions, and Contacts

Readability

Trillium Health Resources is a local, public body that manages Medicaid and state funds for mental health, intellectual/developmental disability, and substance use services in eastern North Carolina. We connect people in the counties we serve to services which best meet their needs. We take much pride and care in this responsibility.

Trillium must comply with contractual obligations for readability for materials directed to members, recipients, and guardians. Copy must be written at a 6–8th grade level (6th grade once departmental names, service definitions, etc. are removed). There are several items to consider when establishing readability for Trillium communications including plain language, clear sentences, and health literacy.

Consider the Audience

When writing a document, presentation, product, or email, it is important to keep the intended audience in mind. Writing for the CEO of Trillium Health Resources is different from writing for the public. Most of the writing we do is for general consumption therefore it is important to follow some key practices to ensure the intended message is clear.

Plain Language

Plain language is communication your audience can understand the first time they read or hear it. It is clear, concise, and follows other best practices appropriate to the subject or field as well as intended audience (see Health Literacy). Typically, the reading level of content written in plain language will fall between fifth and eighth grade.

Because the majority of our writing includes healthcare specific language, there may be times that the readership score may fall a little higher than eighth grade. It is important nonetheless to ensure that your writing is a simple as possible.

The benefits of plain language are both tangible and intangible.

- Your message comes across in the shortest time possible.
- More people are able to understand your message.
- You spend less time explaining it to people.
- If your document gives instructions, your readers are more likely to understand them and follow them correctly.

Key elements of plain language include[2]*:*

- Organizing your information so that the most important points come first
- Breaking complex information into understandable chunks
- Using simple language and defining technical terms
- Using the active voice

Most word processing programs come equipped with the ability to assess the readability of a text or a passage of text according to the Flesh-Kindaid Grade Level scale. Refer to the Help guide in your program to access instructions on how to generate a readability report for your document.

Clear Sentences

Short sentences written in active voice create the most clarity and best readability.

An average sentence should have no more than about twenty words, and an average paragraph should have about three to five sentences. The length of a sentence does not always affect its clarity, but it can be a factor in the readability of a paragraph. Examine all sentences for length and try to shorten any sentences with more than twenty words. If a longer sentence is unavoidable, still try to be as concise as possible.

Active Voice

Active voice is the most direct way of writing. In active voice, the subject of a sentence does the action.

For example:
- Dr. Steward composed the newsletter.
- The town council will host a rally to raise funds for the disaster victims on August 14.

The opposite of active voice is passive voice. Passive voice writing is when the intended subject receives the action. In some passive sentences the intended subject is not mentioned at all.

For example:
- The newsletter was composed by Dr. Steward.
- A rally will be held to raise funds for the disaster victims on August 14.

Professional documents often use passive voice, particularly in formal reports. However, because it lacks directness and can cause sentences to be lengthy, it is best to use passive voice sparingly.

Health Literacy

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010, Title V, defines health literacy as the degree to which an individual has the capacity to obtain, communicate, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions.

Anyone who provides health information and services to others, such as doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, or public health workers, also needs health literacy skills to:

- Help people find information and services
- Communicate about health and healthcare
- Process what people are explicitly and implicitly asking for
- Understand how to provide useful information and services
- Decide which information and services work best for different situations and people

It is important to utilize health literacy skills when developing content, particularly considering the intended audiences experiences and needs in regards to culture, region, context, and socioeconomics.

Person First Language

Person first language recognizes that individuals with disabilities are not solely identified by their disability. They are human first and their disability is simply something they have, not something they are. The grid below provides some examples of person first language commonly used in Trillium communications.

USE
A person with _____ (schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, a neurological disorder)
A person with substance use disorder
A person with a disability
A person has/with a diagnosis of bipolar disorder or is living with bipolar disorder; A person has/with autism
DO NOT USE
Mentally ill; Schizophrenic; Psycho; Nutcase; Cripple(d)
Addict; Alcoholic
Disabled; Handicapped
Bipolar; Autistic

This is by no means an exhaustive list. For more information, reference the Communications Guide.

Gender Inclusive Language

When writing about services, programs, and general information for the public, it can sometimes be tricky to ensure that your language is inclusive and appealing to such a wide audience. Following these guidelines can help Trillium's external and internal communications maintain inclusivity and properly communicate its intended message.

- The best option is to formulate sentences in a manner that no pronouns are required at all.
  - **With pronoun:** Each employee must use his or her badge to enter each building.
  - **Without pronoun:** All employees must use the secure Trillium-issued badge to enter each building.
- Sometimes the use of pronouns is unavoidable. Though it is encouraged to avoid the use of pronouns as much as possible, if necessary, keep the language of your writing as objective as possible. This can be achieved by pluralizing nouns in order to use the pronoun "they."
- Nouns can also contain internal gender bias. When writing be sure to avoid using gendered nouns such as chairman, policeman, man, mankind, etc. Instead, utilize gender-neutral nouns such as chair, police officer, individual, people, provider, etc.

Section 2: Grammar Guide

This section shares information about:

- Capitalization
- Punctuation
- Usage
- Sentence structure

Capitalization

- Proper nouns, names, and proper adjectives are always capitalized
- John Smith
- Duck River Rd.
- Wilmington, NC
- Capitalize the word "room" when used with the number of the room or when the part of the name of a specifically designated room.
- Room 212; Room T113
- Capitalize the job title when it comes immediately before the name, in a formal context or in direct address. It is not generally capitalized if it comes after the person's name, or if there is a "the" before it.
- Vice President Ron Crews; Director of Internal Affairs Natasha Gordon
- The vice president; The director of internal affairs
- Do not capitalize formal titles unless they precede or follow a name.
- The governor said tonight's event will occur at the community center.
- In a formal letter, Governor Smith said tonight's event will occur at the community center

There are two basic styles for capitalizing titles and bullet points:

- **Headline Style:** All interior words except articles (a, an, the), coordinate conjunctions (and, but, or, for, nor), prepositions, and appropriate scientific terms or names are capitalized.
  - ° Sticks and Stones: The Magic of Names
  - ° The Concise Guide for Corporate Writing
- **Sentence Style:** Only the initial word receives a capital letter.
  - ° Working as an editor
  - ° Understanding the importance of clarity

Reference to Specific Departments, Job Functions, and Contacts

Trillium expectations may be unique when it comes to addressing specific departments, job functions, and contacts. Because Trillium is a public governmental agency, there are may terms and titles that are unique to the work we do and the field we are in. These terms may be uniquely addressed when it comes to grammatical treatment.

CAPITALIZE	DO NOT CAPITALIZE
Specific names of forms, policies, or programs. • Provider Direct (PD) • Incedo • Pre-Admission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) • Corrective Action Plan • U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	*General references* • provider network • network • taxonomy • contract • credentials • individual or groups
Specific names of providers or provider agencies • Easter Seals • Autism Society of North Carolina	*General term "provider" or "agency" except in legal documentation where necessary*
Specific names of departments Communications Department • Network Department • Research and Development	*General term "department" unless in legal documentation in reference to the sole department involved in the matter.*

Punctuation

Colon

- A colon introduces an element or a series of elements illustrating or amplifying what has preceded the colon.

Trillium Health Resources provides ready access to quality care for individuals with the following needs: intellectual/developmental disabilities, mental health, and substance use.

- When a colon is used within a sentence, the first word following the colon is lowercased unless it is a proper name.
- The following six LME/MCOs in North Carolina also serve the same purpose: Vaya Health, Cardinal Innovations, Partners Behavioral Health, Alliance Behavioral Health, Sandhills, and Eastpointe.
- This guide covers the fundamentals of corporate communications for Trillium Health Resources: readability, grammar, and typography.

Commas

- Use a comma to separate lengthy, independent clauses in a compound sentence.

  They have not responded to our orders, nor do I think they ever will.

- Use commas to divide elements in a series.

  She blushed, stammered, sneezed, shook her head and burst into tears.

- Use commas with transposed initials, with titles and always in dates.

  Dexter Lenci, M.D. or Jones, B.W. The boys sailed for Europe on June 22, 1962.

- Oxford comma: the final comma preceding a conjunction in a sentence. Although there are varying rules regarding the use of this comma, the Trillium default is to always use the Oxford comma.

Dashes

A dash is used to either indicate a range between numerical items or accentuate something that has been said previously in a sentence. Dashes are not common punctuation marks, and should be used sparingly.

Examples of En Dash:
To type an en dash on Windows, hold down Alt and type 0150 on the numeric keyboard; the en dash will appear upon releasing the Alt key.

- The 2010–2011 season was our best yet.
- You will find this material in chapters 8–12.
- The professor holds office hours every Wednesday, 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Examples of Em Dash:
In MS Word: Option/Ctrl+ Minus Key
(with Num Lock enabled)

- They developed a plan—a plan they all hoped would not backfire when executed.

Hyphen

Hyphens look like the dash, but it is smaller and serves a more primary purpose. Hyphens are used to connect words that form:

- Compound adjectives
- long-standing commitment; eight-year-old girl
- Compound phrases of nouns and verbs, such as whistle-blowing and data-cleansing
- Do not use hyphen if the construction includes very or an adverb ending in –ly
- the locally managed service

Parentheses

Information placed inside parentheses is often as addendum. In corporate writing, it is best to only include information that is essential in the content of a document. Avoiding the use of parenthetical asides improves the readability of the document.

Quotation Marks

Use double quotation marks ("") for direct speech or when quoting from documents or books. Do not use italics.

- If quoted text contains a quotation, the inner quotation should be in single quotation marks (").
- Quotes that are longer than four full lines of text should be indented, with no quotation marks or use of italics.

Semicolon

Use to clarify a series that includes a number of commas.

- Include a semicolon before the conjunction

  The stops on this trip will include Raleigh, NC; Charlotte, NC; Memphis, TN; and Tulsa, OK.

- Use to separate two or more complete thoughts that are close in meaning or provide similar information. That creates a strong compound sentence.

  The Network Department handles provider inquiries; the Utilization Management Department handles service paperwork.

- Use to divide complete statements tied together by a conjunctive adverb (also, anyhow, besides, otherwise, etc.)

  You may contact the Member Recipient line in order to inquire about help with services; however, Trillium has a "no wrong door" policy meaning any contact you make will get to directed where you need to be.

Usage

Relative Pronouns

Relative pronouns are similar to conjunctions in that they provide a link ideas in a sentence together to create balance. The difference is that the relative pronoun actually plays the role of a noun in the clause.

PRONOUN	DESCRIPTION
That	**Used in restrictive relative clauses referring to people, places or things** *Examples:* • The team that built the organization will provide for the community's needs. • The room that you signed up for is down the hall to the left.
Which	**Used in non-restrictive relative clauses referring to places or things. Typically, clauses containing "which" are set off by one or two commas.** *Examples:* • The team is building a great organization, which will provide for the community's needs. • The office, which is currently empty, is down the hall to the left.
Who	**Used in restrictive and non-restrictive clauses referring to people** *Examples:* • (Restrictive) Monica is the person who organized the event. • (Non-restrictive) Terrell, who took the class last year, will lead the training for new employees.

Structure

Parallel Structure

Parallel structure is terminology that addresses the uniformity given to a list of words, phrases, or clauses found within a sentence or bulleted list. All items in a list should follow the same grammatical pattern. Parallel structure is essential to readability as it gives the reader clarity on the relationship amongst the ideas being presented.

- **Faulty Parallel Structure:** Trillium requires priority admission to all women who are pregnant and injecting drugs, using substances, and others injecting drugs.
- **Proper Parallel Structure:** Trillium requires priority admission to all individuals who are injecting drugs, including women who are pregnant and injecting drugs and women who are pregnant and using substances.

Section 3:
Style and Formatting Guide

This section explains how to access services.
- Abbreviations and Acronyms
- Bulleted Points and Numbered Lists
- Dates and Time
- Numbers
- Typography and Branding

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviations (the shortened form of a word or phrase) and acronyms (words formed from the initial letters of a phrase) are commonly used in Trillium communication to refer to various services, departments, and programs. Since the use of abbreviations and acronyms is necessary, the guidelines below outline best practices when including these in your writing.

Abbreviation

Refer to the Trillium Health Resources list of Vocabulary and Acronyms for reference for Trillium-specific abbreviations. Do not change or adjust any abbreviations from their official form. Any Trillium abbreviation used in an external communication must be spelled out at first mention and then can be referenced as an abbreviation for each mention following

The following items do not receive abbreviations:
- The word "county"
- Days of the week
- Months of the year

A few abbreviations that do not need to be spelled out due to their familiarity:
- Any of the fifty United States
- U.S. or U.S.A
- Units of measurement such as lb., lbs., kg, ml, and the like.
- Abbreviate a unit of measurement if it follows a numeral. The abbreviation remains the same for both single and plural unit measurements. There is no space between the number and unit.

Approved abbreviations for Latin terms
- i.e.: generally is used to say "in other words" or "that is to say"
- e.g.: generally used to offer examples of a matter previously mentioned
- etc.: generally used to say "and others" or "and the rest"

Titles
- Be consistent in abbreviating academic titles and degrees: B.A. (Bachelor of Arts); B.S. (Bachelor of Science); M.A. (Master of Arts); M.S. (Master of Science); LSW (Licensed Social Worker; LMFT (Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist); etc.
- Always use a period after contractions such as Mr., Dr., Ms., or after an abbreviation unless it spells another word—for example, when no. is used instead of number.

Acronyms

Acronyms only need to be used in place of full names or term when the proper name will be repeated continually throughout the text. Refer to the Trillium Health Resources list of Vocabulary and Acronyms for reference for Trillium-specific acronyms.

The first time that you use the name or term, spell it out in full with the acronym in parentheses after it. If the document is lengthy, this should occur at first mention in each major segment.

Bulleted Points and Numbered Lists

Bulleted Points

- All bullet points are left-justified.
  - ° used the most often, particularly in text heavy documents
  - ° used on graphic heavy documents like flyers and promotional material
- Start each bullet point with a capital letter except in instances when the items listed contain fewer than four words.
- Bullet points are useful for organizing short, related points.

When using them avoid:
- Lists of more than six bullet points
- Wide variation in the length of the bullet points in a list
- Bullet points containing lengthy sentences or short paragraphs
- Overusing bullet points, as this can become monotonous for the reader
- Using bullet points to split a long sentence into phrases separated by semi-colons
- Adding punctuation to the end of points in the list that are not complete sentences

Numbered Lists

Use numbered lists instead of bullet points if:
- The list is a series of steps
- Points from the list will be referenced in the text that follows

Dates and Time
- Dates are shown as month/date/year, as in October 12, 2018 or Friday, October 12, 2018.
- Avoid the use of abbreviations and superscripts, as in 12th of July or Aug. 12th 2018.
- When referring to a range of years, show both years in full, as in 2005-2006, with a dash with no spaces in between.
- When referring to a single financial year, use 2017/18 separated by a slash with no spaces in between.
- The names of seasons are not capitalized. If referring to a season within a particular year, write "the spring of 2006", not spring 2006."
- Meridian time indicators must always appear with periods and in lowercase letters (a.m. and p.m.)

Numbers
- Numbers from zero to nine are written out.
- Numbers from 10 and above are to be shown in numerals.
- Numbers of 1,000 or more should have a comma between the thousands.
- The words millions and "billions" should be written out in full.
- A number that starts a sentence should be written as a word regardless of the value. Hyphenate numbers made up of two words. (e.g. twenty-five, thirty-two), but not if the number involves units such as hundred, thousand, million (e.g. five million, six hundred, seven thousand).
- Ordinal/ranking numbers: From first to ninth, the number should be spelled out. For 10th and over, use number with an abbreviation, but no superscript.

- Fractions should be written as words and hyphenated, apart from in tables.

  Example: two-thirds, three-quarters. Use "a third" not "one third", and "a quarter" not "one quarter".

- Numbers of chapter, section, and page numbers are to be shown as numerals (e.g. Chapter 5, section 3, page 89). The exception to this is if the document portion being referenced is labeled with Roman numerals.

- Percentages are written as a numeral and sign (9%) with no space between the number and sign. The exception to this is when a percentage is starting a sentence. In this case, spell out both the number and "percent."

  The number of providers completing the Gaps and Needs Survey increased by 18%. Thirty percent of all employees voted to move the observed Independence Day holiday to the first Friday of July.

- Phone numbers are written: 1-XXX-XXX-XXXX

Typography and Branding

When composing documents, follow all Trillium Health Resources branding and style requirements.

Placement

Left Aligned Placement
The majority of marketing materials will use left aligned placement; for example manuals, brochures, postcards, posters, leaflets and powerpoint presentations. This is a prominent position which strengthens the brand image. Left align placement should be always be used for online application, or cases when the top right hand corner can be obscured e.g. the browser window not being large enough.

Centered Placement
Some marketing materials will use centered placement; for example adverts, posters, leaflets and

powerpoint presentations. This is a prominent position which strengthens the brand image.

Right Aligned Placement
Right aligned placement is only used when vertical space is at a minimum, for example billboards or banners.

Page Parameters

Margins on Letter pages should be as follow:
1.5" header, Left and right 1" in and .5" for bottom

Brand Typefaces

Avenir has been selected as the Trillium Health Resources official font for externally shared documents. It has been selected for its contemporary simplicity and readability. **Avenir** is available in a variety of weights, can be used in PowerPoint presentations and Word documents and is available as a webfont.

Avenir
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUV W XYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Supporting Typefaces

Minion Pro
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUV W XYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Microsoft Sans Serif
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUV W XYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Microsoft YaHei UI
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUV W XYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Verdana
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUV W XYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890

Where necessary **Microsoft Sans Serif** is an acceptable substitute for official fonts.

Use **Microsoft YaHei UI** when sisplaying text in languages other than English or Spanish.

Verdana is an acceptable substitute when displaying text constant contact or other electonic communications.

Font

Paragaph of body text should appear at 12 pt and in light or medium weights with a 90–80% reduction in horizontal scale or width. This in turn, makes the text squish-up a bit and appear compressed or condensed. The text you have been reading in this manual contain an 80% horizontal shift.

If you are using Microsoft Word you can find these options on the **Home** tab.Click the **Font** Dialog Box Launcher and then click the **Advanced** tab. In the **Scale** box, enter the percentage that you want.

Sizes of titles and headings:

- **H1:**
  Avenir Black, All Caps or mixedl case, Green #1 for titles and headings, 18-20 pt.
- **H2:**
  Avenir Medium Oblique, All Caps or mixedcase, Black for subheading, 16 pt
- **H3:**
  Avenir Heavy Oblique, Mixed case, 508 Blue for subheading, 14 pt
- **P:**
  Avenir Book, Black for body text, 12 pt. (80%–90% horizontal reduction) Main titles: 18pt

The body text for large format documents will be 18pt. Sizes for the respective headings will be determined by the Digital Communications Coordinator.

Style

Left-justify all print documents.

Full justify all web content.

Single-space all text.

Logo

See the Press Kit for information regarding Trillium Health Resources' official logo usage.

Section 4: Multimedia

Formatting

Text

All rules for fonts, type size (12pt, etc.), branding, etc. should be followed as for printed or static digital materials.

For videos, an intro (to introduce the topic) and outro (that includes Trillium's logo and contact information) should be used.

Format

Preferred video in QuickTime .MOV format (minimum of 720 x 480), 16:9 aspect ratio, HD 1920 x 1080 video .Mp4, and 4K

Assets

We attempt to use photos and recordings of Trillium events and members whenever possible. Please search the document/photo archive on SharePoint for appropriate images.

If appropriate images are not available, stock photos can be used. Communications maintains a license through Adobe Stock. Please query the type, proportion, and standard content materials. Once the choice has been made, send us the license number and we can download the asset for your department usage. Please send a request to MarketingandMessaging@TrilliumNC.org. See below for turnaround time needed.

Accessibility

All accessibility rules (Section 508, etc.) should be incorporated for video or animated images.

Platforms such as Youtube allow for auto captioning, but provide a script for the video if necessary.

Keep all text in "video safe" area and above playhead timeline. Be mindful of title and captions in same the space.

Audio files (standard)

- Preferred: .aiff files; also accepted: .wav and .ac3 files
- Bit-rate: 24-bit
- Sample rate: 48 kHz

Subtitle files

- Submit subtitles in SubRip (.SRT), Spruce (.STL), or Text (.TXT) file formats.
- Length of individual captions appearing on screen should not exceed 65 characters, including spaces.
- Limit captions to two lines per screen, and ensure that their placement doesn't conflict with the placement of other text on screen (e.g., names, titles).
- Be sure to use the correct dimensions based on placement for Youtube, Facebook, Instagram, mobile, website, or other outlets.

Audio and sound

When adding audio as background music or supplementary content to PowerPoint or video projects, use royalty-free or creative commons-licensed materials. Suggested but not limited to YouTube Audio Library. You must create or retain a gmail account to access these resources.

Platforms

Communications typically uploads recorded videos to Youtube for sharing on our website and social media channels.

Other viable options include:
- Vimeo
- Microsoft Stream

***If you need assistance downloading these assets or having any materials reviewed, please give marketing a two-week turnaround time for music and other requests. Taking these necessary steps will ensure that all rules and regulations surrounding copyrighted audio is in accordance with state and federal law.

Resources

New Communications Project Requests

https://app.smartsheet.com/b/
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