
Communications Committee

Notes of the Communications Committee strategy workshop held as follows:-

Date: Thursday 5 November 2009

Time: 1:00 pm

Venue: The Council Chamber, Health Professions Council, Park House, 184
Kennington Park Road, London SE11 4BU

Present: Mrs S Drayton (Chair)
Mrs P Blackburn
Ms J Drown
Ms M MacKellar
Professor D Waller

In attendance:

Mr C Bendall, Secretary to the Committee
Ms N Blunck, Public Affairs and Stakeholder Manager
Ms S Carini, Events Manager
Mr T Glazier, Web Manager
Mr M Guthrie, Director of Policy and Standards
Mr J Jones, Publications Manager
Ms J Ladds, Director of Communications
Ms A Morgan, Communications Officer
Mr M Potter, Continuing Professional Development Communications Manager
Dr A van der Gaag, Council Chair

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Communications on research previously undertaken by HPC. In 2007, HPC had undertaken research with the public, registrants and opinion formers. The findings had been used to inform HPC's communications strategy and activities.

The Committee was invited to discuss two questions:

- What should the strategic priorities be for communications in 2010-2011?
- Are the communications objectives set out in the Communications Strategy still relevant and fit for purpose?

Strategic priorities

The Committee agreed that the strategic priorities for communications should be in support of the Council and the Council's objectives. The Committee agreed that key issues for 2010-11 could include revalidation and new professions. The Committee agreed that the objectives of the Communications Strategy 2007-2011 were still appropriate, i.e.:

1. To raise awareness and understanding of the HPC's role in regulation across all our audiences
2. To extend our reach to the public enabling them to access easily information about the HPC
3. To influence the regulatory agenda through ongoing dialogue and engagement with key stakeholders
4. To engage with our registrants to ensure they understand the benefits of regulation, the work of the Council and what is required of them
5. To further strengthen and ensure effective internal communications within the organisation

Communications workplan

The Committee agreed that the Executive should review the content of the workplan, so that it more clearly reflected the volume and complexity of the work of the Department. The Committee felt that papers to the Committee should focus on reporting progress against the strategy and that there should be a reduction in some of the current reporting to the Committee.

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2009-11-06	a	COM	MIN	Communications Committee strategy meeting notes 5 November 2009	Draft DD: None	Public RD: None

Points to consider

The Committee agreed that HPC should focus on reaching those groups who were using, or likely to use, the services of professionals regulated by HPC.

The Committee agreed that the Executive should consider the following points:

- whether HPC could conduct more communications work in conjunction with other organisations, such as advocacy organisations, community workers, advisory services, Community Health Councils and mental health charities. The Committee agreed that these organisations could facilitate communication with groups which were hard to reach, such as older age groups and ethnic minorities. These organisations might also have contact with people who had negative experiences with registrants;
- whether it would be possible for HPC to 'signpost' audience towards appropriate contacts. For example, some allegations about registrants might be more appropriately dealt with by employers, or relate to wider issues about provision of health and social care services;
- in the event that HPC became the statutory regulator of more professions, striking the balance between communication with new professions and the existing professions;
- proactive and reactive communications, e.g. those about to use the services of registrants and those already using the services of registrants;
- the opportunity to engage registrants in raising awareness of the HPC;
- opportunities to influence the regulatory agenda, working with the Policy and Standards Department e.g. round-table discussions on key issues or drawn from research undertaken.

The Committee also posed the question 'What is best in terms of progressing public protection?' (i.e. which audiences should HPC's communications focus on, in order to be most effective).

Chair

Date

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