



BC PATIENT SAFETY
& QUALITY COUNCIL

Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.

BC Patient Safety & Quality Council

Style Guide

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PART 1

Style

grammar

& usage

This section outlines a few good practices and suggestions for writing – about the Council, and in general too. The idea isn't to take these as strict rules, but rather as guidelines for making your communication as approachable and readable as possible. Using a friendly tone, when appropriate, helps us sound engaging and human. And using consistent style across all of our communications ensures our content is polished, recognizable and helpful for readers.

The most useful thing to keep in mind when you're writing, whether it's something that's a little more formal, promotional, internal or for the public eye, is to keep it clear. Shorter paragraphs and sentences, plain language, and a second pair of eyes (the Comms team is always here for you!) will all help with this.

council naming & spelling conventions

- Use an ampersand when writing out the Council's full name.

The BC Patient Safety & Quality Council is an organization . . .

- After using the full name, you can use "BCPSQC" in further mentions. Just make sure to include "(BCPSQC)" the first time you write out the full name so that people know what you're referring to.

The BC Patient Safety & Quality Council (BCPSQC) regularly offers workshops.

Learn more about BCPSQC's workshops!

- In general, though, we prefer to use "the Council" (capitalizing "Council") over "BCPSQC" in further mentions. Even better, look for opportunities to use the first person: a collective "we" or "our."

The Council's vision is a sustainable health care system built on a foundation of quality. We provide system-wide leadership...

- After the first time you refer to the Quality Forum, you can abbreviate it to "the Forum." Use a direct article ("the"), unless you are talking about a specific year's Forum.

The Quality Forum is a great networking opportunity. Registration for the Forum will open in November.

- When referring to a specific Forum, the year should follow the words "Quality Forum."

Quality Forum 2018 (not 2018 Quality Forum or "the Quality Forum 2018")

- The prefix in "pre-Forum" is not capitalized (unless it's at the beginning of a sentence).

The pre-Forum session is on February 21.

- Capitalize names of events, workshops, programs, departments and initiatives.

Quality Forum

Releasing Time to Care

Patient Voices Network

Clinical Improvement

- Capitalize proper nouns in Council URLs to make them easier to read and remember.

BCPSQC.ca

QualityForum.ca

ChangeDayBC.ca

- In general, try not to use www. when writing a URL.

■ **HERE'S A TIP:**

If you'd like to insert a hyperlink in a Word document, you can highlight a URL, such as BCPSQC.ca, press **CTRL + K**, and add a link.

- Don't put articles in front of acronyms and initialisms, even if an article is used with the spelled-out form.

"Sign up with the Patient Voices Network!"

AND

"Sign up with PVN!"

"The BC Patient Safety & Quality Council is..."

AND

"BCPSQC is..."

- Follow our internal conventions for spelling, shortening and abbreviating our initiatives. Contact the Comms team if you're unsure of an abbreviation or initialism.

→ "Releasing Time to Care" can be abbreviated to "RT2C" after first use.

→ "Engaging People in Improving Quality" can be abbreviated to "EPIQ" after first use.

→ "Quality Café" should always be spelled with the accented e.

■ **HERE'S A TIP:**

To insert an é, use the alt code: **ALT + 0233** (while holding the Alt key, type 0233 on your keyboard's number pad).

EXCEPTION:

→ "Clear" is no longer stylized as an acronym for "Call for Less Antipsychotics in Residential Care," so you do NOT need to use the full name the first time you refer to it.

■ **FUN FACT:**

An acronym is an abbreviation that spells a word you pronounce (like EPIQ) and an initialism is one where you say each letter, instead of the word (like PVN).

preferred spellings & terms

- Write "health care" as two words.

Our vision is high quality and sustainable health care for all.

- Use "patient- and family-centred care," not "patient-centred care" or any other combination of dashes and capitalizations.

PVN's mission is to advance authentic patient engagement by building the capacity of our partners so patient- and family-centred care becomes the foundation from which all health care decisions are made.

- Write provincial abbreviations without periods.

Vancouver, BC

- Use simpler language wherever possible.

Among, not amongst

Use, not utilize

■ RESOURCE:

This Government of Canada resource, *Plain Language, Clear and Simple*, lists simple alternatives to complex words and phrases:

publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2017/ircc/Ci53-3-3-1991-eng.pdf

- Use the term "Indigenous" when referring to First Nations, Métis and Inuit people collectively, or if you are unsure which term to use, as it avoids negative associations that accompany the term "Aboriginal."

However, there may be instances when it is appropriate to use those other terms. Whenever possible, use the term that an organization, group or person uses themselves, and, if you are unsure, simply ask someone involved.

We are working with the First Nations Health Authority to include the voices and perspectives of Indigenous people and communities in health system planning.

■ **RESOURCE:**

Looking for more information about appropriate terminology? Refer to UBC's guidelines (assets.brand.ubc.ca/downloads/ubc_indigenous_peoples_language_guide.pdf), and a document we created that defines terms and protocols ([S:\First Nations Health Authority\Cultural Safety & Cultural Humility\3.0 Indigenous Cultural Competence \(Definitions\)](S:\First Nations Health Authority\Cultural Safety & Cultural Humility\3.0 Indigenous Cultural Competence (Definitions))).

punctuation

- When using a dash to separate parts of a sentence, or to separate dates and times, use an en-dash with one space on either side. (An en-dash is slightly longer than a normal dash.)

This workshop is filling up fast – register today!

February 24 – 26

■ **HERE'S A TIP:**

In Microsoft Word, typing a space, then a dash, and then a space will automatically turn the dash into an en-dash.

To manually add an en-dash between two spaces, use the alt code: **ALT + 0150** (see page 8 to learn how to use alt codes).

- Generally, use a colon to separate parts of titles.

Culture Change: Not as Easy as it Sounds

EXAMPLE OF AN EXCEPTION:

Game On! Using Gamification to Maximize Motivation and Engagement for Health Improvement

- Periods, commas, exclamation marks and question marks go before closing quotation marks (double or single).

"Where is my session?" asked Heather.

95% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I learned new ideas or concepts."

- Other punctuation marks (e.g., colons, semicolons and dashes) go after.

This Quality Café is dedicated to "TRIZ": one of many liberating structures used for engaging teams.

- Always use double quotation marks, unless you are writing a quote within a quote.

"One participant said, 'This was my favourite Quality Forum ever!'"

- In general, avoid using an Oxford comma, which is sometimes placed after the second-to-last item in a list.

| BCPSQC team members live in Summerland,
Prince George, Burnaby and Victoria.

- Do use an Oxford comma when it will help the reader avoid confusion and correctly interpret the message you are communicating (often a good idea if the items in your list are longer phrases).

| We seek out national and international
innovation of value to BC, adapt these new
ideas to meet the needs of our health care
system, and work with our partners to put them
in place.

- Do not double space after a period.

| The Council is great. We have fun.

- Use periods to punctuate phone numbers.

| 604.668.8210

- Publication titles should be written in italics, not quotation marks.

Check out the Council's annual report, *How Are We Getting There? Our Relentless Pursuit of Quality.*

- Use commas after i.e. and e.g.

The call won't take much time – i.e., one hour.

Choose any ATTIC activity you'd like – e.g., Toss Me Some Feedback or Reinforcer.

■ **FUN FACT:**

i.e. stands for "id est," which means "that is" in Latin, and e.g. stands for "exempli gratia," which means "for example."

titles & capitalization

- When writing out a title, capitalize the first and last word, and everything else except:
 - Articles, like "a" and "the"
 - Coordinating conjunctions, like "and," "or" and "but"
 - Prepositions, like "on," "in," "at," "for" and "with"
 - The "to" in infinitives

Change the Way You Talk to Change the Way
You Work

Clearing a Path to Improved Care for Residents
with Dementia

■ HERE'S A TIP:

Check out titlecapitalization.com (set it to "Do not capitalize words based on length") to test your titles if you're unsure.

- Email addresses are in all lower case.

ckrause@bcpsqc.ca

qualityforum@bcpsqc.ca

- Always capitalize the word "Indigenous" when referring to First Peoples in Canada or related topics (but not when referring to something non-human, like a plant or animal, that originates from a particular place).

"How can we hardwire the Indigenous perspective into everything we do in health care?"

"Pineapples are indigenous to South America."

numbers, dates & times

- Generally, spell out numbers one to nine, and use numerals for numbers 10 and up.

Two, seven, nine

11, 365, 7,877, 10,000

- Larger numbers are only written out if they come at the beginning of a sentence.

Twelve hundred people attended Quality Forum 2017.

- Use commas in numbers over 999.

There were 1,200 people at Quality Forum 2017.

- Time is in 24-hour format, with numbers in time ranges separated by an en-dash with a space on either side.

0830 – 1630

Lunch is at 1300.

- Typically, we add PT for webinars and other digital events that may be attended by people from outside BC.

| Quality Café will begin at 1200 PT!

- We do not use numerical suffixes when writing dates (e.g., January 9, not 9th).

| October 17, 2017

- Whenever space permits, write the name of the month in full (e.g. September 3, not Sep 3).

| The webinar will take place on January 4, 2018.

- When referring to percentages, use the symbol and not the word "percent."

| 93% of participants enjoyed the session.

reference information

- Include the Council contact information on the back cover of all printed documents.
- Digital documents do not require full mailing information but should always include a contact name, email address, social media handles, and phone number.

- **RESOURCE:**

- Use this file for a template and examples:

- <S:\Communications\Strategy\Template for Contact Info on Back Covers of Publications>

- When referencing sources in a report or other document, use the Vancouver Style, which is the standard for many medical publications.

- **RESOURCE:**

- Several educational institutions offer online guides to Vancouver Style. Here's one:

- <bcit.ca/files/library/pdf/bcit-vancouverstyle.pdf>

- **FUN FACT:**

- Yes, this style was developed in Vancouver! The International Committee of Medical Journal Editors created it at a meeting there in 1978.

acronyms & abbreviations

This list is a pretty thorough – though not exhaustive – collection of the acronyms and abbreviations that get thrown around at the Council. Generally, peppering your writing with a lot of acronyms and initialisms will make it difficult to understand for those who don't work here (and even for those who do!).

To keep things simple, try to spell these terms out in external communications. There are a few that are easily recognizable and can be shortened when writing for people who don't work with us – we've indicated these with an asterisk *. (If you want to be safe, though, it's best to spell them out the first time you use them.)

** indicates terms that are easily recognizable and can generally be abbreviated even in external communications*

* 48/6	48/6 Model of Care
B&E	Board & Executive
* BCPSQC	BC Patient Safety & Quality Council
CEG	Clinical Expert Group
* CLwK	Connecting Learners with Knowledge (CLwK.ca)
CI	Clinical Improvement
CQA	Clinician Quality Academy
CWG	Communications Working Group
* EPIQ	Engaging People in Improving Quality
* HQN/ BC HQN	Health Quality Network/ BC Health Quality Network
* HSSBC	Health Shared Services BC
HT	Health Talks
I&E	Innovation & Engagement

** indicates terms that are easily recognizable and can generally be abbreviated even in external communications*

* MAiD (see note below)	Medical Assistance in Dying
P&PE	Patient & Public Engagement
* PAD (see note below)	Pain, Agitation and Delirium
PFCC	Patient- and Family-Centred Care
* PVN	Patient Voices Network
QA	Quality Academy
QF	Quality Forum
* RT2C	Releasing Time to Care
* SQAN	Surgical Quality Action Network
* VTE	Venous thromboembolism

NOTE: Always spell out Pain, Agitation and Delirium on first use because the acronym PAD has also become associated with Physician-Assisted Death.

Also, use the phrase Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) and not the phrase Physician-Assisted Death.

names & terms



In most of our communications, most of the time, we try to avoid using professional and academic degree designations that appear before or after someone's name.

That being said, it is often appropriate or necessary to include titles. Below are some guidelines for when using a title might be a good idea versus when we try not to, as well as some good grammatical rules of thumb for including designations.

- Generally, avoid using "Dr." or other titles.

Speaker: Susan Smith

(as opposed to Dr. Susan Smith or Dr. Smith)

- General titles that aren't written as part of a name don't need to be capitalized.

The minister of health

vs.

The speech given by Minister of Health
Adrian Dix

Lisa Chan is a licensed practical nurse.

Colin McDonald is a family physician.

- Capitalize specific titles within organizations.

Doug Cochrane

Chair, BC Patient Safety & Quality Council

Shari McKeown is the Director of Clinical
Improvement at BCPQSC.

- Use abbreviations (without periods) when listing degrees.

Patricia Lam, BKin, BSN

- When writing a degree generally (e.g., "master's degree"), it doesn't need to be capitalized. Capitalize specific degrees, focus of degree (for example "in Nursing"), and names of institutions.

Ahmed holds a Master of Applied Science from UBC.

Sharon earned her bachelor's degree in Communications from the University of Northern BC.

VS.

Sharon earned her Bachelor of Communications from UNBC.

Owen is a registered nurse with a Master of Science in Nursing from the University of Victoria.

REMEMBER:

Don't pluralize degrees, and only use the possessive form when writing the general degree level (i.e. don't write "Masters of Arts" or "Master's of Arts," but do write "Master of Arts" or "master's degree in History") – refer to examples.

PART 2

Design

about **our brand**



We love making great first impressions!

Our brand identity helps cultivate our image as an innovative, approachable and energetic organization.

our logo

The BC Patient Safety & Quality Council logo combines three elements: an icon, a wordmark and a tagline. These elements should never be changed and, if used consistently, will reinforce public awareness of our organization.



|
icon

**BC PATIENT SAFETY
& QUALITY COUNCIL**

— wordmark

Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.

— tagline

Placing logos can be tricky. Depending on the circumstance, sometimes it's better to use black, white or black-and-white versions of the Council logo.

100% white



**BC PATIENT SAFETY
& QUALITY COUNCIL**

Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.

- For darker backgrounds, use the white logo to make it more distinguishable.

black & white



**BC PATIENT SAFETY
& QUALITY COUNCIL**

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- Want printing costs to be lower? Only one colour of ink available? No problem! Use the black and white logo.

100% black



**BC PATIENT SAFETY
& QUALITY COUNCIL**

Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.

- For lighter backgrounds, use the black logo to make it more distinguishable.

construction & white space



- Try to make the logo large enough so you can read the wordmark in printed documents (at least 35 mm wide).



- If you're using just the icon, it should be at least 10 mm.

■ SOME BAD EXAMPLES:





- Think of white space around the logo to ensure its visibility. Use the height of the icon as a guide.



- When placing more than one logo together, try to make their icons about the same size, and align them along the bottom or the left, depending on if they're lined up or stacked.



■ SOME MORE BAD EXAMPLES:



BC PATIENT SAFETY
& QUALITY COUNCIL
Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness



BC PATIENT SAFETY
& QUALITY COUNCIL
Working Together. Accelerating Improvement.



How you want to be treated.

our typography



PRIMARY FONT 1:

ALRIGHT SANS

- Alright Sans can be used in most BCPSQC communications to project a consistent visual identity, whether they're digital or printed materials. We currently have seven styles of this font: thin, light, regular, medium, bold and black, with corresponding italics. If you don't have Alright Sans on your computer, Compugen can install it for you.

thin

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

thin italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

regular italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

black

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

black italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

PRIMARY FONT 2:

CALIBRI

- Calibri can also be used in BCPSQC communications. It's useful for text-dense documents where Arial Sans might look a bit too busy, and it comes as a standard font in Word and other Microsoft programs. It's available in three styles: light, regular and bold, with corresponding italics.

light

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

light italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

regular

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

regular italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

bold italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

SECONDARY FONT:

PMN Caecilia

- PMN Caecilia is a slab serif font that matches well with Alright Sans. It works well as body text or as a title, header or subheader in documents. If you're displaying data, we also use numbers in this font (including the page numbers in this document!). We currently have four styles available in this font. If you don't have PMN Caecilia on your computer, Compugen can install it for you.

roman

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

heavy

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

1234567890

our colours

The Council green is one of our most distinguishable features. It is an essential part of our identity.

Combine it with white, black or our unique grey.

We like to keep it simple! Below are some codes you can use in Word and other programs that will let you easily add our colours to documents. Need help? Ask the Comms team!

Pantone



Solid Coated
583 C

Print



C = 16
M = 3
Y = 97
K = 13

Hex



#C4C224

Web



R = 196
G = 194
B = 36



Solid Coated
Warm Gray
9 C



C = 53
M = 48
Y = 53
K = 9



#7F7871



R = 127
G = 120
B = 113

email formatting & signatures



Feel free to use this guide to make yourself an email signature and email formatting consistent with Council branding.

The Comms team will occasionally circulate timely signature tags you can switch out below your main signature, usually a brief sentence and a link to help spread the word about a current or upcoming campaign, project or event.

If you have any trouble setting up your signature, don't forget the Comms team is always here to help!

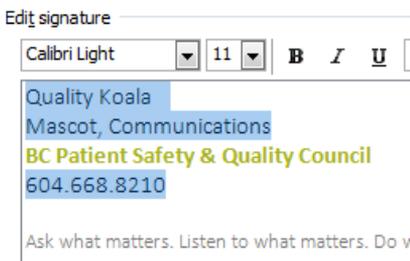
signatures



- In a new message in Outlook, select "Signatures" from the Signature menu under the Insert tab.



- Select "New," and give it a name!



- Set the font for your name, title, and phone number to 11 pt. Calibri Light.

Edit signature

Calibri (Body) 11 **B** *I* U 

Quality Koala
Mascot, Communications
BC Patient Safety & Quality Council
604.668.8210

Ask what matters. Listen to what matters. Do w

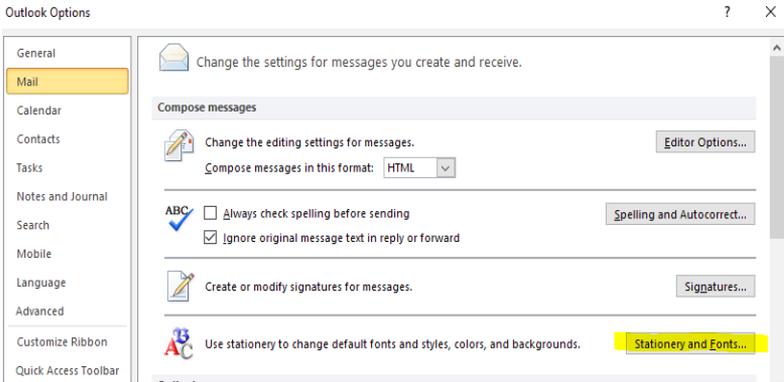
- Set the Council's name to 11 pt. Calibri, bolded. Make it Council green with the RGB values on page 39. (Select "More colours" under the colour drop-down, then select the "Custom" tab.)

Quality Koala
Mascot, Communications
BC Patient Safety & Quality Council
604.668.8210

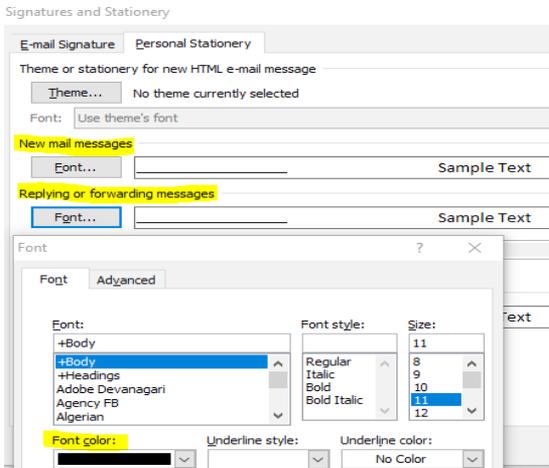
Ask what matters. Listen to what matters. Do what matters. Find out how at www.whatmatterstoyoubc.ca

- Please don't include any other images, quotes, etc. in your signature, except for signature tags circulated by the Comms team to promote Council initiatives.
- Signature tags are 11 pt. Calibri Light in Council grey. Voila! Save and add to emails at your leisure.

text formatting



- From Outlook, select "File" and then "Options." From the Options menu, select "Mail" and then "Stationery and Fonts."



- Select "Font" under "New mail messages" and make sure the font colour is set to black. Do the same for "Replies or forwarding messages." (It's often set to blue by default.) Now you're all set!

