



Head and Neck Cancer Australia Website Usability Analysis

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Background

- With increasing accessibility of the world-wide web, more people use it to obtain patient education materials (PEM).
- Providing high-quality educational material increases consumer knowledge of health care and may lead to better health outcomes through increased understanding.
- We previously demonstrated a high level of unmet information need in people with head and neck cancer (HNC). The Head and Neck Cancer Australia (HANCA) website (Figure 1) aims to address this need by delivering comprehensive information about HNC.

Our aim: To determine the usability of the Head and Neck Cancer Australia website.

Methods

- Usability testing by patients who have been treated for HNC was undertaken. Participants' were instructed to complete nine tasks designed to assess navigation and use of the website.
- Participants were asked to 'think aloud' to provide insight into their response to the website and to rate the task difficulty.

Results

- 18 participants, median age 48 years (range, 25-63), majority male (n=13). Table 1**
- Participants rated easiest tasks as: carer information (average time: 10 seconds, range 3-35), health and wellbeing (average time: 36 seconds, range 9-117), and finding information on psychological wellbeing (average time: 66 seconds, range: 10-565). Figure 2**
- Thirty-one percent of participants rated using the search bar as a hard task and 27% of participants rated finding videos of personal stories as a hard task. Figure 3**
- Participants indicated the website contained a lot of information on type of HNC, treatment options, emotional wellbeing, support for carers, and was a reference point to access other online resources including social media connection with patients.**
- All the patients would revisit the website for accurate information about their HNC.**
- Refinements to navigation are needed to make finding information on their cancer and/or videos easier.**

Table 1 Sociodemographic and clinical characteristics of patients

Patient	Age	Gender	Type of HNC	Treatment
1	63	F	Tongue	Surgery + chemoradiotherapy
2	66	M	Tongue	Surgery + chemoradiotherapy
3	62	M	Tongue	Surgery
4	61	F	Tonsil	Surgery + radiotherapy
5	36	F	Thyroid	Surgery
6	53	M	Tongue	Surgery + chemoradiotherapy
7	59	M	Oral cavity	Surgery
8	48	M	Lip	Surgery
9	63	M	Tonsil	Surgery + chemoradiotherapy
10	77	M	Scalp	Surgery + radiotherapy
11	48	M	Oral cavity	Surgery + chemoradiotherapy
12	59	M	Tonsil	Surgery + chemoradiotherapy
13	47	F	Sinus	Surgery + chemoradiotherapy
14	54	M	Tonsil	Surgery
15	25	F	Mandible	Surgery + chemoradiotherapy
16	58	M	Tonsil	Surgery
17	44	M	Oral cavity	Surgery
18	46	M	Tongue	Surgery

Results

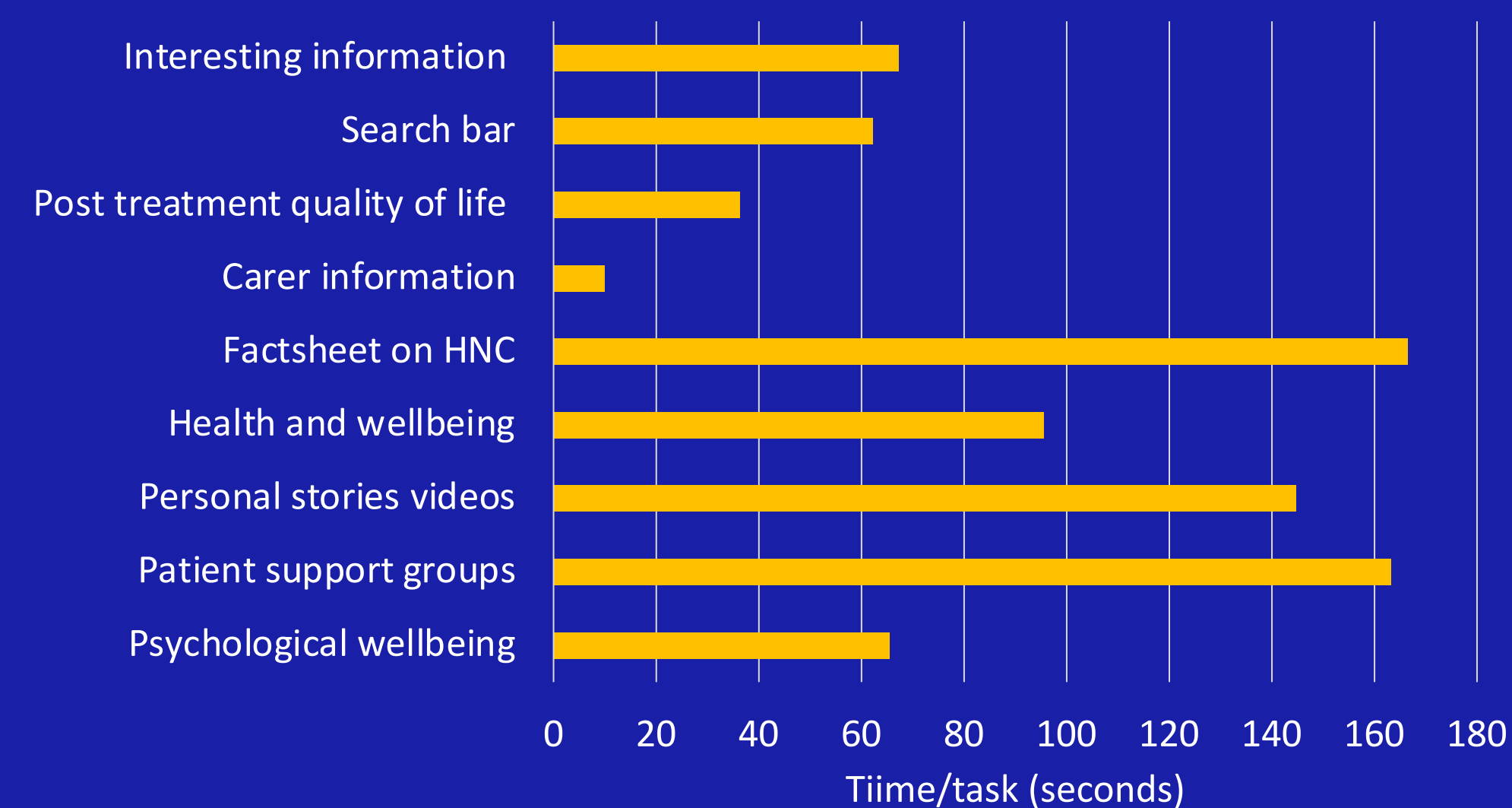


Figure 2. Mean time spent on each task

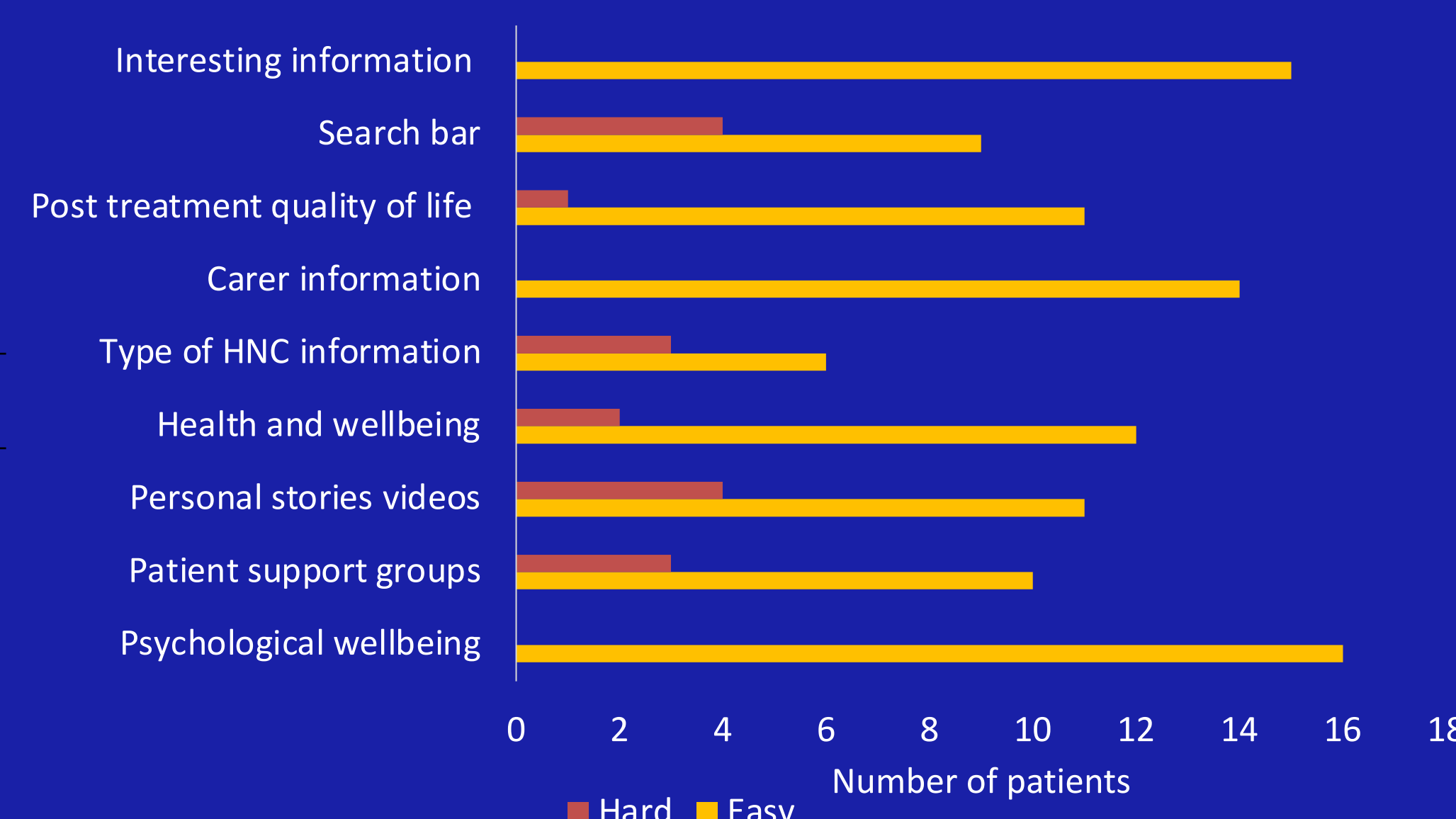


Figure 3. Participant rating of difficulty for each task

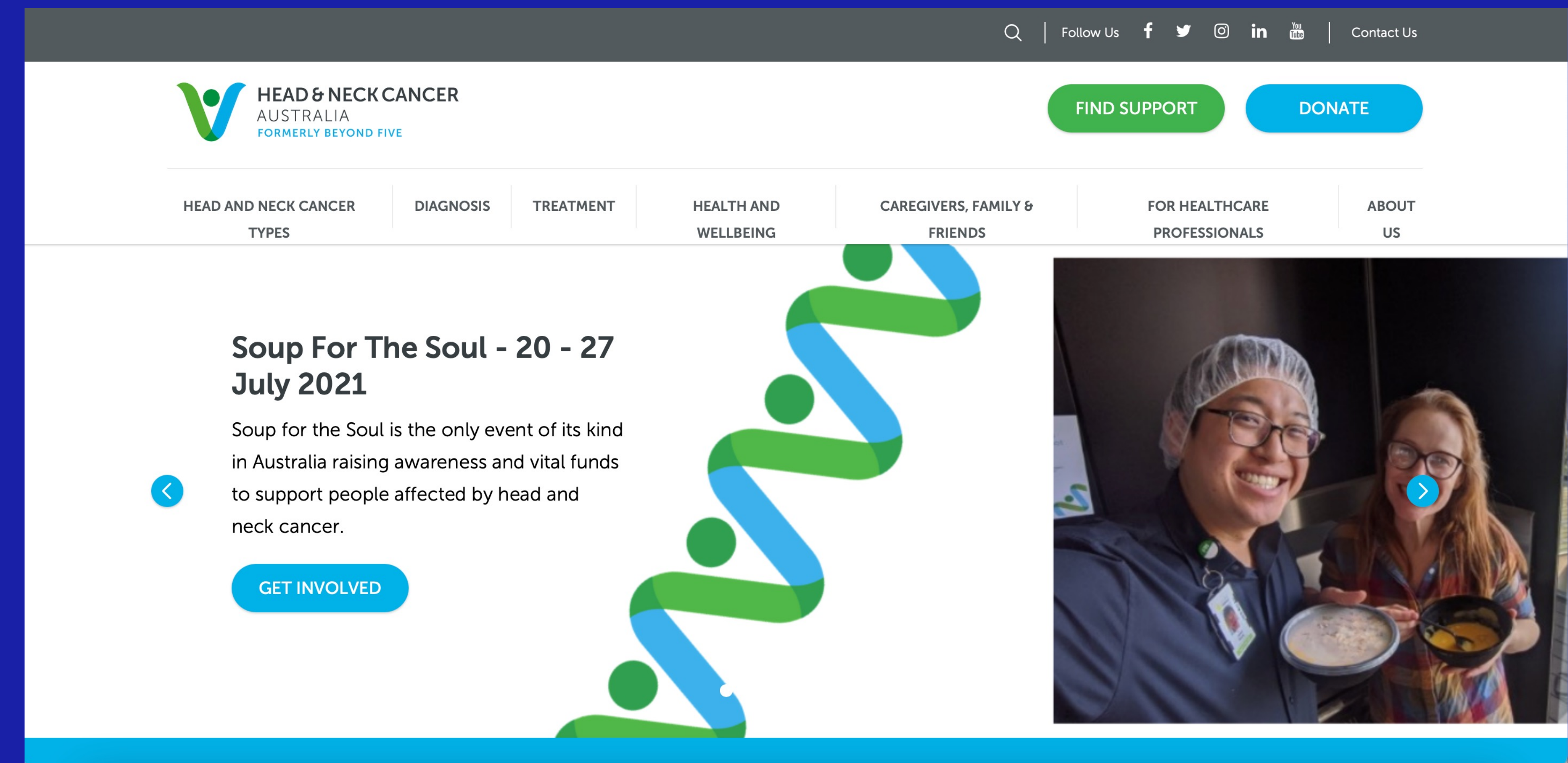


Figure 1. HANCA - <https://www.headandneckcancer.org.au>

Usability

- Majority of patients completed the task with minimal prompts and, while completion times varied, most did so relatively quickly.**
- To effectively engage users, the site requires fewer clicks and greater visibility via buttons or obvious links to the 'Personal Stories' section.**
- In the HANCA website the navigation to patient support groups or HNC services was highlighted with a "Find support" button on the top right hand corner of the page.**
- Dealing with psychological health was covered thoroughly and information was easy to find with minimal prompts and clicks.**

Conclusions:

- Participants perceived the HANCA website to be a credible information source, with a high quantity of information. However, refinements are needed to improve navigation on the site.