

DEVELOPING A WEBSITE TO CONVEY HEALTH RELATED INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WITH

SPINAL CORD INJURIES,

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Background

- The internet is becoming a more critical resource for health related information.
- People with spinal cord injury (SCI) use the internet to search for reliable information.¹
- In order for websites to meet the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, websites must comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.²
- The Spinal Cord Connections (SCC) website is a partnership between UHN - TRI Spinal Cord Rehab Program and Canadian Paraplegic Association (CPA) Ontario.

Objectives

- Design a website for people with SCI, health care providers and the community with Canadian content and expertise.
- Provide a website with trustworthy, reliable and up to date information on SCI.

Methods

- Over the past 1.5 years SCC has been in development creating Canadian content and inviting other recognized sites to add content and links (*Figure 1*).
- Content was developed and vetted with and by professionals working in SCI rehab and consumers with SCI.

Website Infrastructure

- The SCC site uses a content management system, based on open-source software.
- A presentation layer was implemented, utilizing 'responsive design' for mobile devices and coded with accessible web standards in mind.
- User-centred design principles were used to organize the website information architecture.
- Usability testing of the new site was performed throughout the change process.

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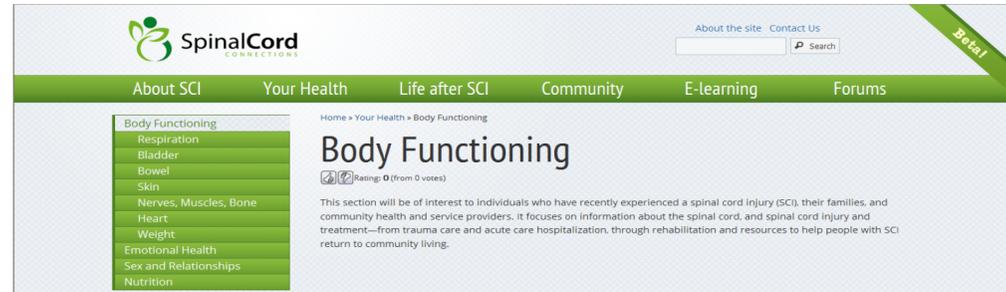


Figure 1. Screenshot of Spinalcordconnections.ca website

Usability Testing

- Conduct interviews with people with SCI until consistent feedback is achieved (N=6).
- 100% of respondents found the site to be easy to use, well-designed, and informative in the usability testing.
- Information was easier to find and read.
- All participants in the testing phase would strongly recommend the site to others living with an SCI.
- The site was tested and found compatible with a wider range of devices and assistive technologies.

SCI-University – a website feature

- These interactive e-learning courses have been designed to provide accessible, interactive and customized information about must know SCI-related topics.
- Focused on problem solving and practical information, everyday health concerns and challenge of adaptation (*Figure 2*).
- SCI U is a valuable asset housed on the SCC website.



Figure 2. SCI U screen shots

Scorecard Metrics

- Google analytics will be used to measure:
 - ✓ The number of unique website visitors per month.
 - ✓ The popularity/interest of pages viewed (excluding views of discussion boards & landing/home page).
 - ✓ Time spent on the website per visit.
 - ✓ The number of new site visitors compared to returning visitors.

Planning for Evaluation

- To commence after approximately six months of the website being available to the public.
- Methods to include – pop up on-screen questionnaires, face to face interviews, focus groups.
- Evaluate SCI consumer user experience of using a web-based resource and the perceived utility of the information provided.
- Investigators will use a quasi-experimental, pre-test post-test, design that will measure the impact of the SCC website on SCI consumer satisfaction, health literacy and health behavior.

Conclusions

- Our user-centric overhaul of the site's information architecture has made navigation simpler, and information easier to find.
- Usability testing confirms these conclusions, and the new SCC website is a solid foundation to build and maintain a community site focused on the needs of people with spinal cord injuries.
- Comprehensive evaluation protocol will help us determine success of the site from a user perspective.



1. Burkell JA, Wolfe DL, Potter PJ, Jutai JW. Information needs and information sources of individuals living with spinal cord injury. *Health Info Libr J.* 2006;23(4):257-65.
2. <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG/>