

Website Links

Reviewed Date		Number	IM0116
Revised Date		Approved Date	November 22, 2000

Introduction

Purpose

The Internet is an extensive resource of health-related knowledge and ideas. The health unit's goal in creating its own website is to increase access to accurate and credible health information and to expand the hours and the reach of public health programs and services. Creating links from the health unit website to other sites with information of relevance to public health, is a cost-effective approach to supporting access to information. A major limitation of this strategy is the lack of a formal process for assessing the accuracy and quality of information provided on health-related web sites. Therefore, the agency must put into place processes for assessing the site to ensure we are not linking people to health related information that may be biased, misleading, or, at worst, result in health-damaging consequences if acted upon.

And, while the agency cannot effectively preclude other websites from incorporating a link to our site, we may actively solicit opportunities to create links to our site from other sites in order to increase traffic to our site.

Legislative Authority

Policy Definitions and Interpretation

Policy

A statement will be incorporated into the home page of the website describing agency responsibility related to links from the site

All links included within the pages of the agency site will meet the standards established by the Internet Steering Committee for health-related web sites. Links will be audited on a bi-annual basis to ensure they continue to be active and relevant.

Web sites will be notified of the agency's intent to create a link to the site.

Procedures

Establishing links to other sites

1. Program staff complete the evaluation (IM0116-F1) form for a specific link and forward to the webmaster.

2. The webmaster reviews evaluation form with the Director – Corporate Service. and if the web sites meets agency standards the webmaster notifies the web site in question of the agency's intent to create a link.
3. If there is no correspondence to the contrary, the webmaster activates the link on the agency web site.
4. The webmaster files the link evaluation form for reference.
5. In June and December of each year the list of links is reviewed by the Internet Steering Committee. Audits are conducted by members of the committee to ensure the sites are still active and relevant. If the request is to have the link incorporated into the links to other health related sites, the request will be reviewed by the Internet Steering committee. Once endorsed by the committee the link will be created.

Soliciting links from other sites

1. Staff identify in writing to the webmaster opportunities to link from other sites to the SMDHU website
2. The webmaster reviews the requests with the Director – Corporate Service.
3. If deemed appropriate, the webmaster forwards an email to the webmaster of the site requesting that a link be activated to the SMDHU site.
4. The webmaster maintains a record of requests to link along with any correspondence indicating that a link has been activated. This record is reviewed by the Internet Steering Committee annually.

Related Forms

IM0116(F1) - Health-Related Website Evaluation Form

Related Policies

Final Approval Signature: _____

Review/Revision History:

September 2010 Policy re-numbered, previous number C1.090