

# Making Web Sites Work For Users: Revising the Portal of the Department of Health and Human Services

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# It's Not About Counting Features. It's About Finding The Ones That Work

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1. Identify which features or design attributes are helping or failing users
2. Establish why particular features or design attributes are failing users
3. Address these findings and create a new user-centric portal design

No tagline

- SEARCH
  - NEWS
  - AGENCIES
  - OPPORTUNITIES
  - ABOUT US
  - RELATED SITES
- 1-877-696-6775  
200 INDEPENDENCE AVE SW  
WASHINGTON DC 20201

Help Us Improve This Site

Get Information On: [A-Z](#) or

The A-Z link was overshadowed by the text before it and the drop-down after it.

Latest Headlines:

- > [HHS Awards More Than \\$8.4 Million in Grants to Address Nation's Nursing Shortage](#)
- > [HHS Secretary Thompson Forges Partnership with America's Nurses to Enhance Public Health Preparedness](#)
- > [Secretary Thompson Urges Congress to Pass President's Plan to Assist Uninsured](#)



SPOTLIGHT ON  
**West Nile Virus information**



Only about 35 topics were available through this drop-down.

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Last revised: September 30, 2002

Search was a button with no box for typing search terms.

Users thought the picture links were sponsors.

All the content is at agency sites. To get to it, users had to pick the right agency from the descriptions on the page this leads to.

The center of the screen was taken up by news items, not the major topics users were looking for.



# Scenarios for video clips:

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- You want to know what housing organizations are available to assist the homeless in your area. Where would you find organizations that could help you with this?
- You want to find a nursing home for a relative. Where would you find this information?

#### ● [Diseases & Conditions](#)

- Heart Disease, Cancer, HIV/AIDS, Diabetes...
- Mental Health
- Treatment, Prevention, Genetics
- Clinical Trials
- Addictions, Substance Abuse

#### ● [Safety & Wellness](#)

- Eating right
- Exercise, Fitness
- Safety Tips and Programs
- Smoking, Drinking
- Traveler's Health

#### ● [Drug & Food Information](#)

- Drugs, Dietary Supplements
- Food Safety

#### ● [Families & Children](#)

- Medicaid, other health insurance
- Child Support, Child Care, Adoption
- Domestic Violence, Child Abuse
- Vaccines

#### ● [Aging](#)

- Medicare
- Health Issues
- Coping and Caring

#### ● [Specific Populations](#)

- Women, Men, Children, Seniors
- Disabilities
- Racial and Ethnic Minorities
- Homeless

#### ● [Resource Locators](#)

News 3:05 PM Wed, Sept 03

#### ● [West Nile Virus](#)

● **September 2, 2003** — HHS Provides \$1.4 Billion More to States and Hospitals for Terrorism Preparedness

[Full Story](#)

● **August 28, 2003** — HHS Approves Illinois Plan to Expand Coverage to an Estimated 20,000 Uninsured Children

[Full Story](#)

#### ● [All HHS News](#)

#### Features

- [Privacy of Health Information/HIPAA](#)
- [Improving Head Start](#)

Separates and visually distinguishes the search function.

Displays time-critical and/or sensitive information prominently in the right panel.

Displays information topics openly – they are immediately visible and available to the user, not buried in a drop-down list or in an alphabetized resource list as on the original HHS homepage.

Establishes HHS as a 'brand' by presenting the breadth of the Department's activities and products – health AND human services – on the portal pages.



# Scenarios for video clips:

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- You want to find a nursing home for a relative. Where would you find this information?
- You want to know what housing organizations are available to assist the homeless in your area. Where would you find organizations that could help you with this?

# Comparison figures for the baseline test (old site) and final test (new portal) for the five same scenarios

Scenario Text	Success Rate	
	Baseline Test	Final Prototype
You want to find a nursing home for a relative.	38%	88%
You want to know what diabetes is and how you can prevent it.	73%	94%
You want to know what housing organizations are available to help assist the homeless in your area.	13%	94%
You want to know what the Fiscal Year 2001 budget for HHS was.	71%	94%
Your cousin is considering a career in medical research and asked you if HHS offers financial aid to undergraduate students.	8%	88%
<b>Average success rate</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>92%</b>



# The Communication Technologies Research Center : Advancing User Centered Design

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- Design and Testing Rooms
  - Usability Testing
  - Accessibility Testing
  - Collaborative Design
- Technical Evaluation Room
  - Emerging Technologies (PDAs, tablet PCs)
  - Multiple Hardware/Software Platforms
  - Assistive Technologies
- Education and Training Rooms











## Contact Information

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