

BOARD MEETING

28 July 2016

Paper Title:	Communications strategy 2016/17
Section:	Public
Lead Director:	Paul Hogg, Trust Secretary
Paper Author:	Fiona Bray, Head of Communications/Marketing
Agenda Item:	11
Presented For:	Approval

1. Purpose of this Report:

The purpose of this paper is to update the Board on the communications strategy for the remainder of 2016/17. A more detailed plan outlines tactical communications activity for the year, to support operational plans. We may need to develop the strategy further once the commercial strategy has been agreed.

2. Summary of Key Points

- Key role for communications to give a clear narrative on current challenges, opportunities and service offer, internally and externally.
- Strategic considerations for communications to support Trust business objectives for remainder of 2016/17.
- Strategic communication objectives and deliverables for 2016/17.

3. Board Consideration

The Board is asked to consider the following:

- recommendations linked to strategic considerations;
- proposed key messages for our external positioning;
- proposal to scope targeted opportunities to raise our national profile;
- proposed communication objectives.

4. Financial Implications

None - core communications activity is within the existing communications budget.

Revenue Capital

5. Legal Implications

None.

6. Assurance

	Assurance provided?
Board Assurance Framework	No
CQC Themes (see below)	Yes
Monitor Risk Assessment Framework	No
Other (please specify):	

This paper provides assurance in relation to the following CQC themes: the strategy supports Trust services in publicly reassuring users, stakeholders and influencers that the Trust is delivering against the five quality areas.

Safe:	People who use our services are protected from abuse and avoidable harm
Caring:	Staff involve people who use our services and treat them with compassion, kindness, dignity and respect
Responsive:	Services are organised to meet the needs of people who use our services
Effective:	Care, treatment and support achieves good outcomes, helps to maintain quality of life people who use our services and is based on the best available evidence.
Well led:	The leadership, management and governance of the organisation make sure it's providing high-quality care that is based around individual needs, encourages learning and innovation, and promotes an open and fair culture.

7. Previous Meetings/Committees Where the Report Has Been Considered:

Audit Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Governance Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Remuneration Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>
Executive Management team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Directors Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chair of Committee's Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/>	MH Legislation Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Risk Issues Identified for Discussion

None

9. Links to Strategic Drivers

Patient Experience	Quality	Value for Money	Relationships
Communicating progress on how we are enhancing the patient experience.	Internal/external communications of quality agenda.	Using the most cost effective communication routes to extend our reach.	Leveraging opportunities to engage communities in our work.

10. Publication Under Freedom of Information Act

This paper has been made available under the Freedom of Information Act.

11. Recommendations:

That the Board:

- Agrees the Communications strategy as set out in the paper.

Communications strategy 2016/17

1. Background

The Board received an update on progress on the communications strategy on 31 July 2014. Following recent team changes, this paper outlines an updated communications strategy to ensure our activity is aligned to current business objectives (Annual Plan 2016/17). It focuses on continuing to build the Trust's profile and corporate reputation, ensuring a clear narrative/positioning, and supports the commercial imperatives of the Trust.

2. National /local context

NHS England has set the high level five year forward view (FYFV) for services – most recently for mental health (February 2016) and primary care (April 2016), following learning disabilities (October 2015). The national strategies have been developed with input from key partners, including the Local Government Association, and outline the clear direction of travel; the focus is now on delivery.

The general policy shift is providing care, closer to home, with a continued focus on delivering services differently – but more cost efficiently – to re-balance NHS finances with more cost pressures likely in-year, whether that is nationally (recalibration of NHS finances) or locally, via local transformation plans. Commissioners have signalled the need for more efficiencies, supporting self-care and care close to home. Local Service Transformation Plans (STP) are being confirmed but we are working with the CCGs and partners across the district on the communications and engagement strategy, ensuring that Trust and STP messages are aligned.

Alongside this, the wider commissioning/tendering environment is more competitive which presents both a challenge and opportunity for the Trust.

3. Strategic considerations for communications

3.1 Internal

Staff are crucial in delivering our operational objectives for the year and are our strongest ambassadors/advocates for our work. It is therefore vital that we provide a clear and consistent narrative about the wider challenges and the context for our business plans. Everyone, but particularly team managers, is responsible for engaging their staff but communications plays a key role – via our corporate internal channels – to support this.

We know that our weekly e-bulletin is our most effective channel to ensure consistent cascades of organisation-wide messaging, evidenced in project specific evaluation (e.g. annual plan, agile programme). In line with this, we have moved away from the traditional (and more costly) staff magazine (Connections), and will be using digital channels more in the future. We have anecdotal feedback on areas that might need further development - cascade mechanisms, onward cascades, face-to-face briefings for key milestones - but we need a firm evidence-base to inform activity, to ensure our channels are meeting staff information needs.

3.2 Recommendation

- Undertake a further audit of our internal channels to ensure we are meeting staff information needs.
- Engage staff at all levels in using social media channels to promote corporate messages/services/activities, including staff on Trust development programmes covering all levels.

4. External

4.1 Current external profile

Our media profile is predominantly 'local' and we secure regular coverage for the Trust's work in our core district-wide publications. Historically the Trust's external profile has primarily come from our mental health services, linked to service innovation/developments that have achieved national recognition. This may also stem from acquiring community services later (2011). As a result, the Trust has a stronger, more visible and sustained media profile on mental health, which is generated by best practice service innovation. This activity supports our corporate objectives – reinforces our credibility/expertise ('great in our patch') – that we can leverage regionally and locally.

Currently the Trust's offer tends to be 'compartmentalised' and audiences that are not closely aligned to our work, may not be aware of our broader services. The Board is invited to consider updating our core messaging – to give a more consistent thread across all our services – and our potential differentiator across all services, of caring for physical and mental health needs.

In the current climate, effective communication is vital to ensure that: the Trust, our services and user benefits (outcomes) are 'visible' – locally and nationally; we have a clear coherent, consistent narrative that articulates our offer/ ambition; we reinforce our track record on doing things differently; and we actively engage our communities ensuring plans reflect the needs of the communities we serve.

4.2 Recommendations:

- Refresh our core messaging to give us a consistent, 'corporate' thread that reinforces our organisation-wide strength (see 4.4 below, proposed key messages).
- Proactively identify national platforms, aligned to areas where we are genuinely doing things differently (needs to be evidence-based), or sector-wide issues that align to work, that reinforce our strengths.

4.3 Target audiences – internal and external

Our target audiences (internal and external) will focus on:

- our staff, Governors and members;
- commissioners – CCGs and local authorities;
- local communities – service users, carers, residents across Bradford, Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven;
- local stakeholders – third sector, patient groups (Healthwatch), key forums e.g. Bradford Assembly, MPs and local Councillors;
- other providers – NHS Airedale NHS Foundation Trust, Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, third sector delivery partners; and

- policy makers – local, regional and national (where appropriate) e.g. NHS England/Department of Health.

A full list of corporate stakeholders is available in our detailed plans.

4.4 Proposed corporate key messages

Our current corporate external descriptor/key message is:

- We provide award winning mental health, learning disability and community services.

We are suggesting the following messaging that reinforces our organisation-wide strength, taking the ‘whole person’ approach, caring for physical and mental health needs:

- We provide award winning mental health, learning disability and community services;
- We look after the ‘whole person’, providing physical and mental health care; and
- We work with health and care partners to ensure that people get the right care, in the right place, with the right support, to meets their needs.

Once agreed, we would develop service-specific messages that focus on the key features and benefits of different service areas.

4.5 Team roles and approach

It is proposed that we introduce an account management approach in the communications team that gives the key operational areas and corporate functions, aligned to Deputy Director areas, a named individual that has an in-depth knowledge of their area and will be their first point of contact for significant new projects. All of the team will continue to support wider corporate activities so we can match resource/skills to operational needs but this will ensure that as a team, links are made across all areas – reinforcing the overall corporate narrative – and leverage skills and opportunities across the team.

All communications activity will continue to support the Trust’s five values but in terms of channels, we will move the focus to digital media to leverage opportunities to communicate directly with our key audiences, ensure communication is current, two-way (and more cost effective) and extends our reach. We will continue to provide printed material for core services as required, for those community members/users who prefer this medium.

5. Communication objectives

- Ensure channels are fit-for-purpose and meet the organisation’s /staff information needs.
- Reinforce our clinical expertise – via our clinical experts across core service areas – to support our communities’ health and wellbeing.
- Position the Trust as leading local ‘conversations’ on broader health issues, aligned to our service areas.
- Actively engage our diverse communities in our work – extending You and Your Care – leveraging the potential of our most actively engaged users and our community-based staff.
- Build the Trust’s corporate profile on a regional and national level, and its role on sector-wide issues.

Appendix 1 and 2 give an overview of key deliverables and headline activity.

6. Measures – reported monthly through the Chief Executive’s report to Board.

- **Media coverage** – (quantitative and qualitative) across local, trade and national media; track pick-up of key corporate message; maintain current quantitative levels – averaging 50 pieces a month – but evidence coverage in trade / national media (benchmark for following year).
- **Web traffic** – unique visitors, bounce rate (annual uplift of unique web visitors of 10%)
- **Social media** – followers, (annual uplift of 15%); evidence engagement of key influencers
- **Engagement** – track engagement levels for key corporate projects where we invite views
- **Campaigns** – track uplift in the across the above and where possible, increase in service enquiries as a direct result of communications activity

7. Recommendation

That the Board:

- agrees the communications strategy as set out in the paper.

Appendix 1

Key deliverables	Strategic aims		
	Consolidation of market share: being 'great in our patch'	Manage impacts on the whole system of reduced health & social care funding	Secure funding for new or expanded services
Channels <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure timely and engaging communication to staff on operational issues; more proactive support for organisation-wide milestones that cut across internal and external audiences; • audit internal channels and cascade mechanism – use findings to scope developments; • broader communication activity to support key corporate milestones (annual report, annual plan 16/17); • refresh branding guidelines and templates; • produce style guides – web and printed materials – to support staff. 	√	√	√
Clinical expertise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop/promote broader health advice across our core digital channels, signposting to services for additional support • Use relevant external health milestones (national days) to promote and drive traffic to our site 	√		√
Leading local 'conversations' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver two communication campaigns – extend reach, amplify impact and reinforce broader offer • 1 x mental health, 1 x community 	√		√

<p>Engaging our diverse communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish cascade process for Trust-wide service user group/ partners with feedback mechanisms for key milestones (annual report/quality report, annual plan, new services) • Use digital feedback mechanisms to support wider community engagement • Develop network of corporate (eg. leadership forums) and 'citizen' tweeters (eg. carers), to extend our reach, with training for key staff groups • Refresh layout/content of website to reflect corporate messaging and content, ensuring content is easy to navigate and accessible • Deliver direct communication to all members to support key corporate milestones eg. annual report/quality report, supporting staff/public governors on activity to reach the wider community eg. community-based events 	√	√	√
<p>Corporate communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive targeting of trade/national media to extend our reach • Formal cascades to senior level influencers for key corporate/service milestones • With support of Deputy Directors, develop bank of case studies on key service initiatives demonstrating user benefits/ impact, showcase on-line • Identify relevant national events/forums/speaker opportunities aligned to key corporate areas 	√	√	√

Appendix 2

Organisation-wide activity – at-a-glance



