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CCSM Issues Committee Final Draft: Maine.Gov DHHS Website Issues – 2/8/2023

The Issue:

The Maine.gov website is often out of date and not the most user-friendly. When the average person goes to this site for information, they often get lost in the process. When websites are not geared for the average person, who may need the website, people tend to get frustrated and give up. This causes them to search for other ways to find the information they need. This adds extra time that they may not have, especially when they are desperately searching for specific resources.

Recommendations:

1. The Maine.gov website is not ADA compliant/friendly. There should be a variety of methods for accessibility needs. For example, there should be a way to change the size and color of the font on the site for people that need it. If there is not an outside organization that helps DHHS with checking their site, we recommend that there be an accessibility expert organization that guides the work of the website.
2. The site should be updated in a timely fashion (ex. as of 12/14/2022 the ADA site has a coordinator listed that is no longer there).
3. The search engine at Maine.gov should be more adept at catching the words entered. A broader search engine is needed. For example, if you search for mental health advisory groups, you do not get to the right place. This is where it would take you to [Mental Health Services | Department of Health and Human Services \(maine.gov\)](#). If you change it to behavioral health advisory, you get [Behavioral Health Services |](#)



[Department of Corrections \(maine.gov\)](#). The second choice is more accurate and takes you to OBH. Even when you get to the OBH page you must look under Advisory Groups on a tab to the left. In a perfect world, it should take you to that specific page without the extra step. This is the page it should take you to [Advisory Groups | Department of Health and Human Services \(maine.gov\)](#). It would be helpful on this page to have a brief description of what each organization does, so that you don't have to click each one to get the organizational information. We hope this example illustrates the issues people have with accessing the information on the Maine.gov website.

4. The website is not well organized from the user's perspective. It is organized, in our opinion, for people who know the Maine.gov system. For those who do not understand how the Maine system works, it is not easy to know where to find what they may be looking for. Therefore, we would like to see it become more public user friendly.
5. We would like to see multi-generational forms of communication utilizing phone text, chat features, social media, etc. ,as well as, the more traditional platforms that currently exist.
6. The ITAC committee information on the website had many dead-end links and the public has no way to know who is on this committee or how to reach them. Does this committee have robust membership that includes individuals from different cross-disability groups? If not, we believe that this is a valuable committee that would benefit from a more diversified and inclusive membership.
7. We would like to see multiple ways that feedback could be given to the webmaster besides the online survey comment page that is currently available. You may also consider sending out a survey to website users to get important information that would guide the re-design.



8. There needs to be a clear way to alert the website managers when the public finds errors or organizations need to make changes. This could be as simple as a prominently displayed notify/change button added to the website.

Expected Outcomes:

We would like to see a more user-friendly website where individuals in need can quickly and easily find the resources they are looking for, which would also enhance the purpose for which the website is intended. This would allow users to utilize pertinent information in a timely and updated fashion.

Resources: [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0 \(w3.org\)](https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/)
