



Case Study

Healthcare Commission – Usability testing with eye tracking **January 2008**

The Brief

The Healthcare Commission had recently redesigned its site to incorporate the Annual Health Check micro-site, and wanted to understand how useful and usable the new site was to its users.

The site is aimed at both professionals within the healthcare sector (e.g. administrators/managers and GPs) and those who are not (e.g. patients, journalists, researchers). Healthcare Commission particularly wanted feedback on whether these different audiences could find all the information relevant to them.



We conducted unobserved testing with 9 testers, using the latest eye tracker – Tobii T60, which captured the screen they were looking at, and where the testers were actually looking, as well as a head and shoulders view of the tester and audio.

The observed testing (3 testers) was conducted in specialist studios in London where Healthcare Commission staff

watched the testing through a one way mirror. They were ‘active’ observers, noting usability issues on post-its as they occurred. Following the observed testing, a discussion was facilitated by a WUP consultant to agree the issues and appropriate actions.

How we responded to the brief

We proposed usability testing with eye tracking with 12 testers: 9 of these undertaken unobserved, in advance of a day’s observed usability testing with 3 testers

In order to ensure buy in to the research results, we felt it important that key Healthcare Commission stakeholders gained a shared understanding of the issues through active observation of users on the site. By following this with a facilitated discussion it would allow the observers to identify the key issues and agree actions in a single day

What we did

We recruited testers representing the relevant profiles, including patients and relatives of patients, NHS & independent administrators/managers, GPs, medical charities, journalists and students.

The outcomes

The research identified c.60 usability and content issues. During the facilitated discussion Healthcare Commission staff gained a shared understanding of these issues, and relevant actions to address these, including the development of a new information architecture. As a result the Healthcare Commission was able to act quickly to improve the site, and commissioned us to test their prototype information architecture within 8 weeks of receiving the usability testing report.

Timing

The project was conducted in winter 2007/08, over an 8 week period and cost approximately £12,000 (inc. VAT).