



Information Partner Metadata Guidelines

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Index

Index.....	2
Introduction	3
Key points	3
What is metadata?	4
Metadata examples as they display on healthdirect	4
Why do we need metadata?	4
Who creates the metadata?	5
Who needs to maintain it?	5
Do we need to add metadata to the entire site?	5
What type of metadata does the Healthdirect Australia harvester crawl?	5
Can the harvester crawl PDF pages?	6
Which metadata fields are required?.....	6
What does metadata code look like?	6
Where do we add the required metadata fields?	7
How do I write appropriate meta titles and descriptions?	7
What if we are unable to implement metadata?	8

Introduction

This document is designed to provide Healthdirect Australia Information Partners with guidelines on how to implement and manage metadata in order that their online resources can be crawled by Healthdirect Australia and displayed accurately in our information partner search results.

Throughout this document we refer to 'resources'. A resource is an individual item of content published on an Information Partner website.

The term 'resource' can refer to:

- Documents such as information pages, articles, blog posts and new items
- Audio and video files
- Apps, tools, widgets
- Online programs
- Information about offline services provided by information partners, such as support groups (where the information partner has online health information that meets the eligibility criteria).

Harvesting is the process of ingesting Information Partner resources/content into the two Healthdirect Australia websites:

- [healthdirect](#)
- [Pregnancy Birth & Baby](#)

If you have any questions after reviewing this document or you would like us to speak to your web manager or developer, please contact your partner manager.

Key points

- Have good quality metadata for every page we link to
- Our websites display your [meta title](#) and [meta description](#).
- Each meta title and meta description needs to be unique for every URL we link to
- Include the main keyword, i.e. condition name, in both the meta title and meta description
- One resource, one page - including videos (if you nest multiple resources on one page, we can't link to them).
- PDFs need to be on an HTML page for us to link to them

What is metadata?

Metadata is defined as data about data. It is what helps search engines such as Google, Yahoo, Bing and the search function on any website identify what a resource is about and its relevance to a search query. A metadata record typically includes, but is not limited to:

- basic information such as title, author, version, dates
- a description or summary of the content
- the possible use of the content
- the intended audience
- legal information about the ownership or rights held over the resource
- how to access the resource and any access restrictions

Good metadata improves search engine optimisation (SEO)

Search engines also use metadata to help showcase the resource on search results pages, helping the user decide if it is relevant to their search without clicking to find out more. Therefore, it is ideal to have well written information in the metadata record as it increases the likelihood of that resource being chosen and is one of the search engine optimisation (SEO) practices that can be controlled.

Metadata examples as they display on healthdirect

The image shows a screenshot of a search results page on healthdirect. At the top, it says "Need more information?" and "These trusted information partners have more on this topic." Below this are two tabs: "General search results" (selected) and "Results for medical professionals". Under "General search results", there are two search results. The first result is titled "Asthma symptoms in children and teenagers | Raising Children Network". The description says "Asthma symptoms include wheezing, coughing and breathing difficulty, but asthma symptoms can also be vague. Read what to look for and when to see a doctor." and includes a link to "Read more on raisingchildren.net.au website". The second result is titled "Asthma medicines | Sydney Children's Hospitals Network". The description says "Good asthma control is: NOT waking up with asthma symptoms and not having symptoms on more than two days per week" and includes a link to "Read more on Sydney Children's Hospitals Network website". Arrows on the left point to the "Title" and "Description" fields of each result.

Why do we need metadata?

Metadata improves the ability of a user to search for and discover information online. It is especially useful for resources such as videos, audio recordings where there is no searchable text.

Most importantly for Healthdirect Australia Information Partners, when we present partner content on our search results, we display the title and description from the metadata fields provided by you/in your resource. Our harvester crawls every URL we link to and looks for the meta title and meta description, therefore it is important to maintain these fields, so the most accurate and current information is displayed.

Who creates the metadata?

Information Partners are responsible for creating and applying metadata to their online resources. This may be a software developer or your website manager. Healthdirect Australia can provide advice if required.

Who needs to maintain it?

The Information Partner is responsible for maintaining it. If you make changes to the content on your website, the corresponding metadata fields need to be updated.

Do we need to add metadata to the entire site?

For the purpose of Healthdirect Australia's harvester crawling your content, we need you to add it to the pages that we link to. However, it is best practice to incorporate maintenance of the metadata into your content management system. This ensures that the metadata automatically updates whenever changes are made to the content. If you are using a form of metadata called HTML meta tags, this will also provide SEO benefits when your site is indexed by external search engines such as Google, Yahoo and Bing.

What type of metadata does the Healthdirect Australia harvester crawl?

Our harvester crawls either HTML or DC metadata. If you have both, it will favour the DC.

HTML meta tags (or meta elements)

The harvesting tool will search for HTML meta tags. These are already present on many websites as these are used by external search engines such as Google, Yahoo and Bing to categorise pages correctly and to improve SEO.

DC metadata

The harvesting tool will capture whatever is in the DC fields, even if this is incomplete or incorrect. It should be noted that DC metadata will not improve SEO on external search engines such as Google, Yahoo and Bing.

Can the harvester crawl PDF pages?

In order for us to crawl your URLs, resources must be presented in HTML or have an HTML cover page which has acceptable metadata as outlined in the following sections. This applies to PDF documents, multimedia content and interactive tools (such as calculators, apps, videos etc). Have one page only for every resource (nesting multiple resources on one page, prevents us linking to it).

Which metadata fields are required?

There are two metadata fields our harvester crawls:

1. Metadata title

Include a metadata field containing an accurate and unique title for every resource in either DC metadata or HTML meta tags.

2. Metadata description

Include a metadata field containing an accurate and unique description for every resource in either DC metadata or HTML meta tags.

The title and description that you feature in the metadata of your resources will display in search results on Healthdirect Australia websites. If the meta titles and descriptions are accurate and succinct and contain the keywords, your resources are more likely to appear in relevant search results. Users will also find it easier to browse and evaluate the results.

What does metadata code look like?

Example of HTML metadata code:

The HTML meta tag for title:

```
<title>This is the title of the page</title>
```

The HTML meta tag for description:

```
<meta name="description" content="A blurb to describe the content of the page appears here
```

Example of DC metadata code:

The DC metadata for title:

```
<META NAME="DC.Title" CONTENT="This is the title of the page">
```

The DC metadata for description:

```
<META NAME="DC.Description" CONTENT=" A blurb to describe the content of the page appears here.">
```

Where do we add the required metadata fields?

The title and description metadata fields need to be within the <head> </head> tags in the source code of every page we link to, in order for our harvester to identify it. You may have these fields in your content management system (CMS). If you do not have a content management system (CMS) you will need to update each page by accessing the source code. This may require working with your software developer.

Example of metadata in source code:

```

8 <head>
9   <meta charset="utf-8">
10  <meta http-equiv="X-UA-Compatible" content="IE=edge">
11  <meta name="viewport" content="width=device-width, initial-scale=1">
12
13
14  <meta name="site.paths.root" data-metabaron content="/" />
15  <meta name="site.paths.static" data-metabaron content="/static/" />
16  <meta name="config.api.dataClass" data-metabaron content="" />
17  <meta name="site.searchApiEndpoint" data-metabaron content="/api/search/" />
18  <meta name="site.cookiesApiEndpoint" data-metabaron content="/api/cookie/" />
19
20  <title>Living with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) | FASD Hub</title>
21  <meta name="description" content="Some of the strengths and challenges a person living
22  with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) may face in Australia." />

```



here

How do I write appropriate meta titles and descriptions?

Writing an effective meta title

- **Meta title** - You should always have a unique title tag on every page that describes the page. [Check out this post for more information on title tags.](#)

Ensure that each page/resource has a unique and informative title. Where possible, this should be the same as the heading published on the page. Try to avoid page names such 'Anne's story' or 'Page 12345', aim to include the best key words that relate to the content while keeping it short and to the point. Avoid jokes, puns, numbers and special characters in titles. Also don't have the same title repeated across different pages as this will prevent us displaying them. No more than 60 characters to ensure it is not cut off by the search engine.

Example of meta title:

Migraine with aura | Brain Foundation

Writing an effective meta description

- **Meta description** - The meta description tag is used for one major purpose: to describe the page to searchers as they read through the Search Engine Results Pages (SERPs). This tag doesn't influence ranking, but it's very important regardless. It's the ad copy that will determine if users click on *your* result. Keep it within 160 characters and write it to catch the user's attention. Sell the page — get them to click on the result. The description should elaborate on the title and provide a reasonable expectation of what the user will find by clicking through to the resource. Here's a great article on [meta descriptions](#) that goes into more detail. No more than 160 characters to ensure it is not cut off by the search engine

Example of meta description:

Migraine is a neurological disorder that can be very distressing and disabling. Typically, it is a one-sided throbbing or pulsating headache that is at least moderately intense.

What if we are unable to implement metadata?

If your organisation is an approved partner with online resources that do not comply with the minimum requirement Healthdirect Australia may, at its discretion, agree to manage a small number of resources manually. This would be viewed as a temporary measure till such time as metadata can be implemented. Metadata compliance does not affect the publication of your partner profile page.

Should you require further information or support, please notify your allocated partner manager who can arrange to have our information manager talk with you and/or your developer.