

A word cloud visualization of terms related to patient communication. The most prominent words are 'patients', 'donors', 'media', 'Trust', and 'communication'. Other significant words include 'managers', 'public', 'ensure', 'sensitive', 'strategies', 'information', 'positive', 'complex', 'including', 'experience', 'level', 'Excellent', 'Interview', 'clearly', 'skills', 'Ensure', 'Board', 'warrant', 'incident', 'business', 'likely', 'reputation', 'understanding', 'partner', 'necessary', 'Communications', 'prepare', 'relevant', 'requirements', 'consultation', 'prepare', 'audience', 'working', 'effectively', 'knowledge', 'audience', 'possible', 'effective', 'high', 'marketing', 'general', 'patients', 'environment', 'general', 'requirements', 'Welsh', 'bulletins', 'ensure', 'senior', 'staff', 'NHS', 'internal', 'work', 'advise', 'external', 'manage', 'patient', 'analysis', 'Applications', 'safety', 'particularity', 'support', 'particular', 'professional', 'Able', 'carers', 'regular', 'equipment', 'help', 'national', 'extensive', 'service', 'engagement', 'relationships', 'critique', 'major', 'event', 'key', 'advice', 'work', 'hostile', 'policies', 'appropriate', 'health', 'quality', 'Trust-wide', 'changes', 'feedback', 'highest', 'understand', 'releases', 'positively', 'impact', 'develop', 'wider', 'relates', 'information', 'dealing', 'positive', 'releases', 'positively', 'impact', 'develop', 'wider', 'relates', 'information', 'dealing', 'positive', 'releases', 'positively', 'impact', 'develop', 'wider', 'relates'.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction and scope.....	3
2. Summary.....	3
3. Vision and Aims.....	4
4. Brand Identities – setting the scene	6
5. Strategic direction and opportunities	7
6. Stakeholder Engagement	13
7. Roles and Responsibilities	16
8. Communications and Engagement principles	18
9. Evaluation of Communications and Engagement.....	19
10. Conclusion	20
11. Communications Contacts	21
12. Supporting Policies and Procedures	22
 APPENDIX A: Action and Implementation 2014/15.....	23
APPENDIX B: SWOT Analysis.....	29

1. Introduction and scope

This document sets out a Communications and Engagement Strategy for Velindre NHS Trust and its two service divisions, the Welsh Blood Service and Velindre Cancer Centre. It identifies challenges facing the Trust, sets a vision and aims for communications and engagement, lays out a strategic approach, and proposes key initiatives for implementation.

The strategy may also be utilised by organisations hosted by the Trust, although it is recognised that they have their own established Communications functions and mechanisms.

This document contains an overarching strategic approach to communications and engagement for employees and department within the Trust. The accompanying Action and Implementation Plan 2014/15 (**Appendix A**) recognises the shared and differing communications and engagement needs and therefore concentrates on areas of work for the Trust and its service divisions.

This Communication and Engagement Strategy is supported by a new [Communications and Engagement Toolkit](#). This toolkit provides a simple framework for staff to use to help shape their communication and engagement activities.

2. Summary

Velindre NHS Trust understands the importance of clear, honest, timely and relevant communication and engagement. Good communication is essential for the effective functioning of the organisation and to maintain an excellent reputation for delivering high-quality services, care and research. Engagement gives people an opportunity to influence the services we provide and how we deliver them from an early stage.

The Trust recognises that communication and engagement can help to ensure the delivery of safe and effective care to our patients and donors and supports 'Delivering Excellence: 2014/15 - 2016/17' and our five year framework, 'Delivering Quality, Care and Excellence: 2011/12 - 2015/16'.

This Communications and Engagement Strategy will reflect and support Velindre NHS Trust's vision of "**Delivering quality, care and excellence**".

AND

The Trust's Strategic goals:

1. High quality outcomes
2. Improved well-being and quality of life for our patients, donors and staff
3. Excellent care for our patients and donors
4. World-class Research and Development
5. Organisational excellence

To help achieve these goals, the Trust and its service divisions will need to undertake a wide range of internal and external communication including staff, public and stakeholder engagement, promotion of successes, and social marketing.

The Trust must develop a culture in which our staff, patients and donors, public, and stakeholders are encouraged and empowered to influence and implement significant change. We will need to help our stakeholders understand the issues, opportunities and aspirations we have and engage them in helping us to make decisions and develop solutions.

Communicating and engaging in a professional and effective manner is the responsibility of **everyone** in the Trust. The role of the Head of Communications and the virtual Communications team (communications professionals based in service divisions of the Trust) is to lead and support colleagues in their own communications and engagement activities.

This strategy is a living document. It will be updated regularly as communications and engagement functions develop, when the Trust refines its strategic plans, and as we learn more about the needs of particular groups and how we can best communicate and engage with them.

3. Vision and Aims

The vision and aims of this strategy have been developed following a consultation exercise with corporate and divisional staff and partners, which included engagement with:

- A collection of staff to form SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis against Standard for Health Services Standard 18 – Communicating Effectively (**Appendix B**);
- The Independent Board Member lead for communications;
- A Trust Board ‘Communications and Engagement’ workshop session;
- Executive Directors and Divisional Directors;
- Divisional Senior Management Teams;
- The Trust’s Patient Liaison Group;
- Trust equality groups through an Equality Impact Assessment; and
- A focus group made up of staff from Velindre Cancer Centre, the Welsh Blood Service, and the Trust’s Corporate Division.
- Workforce & Organisational Development Committee
- Local Partnership Forum
- A 6-week consultation period for all Trust staff

The **vision** of this new Communications and Engagement Strategy is:

To develop and embed into the culture of the organisation a communications and engagement approach that supports Velindre NHS Trust to achieve its corporate vision and goals.

The diagram below illustrates how achievement of this vision would support the aims of the five year framework – ‘Delivering Quality, Care and Excellence: 2011/12 - 2015/16’:

High quality outcomes	Effective communications and engagement with staff, public and partners will be key to supporting the development of our services. Promotion of the Trust's reputation for excellence will help to attract the very best clinicians and staff to work for the organisation.
Improved well-being and quality of life for our patients, donors and staff	Communications and engagement will enable us to seek and respond to patient/donor feedback and staff suggestions, which will help to shape the provision of our services and support the delivery of excellent outcomes and high levels of patient experience.
Excellent care for our patients and donors	Proactive provision of clear, transparent information about outcomes – driven by effective communications and engagement – will give patients and donors greater involvement and control over their care and the services we provide.
World-class Research and Development	Effective promotion of Velindre NHS Trust as a world leader in clinical research and development and innovation will support the increased activity and income, as well as benefiting patient and donor care.
Organisational excellence	When employees are engaged they feel positive about the organisation and this leads to improvements in the quality of working lives and enhanced performance. Effective internal and external communications and engagement will support a cultural change which enables staff, public and stakeholders to be actively involved in shaping the organisation and delivering corporate strategies.

The **aims** of this Communications and Engagement Strategy are:

- 1. To develop and maintain an excellent standard of communications, both internal and external**
- 2. To embrace and develop digital communications services appropriately**
- 3. To manage and enhance the Trust and service division brands and reputations amongst stakeholders**

To achieve these aims the Trust will ensure:

- commitment and leadership from the Board, Executive Management Team and Divisional Management Teams;
- a clear understanding amongst staff that ensuring effective and timely two-way communication is everyone's responsibility; and
- effective resources to support communications activities.

4. Brand Identities – setting the scene

Velindre NHS Trust is a unique organisation which has differing communications and engagement interests according to its two service divisions, the Welsh Blood Service and Velindre Cancer Centre.

Brands convey a uniform quality, credibility and experience. The Trust has a very strong reputation and recognisable brand, and provides a range of services which allows us to come into contact with a wide range of patients, donors, families and carers at different stages in their lives. Whilst much work has been done to promote Velindre NHS Trust as a centre of excellence, the Trust is keen to retain and celebrate the individual identities and successes of the service divisions.

Velindre Cancer Centre is a specialist treatment, teaching, research and development centre for non-surgical oncology. It treats patients with chemotherapy Systemic Anti-Cancer Treatments (SACTs), radiotherapy and related treatments, together with caring for patients with specialist palliative care needs.

Maintaining and developing the Velindre Cancer Centre branding will encourage confidence and trust for our patients, carers and stakeholders. Velindre Cancer Centre is already recognised for delivering high quality care, having a strong patient-facing culture and delivering a very high level of patient experience. These are qualities we need to promote for staff, patients, carers and all other stakeholders.

Velindre Fundraising, which raises charitable funds to benefit the Cancer Centre's patients and carers, possesses a very strong brand and is widely recognised by the general public in South-East Wales due to its high profile at fundraising events and initiatives. The Velindre Fundraising brand needs to be maintained so fundraisers continue to support the charity and also to attract new fundraisers.

The **Welsh Blood Service** plays a fundamental role in the delivery of healthcare in Wales. It works to ensure that the donor's gift of blood is transformed into safe and effective blood components which allow NHS Wales to improve the quality of life and save the lives of many thousands of people in Wales every year. The Welsh Blood Service also provides an antenatal screening service to several hospitals while the Welsh Transplantation and Immunogenetics Laboratory supports Renal and Stem Cell Transplant Services and operates a national panel of potential blood stem cell donors.

The strength of the Welsh Blood Service brand is essential to inspiring individuals to give up their time and donate on a voluntary basis. Further promoting the brand will enhance the professionalism of the service, encourage donor loyalty, and encourage new donors.

The Trust's Fundraising Strategy will consider setting up a fundraising function for the Welsh Blood Service and if this idea is taken forward then branding and a communications strategy for this function will need to be developed.

Branding for the Trust and its divisions should be regularly reviewed to ensure all are projected clearly and consistently to enhance the confidence and allegiance of stakeholders.

It is important to remember that one-size does not fit all where communications and engagement are concerned. This strategy, accompanying action plan and toolkit emphasise that we must carefully consider our audiences and their needs when undertaking any communications and engagement activity.

The document also outlines priorities for the Trust that will improve communications and engagement at both Trust and divisional levels.

5. Strategic direction and opportunities

The Head of Communications and divisional communications staff are committed to promoting effective, professional and consistent standards of communications and engagement across the Trust.

The Trust must develop a culture in which our patients, public, stakeholders and staff are encouraged and empowered to influence and implement a significant transformation agenda. We will need to help our stakeholders understand the issues, challenges and aspirations we have and engage them in helping us to develop the solutions, make decisions and build on the opportunities this brings.

The Trust and its divisions will promote communications and engagement practices that are:



A more wide-ranging set of actions are included in the Action and Implementation Plan for 2014/15 (**Appendix A**), although the below areas of opportunity are important in building an excellent communications provision for the Trust.

These opportunities are outlined in relation to the three aims of this strategy:

(1) To develop and maintain an excellent standard of communications, both internal and external

Raising awareness of Communications and Engagement

The launch of this strategy across the Trust and its divisions will provide a guide to how communications and engagement will develop across the organisation.

Raising awareness amongst staff will share the Trust's vision for communications and engagement, impart knowledge and skills, and forge stronger links with Communications staff to maximise opportunities.

To encourage and empower staff participation in implementing the strategy an awareness programme will be delivered to departments across the Trust. Communications Champions will be identified in each department to promote the strategy within their area of work, but also to act as a link between the Communications function and staff.

Developing ways of working

The Head of Communications is a relatively new role within Velindre NHS Trust, so it is important to set out ways of working going forward to aid the delivery of this strategy and Action Plan. The Head of Communications will provide a strategic direction for communications functions across the organisation, offering technical expertise, advice and guidance to the Trust and its divisions. The role involves protecting the Trust and divisional brands and reputations, developing internal and external communications and engagement channels, co-ordinating media relations and ensuring the accessibility of information and participation for staff, patients, the public and all stakeholders.

The Welsh Blood Service has an established communications and marketing team who are adept at donor-targeted communications, engagement and campaigns. The team also deal with Welsh Blood Service related media requests, protect the reputation of the division, and proactively seek media coverage and advertising opportunities.

The Trust's Head of Communications will provide support to communications staff in the Welsh Blood Service and lead communications on strategic developments, such as the All Wales Blood Service Programme.

Velindre Cancer Centre has historically been without a dedicated communications function and so opportunities exist to build on its public profile as one of the top dedicated Cancer Centres and cancer research institutions in the UK.

Velindre Fundraising has a strong communications output, which is successful in encouraging and supporting fundraising initiatives for the benefit of Velindre Cancer Centre. The Head of Communications will support its communications activities and engagement with fundraisers and the public.

The Head of Communications has established ways of working with communications staff in the two divisions and will further explore opportunities to share skills and knowledge to deliver this strategy.

Improving Staff Engagement Levels

The 2013 Staff Survey results have provided the Trust with valuable information in relation to levels of staff engagement within the Trust and how engaged people feel with their work and the work of the organisation. This strategy will support the [Staff Engagement Strategy](#) and the work of the Trust's Staff Engagement Group, which has been set up to bring about meaningful actions to address the findings of the Staff Survey.

The Head of Communications will work with Board members and senior managers to help identify opportunities to build trust and create a culture of communication and understanding. Promoting accessibility and increasing the visibility of the Board and Executive Team will assist internal engagement.

The development of [Staff Engagement Action Plans](#) in each division of the Trust demonstrates the Trust's commitment to two-way communication. The Head of Communications and communications staff will assist with delivering the communications-related actions they set out.

We will work to ensure all staff are fully engaged in the Trust's commitment to deliver high quality care and services by keeping them informed about what is changing, why change is needed and most importantly involving them in the decisions that affect them.

Opportunities will be explored for members of the Board and Executive Team to hold engagement events for all Trust staff to encourage openness and two way dialogue.

Enabling employee voice

It is the responsibility of staff to receive and digest information communicated by managers and colleagues in order to offer feedback and fully engage with the organisation and promote excellent communications and engagement practices.

Communications opportunities should be developed to ensure all employees can promote their opinions to reinforce or challenge views throughout the organisation – at both divisional and Trust level.

Divisional staff will be encouraged to celebrate the individual identities of the Welsh Blood Service and Velindre Cancer Centre, but should also be engaged in Trust-wide working to enhance sharing and learning.

A new interactive online staff magazine will be developed to allow dialogue, ideas and communications to flow more effectively horizontally and vertically throughout the organisation. Staff without access to a computer in work will be catered for, either through digital solutions or through traditional briefing methods already in place.

The awareness programme to support this strategy will emphasise that all staff have a responsibility to deliver this strategy, which will involve communicating and engaging upwards as well as top-down.

Sharing good news, learning and achievements

In order to promote the excellent work accomplished by the Trust and its employees, all staff will be encouraged to share examples of best practice and achievements – both internally and externally.

To maximise the sharing of such information internally, staff will be provided with the opportunity to share and engage in two-way conversations with each other, whether within divisions or Trust-wide. Systems will be developed to be inclusive of all staff and to reach them in their work environment.

Where internal communications and engagement systems and opportunities are developed and built into the culture of the organisation, this will naturally lead to good news being collected to share externally with the public, service users and other stakeholders.

To help staff to identify such opportunities for proactive promotion, a [Communications and Engagement Toolkit](#) has been developed which will be shared across the organisation to help gain maximum coverage through the channels used by Communications staff.

Media Relations

As a NHS Wales organisation, the Trust and its divisions are accountable to the public and need to work with the media to explain our role and be transparent. We also need the media – it is a valuable method of reaching people, so it is crucial that good media relations are a priority for the Trust's Communications and Engagement Strategy.

Communications staff will continue to build our relationships with the media by not only feeding them a steady stream of positive news stories, but also admitting mistakes if things have gone wrong.

We will publish clear contact details for our communications staff on our websites, respond quickly to media enquiries, and get back to journalists when we say we will. The Trust will provide a trusted source of experts for the media to call upon and we will review and expand the number of trained spokespeople who are confident in working with the media.

Equitable communications and engagement

The Trust is committed to providing equality of outcome to each person we have contact with, from staff to patients, donors and service users. To do this we need to understand possible communication barriers and how to overcome them.

Equality policies and guidelines such as the 'All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss', will be considered when planning communications and engagement activities. This is particularly pertinent when the Trust needs to engage with hard-to-reach groups.

(2) To embrace and develop digital communications services appropriately

The Trust will align all digital communications work with the NHS Wales 'All Wales Internet Services Policy' which comprises the Email Policy, Internet Policy and Social Media Policy.

Within a few short years digital communications, and social media in particular, have revolutionised communications and information-sharing, creating what some experts call the most significant and fundamental shift in world culture since the Industrial Revolution. It is vital that the Trust integrates digital communications into our communications and engagement practices where appropriate to meet rising expectations and to improve and speed-up communications and feedback.

Social media

It is important to consider that digital communications can target diverse audiences directly, with no interference from other influences, and enable two-way communication with them.

Social media is cost effective and creates an openness, which can be used to gather an insight into what people think about the Trust. These platforms can also be used to engage stakeholders and the public in discussions and debate, hold open meetings or question and answer sessions.

The Trust's divisions already utilise social media, although the Trust will increase its use of social media to:

- Enhance engagement with donors, patients, carers and other stakeholders;
- Provide information; and
- Share good news.

Where appropriate and beneficial we will develop the Trust and divisional presence on social networking sites (for example Facebook, Twitter, YouTube).

We will ensure multiple channels are available for interactive feedback from patients, donors, carers and the public about all aspects of our services, maximising engagement opportunities and helping to provide credible data that we can learn from.

Providing relevant online information

As a modern gateway, a relevant and accessible website is necessary for any organisation that is striving for excellence. The Trust's websites will be regularly reviewed to ensure the image and reputation of the Trust and its divisions are maintained and promoted, as well as making online access to information about our services and performance easily available.

Providing information through our websites will:

- Increase understanding of the Trust and its divisions;
- Enable donors, patients, carers and other stakeholders to engage with the organisation;
- Let people know what they can expect from us; and
- Promote transparency.

All our websites will cater for the needs of the diverse groups who may visit our websites, for example, by making them accessible to people with sensory impairments and by making them fully bilingual for Welsh language users.

We will review our websites to ensure they provide a true reflection of the Trust and its divisions and are accessible, attractive and provide information that patients, donors, the public and other stakeholders want to access in a format that is easy to understand.

(3) To manage and enhance the Trust and service division brands and reputations amongst stakeholders

Strengthening the capability and capacity of communications and engagement is of paramount importance in an environment of unprecedented change in the NHS and in consideration of a number of opportunities for Velindre NHS Trust and its divisions, such as the All Wales Blood Service transition and Welsh Government funding for a feasibility study with regards to a £200m development of Velindre Cancer Centre.

It is therefore important for the Trust and its divisions to:

- Find systematic ways to maintain and enhance our reputation;
- Increase our capacity to gather new patient and donor experience feedback to inform decision making;
- Demonstrate how staff, patient and donor experience has resulted in improvements, learning from their feedback and experiences of the care we provide; and
- Show how we engage our staff, donors, patients and other stakeholders in the development of key strategies and plans for the organisation.

The general public, patients, donors and carers

We will clearly and succinctly explain the organisational structure of the Trust and its divisions and hosted bodies through the Trust's website and such documents as the Annual Report. Those looking for information on Velindre Cancer Centre or the Welsh Blood Service should be given clear directions to divisional communications and engagement resources, for example from the Trust website. Likewise, members of the public accessing divisional communications content should be informed that each organisation is part of Velindre NHS Trust.

The Trust will maintain and further develop the strong specialist brands of its divisions under the Trust umbrella of "quality, care and excellence". We will review how each of our brands are presented to ensure they remain relevant and encourage shared ownership with all our stakeholders.

Other stakeholders

Good relationships and two-way lines of communication with political stakeholders such as Welsh Government and elected members will be maintained and further opportunities explored to improve the reputation and success of Velindre NHS Trust and its divisions. This is particularly important as Trust has a reporting route to Welsh Government, which has needs reassurance around the safety and quality of our care and services.

Similarly, vital contributors to the Trust's success, such as the patient Liaison Group and Donor Forums (shaping services) and Velindre Fundraising contacts (generating additional income) – need to be kept informed and engaged in two-way conversation.

The Trust and its service divisions will continue to develop methods to update, provide feedback, and seek the views of these stakeholders to maintain their support. This requirement is further explored in the next section of this document.

6. Stakeholder Engagement

Understanding the internal and external issues facing the Trust (such as those outlined in **Appendix B**) provides the foundation for this Communication and Engagement Strategy.

Excellent communication and engagement is crucial to keep both internal and external audiences involved in how Velindre NHS Trust is performing and how it will continue to develop in the future.

Following on from the foundational work of *Making the Connections* publication in 2004, the new Welsh Government's Programme for Work places the voice of the citizen at the heart of all public services in Wales. First Minister Carwyn Jones emphasised this commitment by saying:

“Engagement with service users remains a critically important pillar of the new Government’s drive. Creating the Wales of the future is something that involves all of us – we can achieve little without the input and partnership of the people of Wales and our key stakeholders.”

Communications with stakeholders rests principally with direct and ongoing engagement by Velindre NHS Trust staff.

Through **stakeholder engagement** the Trust can involve people who may be affected by the decisions it makes, or can influence the implementation of its decisions. Such engagement can improve communications, obtain wider support for projects, gather useful information and ideas, enhance reputation, build trust, and provide for more sustainable decision-making.

We communicate with many different people, groups and organisations. A ‘one size fits all’ approach to engagement will not be successful and we must tailor the channels we use to suit the audience and the message.

Successful stakeholder engagement will:

- Gain buy in to the Trust’s organisational strategies and objectives;
- Strengthen our position and profile;
- Engage stakeholders in defining our strategies and objectives for the future;
- Improve the Trust’s reputation;
- Increase employee and stakeholder engagement; and
- Improve communications and feedback with stakeholders.

It is important for the Trust to learn from the experiences of our patients and donors to improve our services and reach the highest standards of care and satisfaction. Many methods of gathering feedback are used within the Trust, including surveys, questionnaires, discussions with various groups, patient stories, and learning from concerns.

An in-depth [analysis of our stakeholders](#) has been prepared to help guide engagement, although the following summary outlines groups of stakeholders who need to be engaged in order to enhance the Trust’s reputation and ensure effective participation and two-way dialogue.

Staff

Every member of staff is an ambassador for the Trust. Ensuring our employees are informed about, and involved in, what is going on within the Trust is vital to the success, morale and smooth operation of the organisation.

Good, effective and timely internal communication and engagement will, in turn, help staff communicate and engage effectively with the people they interact with on a daily basis. It is also vital in motivating and empowering staff to meet the needs and

expectations of the people the Trust serves and to bring about any changes we need to make.

People who access our services

This group includes:

- Patients and donors;
- Families or carers of people who access our services; and
- Service user groups (such as the Patient Liaison Group and Donor Forums).

It is important that the people we engage with and care for have a voice in how we run our services. Their feedback is invaluable in helping us to improve existing services and develop new ones. Excellent two-way communications will support this process.

Partners and the Local Community

Velindre NHS Trust does not work in isolation, but operates jointly with a wide range of organisations. Good communications is key to successful partnership working.

This group includes:

- Welsh Government
- Local authorities
- Third sector
- Universities and higher education
- Other NHS Wales organisations
- Community groups
- Donor Forums
- Patient Liaison Group
- Volunteers
- MPs and AMs
- Local councillors
- Regional media
- Companies who support Trust activities

We want to make sure that these people and groups are able to have their say about how Velindre NHS Trust services are run.

The [Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Toolkit](#) will assist staff planning to engage with a range of stakeholders.

The Head of Communications and Communications staff will assist any member of staff or department who needs help with engagement.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

All Staff

Every member of staff has a role to play in supporting the delivery of this strategy to ensure good and effective communication takes place internally, helping with the delivery of key messages externally, engaging with partners and the public, or by helping to gather good news.

Communication is everyone's responsibility. Each member of staff is a representative and an ambassador of both the division they work for and Velindre NHS Trust. Everyone has a responsibility to adhere to the Trust's communications and engagement principles.

This means developing and making use of the communication and engagement channels that exist and those that will be developed to:

- access the information they need;
- establish and attend meetings to exchange views and information;
- ask questions and provide feedback;
- pass on any feedback they receive and respond as appropriate providing the people they are in contact with (eg. patients, donors, carers, other staff, partner organisations) with accurate, consistent and timely information;
- ensure communication is tailored to meet the needs of specific audiences and is sensitive to the needs of those who use our services;
- communicate in a way that is in line with the Trust's values; and
- contact Communications staff to highlight good news stories that could be proactively promoted, or to help manage difficult messages.

The importance of good communication will be emphasised at induction, through staff appraisals, and appropriate training through the Education and Development team.

Awareness sessions will be held to bring this strategy to the attention of all staff and to reinforce their responsibilities to communications and engagement within the Trust.

Trust Board

The Trust Board set the communications and engagement agenda and strategic direction for the Trust. Board members have a role to play as individuals representing the organisation and, as a full Board, how it presents to the public. Any members of the public who may attend Trust Board meetings are representatives of their communities and are important communicators with local people.

Chief Executive and Executive Management Team

The Chief Executive and Executive Directors have a leadership role in helping to deliver the Communications and Engagement Strategy. They will lead and support cultural development within their area of responsibility so communications and engagement are regarded as an important and legitimate source of investment of management time and resources.

Head of Communications

The Head of Communications provides communications leadership, technical expertise, advice and guidance to the Trust. The role involves protecting the Trust's brand and reputation, developing communication channels, co-ordinating media relations and ensuring the accessibility of information and participation for staff, patients, the public and all stakeholders. The Head of Communications will assist other members of staff to communicate effectively in the course of their work.

Communications Staff

Although working in different divisions of the Trust, staff members in Communications roles will support the Head of Communications in delivering excellent communications and engagement practices for the Trust and its two service divisions. They will support, coordinate and oversee the communications and engagement activities of staff members.

Divisional Directors and Managers

The Senior Management Team in each division will use this strategy to help effectively deliver their aims and objectives. They will support the delivery of this strategy and to encourage their teams to use and implement it.

Workforce and Organisational Development Divisional Leads and Heads of Departments

The Workforce and Organisational Development leads and Heads of Departments across the Trust have a responsibility in assisting with the delivery of this strategy and helping to ensure information is exchanged throughout the organisation.

8. Communications and Engagement principles

To achieve our aims and to deliver this Communications and Engagement Strategy Velindre NHS Trust, Welsh Blood Service and Velindre Cancer Centre should adopt the following communication principles:

- Good communications and engagement is a two-way process – it's about listening as well as issuing information.
- Communications and engagement, both internal and external, will be open, honest, timely, and accessible at all times to protect the integrity of the Trust and its divisions.
- We will tailor our messages and method of communications and engagement to meet the needs of specific audiences.
- Our information and its format will be clear, concise and appropriate. We will use language that people understand and avoid the use of jargon, technical terms, abbreviations and acronyms, making information easily accessible.
- Communications and engagement processes should complement and support Velindre Fundraising activities and the Welsh Blood Service's donor recruitment.
- Communications and engagement are part of the organisation and the way it works, not an adjacent activity. The best communications and engagement activities are an inherent part of an organisation's working structures and processes.
- All communications and engagement work should meet the requirements of the Trust's Welsh Language Policy and the Welsh Government's Welsh Language Framework.
- Equalities policies that cater for people with learning difficulties, dementia, and cognitive impairment – such as the 'All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss' – should be considered in relation to all communications and engagement activities.
- Evaluate to measure success, learning from past communications and engagement activities
- Protect patient and donor confidentiality in all communications and engagement work, using appropriate permission forms and policies when involving them.

9. Evaluation of Communications and Engagement

Evaluation of communications and engagement activities can help Velindre NHS Trust and its service divisions to:

- focus effort – keeping the important activities in perspective;
- demonstrate effectiveness – showing the value of good communications and engagement;
- ensure efficiency – so investment is used where needed; and
- enable continuous improvement – helping to enhance communications and engagement skills and capabilities.

We need to determine whether our actions have helped us achieve our communications aims. Communications will be deemed a success if our staff and other audiences:

- understand our aims and aspirations;
- feel up to date with our latest plans and developments;
- have the opportunity to make their views known;
- believe they will be listened to and that their views can make a difference;
- feel genuinely engaged in our development as we move forward;
- have a better understanding of our services; and
- feel that we understand their expectations and strive to exceed them.

This will be assessed in a number of ways, including:

- staff surveys (strategy aims 1, 3)
- service user surveys (aims 1, 2, 3)
- patient feedback gathered and reported in the quarterly Patient Experience Report (1, 2, 3)
- media monitoring (1, 3)
- website and social media data and comments (1, 2, 3)
- individual appraisals (1)

Evaluation should be seen as an integral and continuous stage in the communications and engagement process. Evaluating the effectiveness of our communications tools and techniques is vital if we are to understand what works and what doesn't and whether our messages are reaching the right audiences.

A template to assist with effective evaluation is included in the [Communications and Engagement Toolkit](#).

10. Conclusion

The delivery of this Communication and Engagement strategy will help ensure Velindre NHS Trust continues to be trusted by patients and donors to deliver quality care and services, has an excellent reputation to ensure donor, patient and stakeholder confidence, and provides patients and donors with the best possible experience.

However, the success of this strategy is dependent on everyone who works for Velindre NHS Trust. Day-to-day communication and engagement with donors, patients, carers and the public creates a lasting impression about our organisation and its divisions.

All staff share the responsibility for ensuring that communications and engagement is built into the culture of the organisation and that the impression they leave is one of excellence.

11. Communications Contacts

If you need any help or assistance with any communications or engagement activities you are planning to undertake, please contact one of the communications professionals below:

James Hodgson

Head of Communications, based at Trust HQ

(Leads internal and external communications functions across the Trust, providing strategic direction, advising staff, managing reputation, dealing with the media, developing partnerships with external organisations)

Tel: 029 20316 951

Email: James.Hodgson@wales.nhs.uk

Julie Heydon-Mann

Communication and Compliance Officer, based at Trust HQ

(Provides support to the Head of Communications, Trust Intranet and Internet editor, administers Freedom of Information requests and responses)

Tel: 029 20316 951

Email: Julie.Heydon-Mann@wales.nhs.uk

Mark Harvey

Media Development Officer, based at VCC

(Provides communications support to VCC, Intranet and Internet editor, social media administrator, produces promotional materials)

Tel: 029 2061 5888 Ext: 6323

Email: Mark.Harvey@wales.nhs.uk

Tracy Sampson

Publicity & Marketing Manager, based at WBS

(Raising awareness of WBS, managing reputation, running campaigns, dealing with the media, organising events, arranging promotional materials, developing partnerships with external organisations)

Tel: 01443 622089

Email: Tracy.Sampson@wales.nhs.uk

Kate Hammond

Communication and Media Officer, based at WBS

(Leads WBS social media, works alongside Publicity and Marketing Manager with campaigns, events, promotional materials and dealing the with the media, edits Intranet)

Tel: 01443 622189

Email: Kate.Hammond@wales.nhs.uk

12. Supporting Policies and Procedures

- [Velindre NHS Trust – Delivering Excellence – Our Three Year Plan 2014/15 - 2016/17](#)
- [Delivering Quality, Care and Excellence 2011/12 - 2015/16 \(Five Year Framework – Velindre NHS Trust\)](#)
- [Trust Procedure for Dealing With Media Enquiries](#)
- [Policy for the Photography, Video and Audio Recording of Service Users](#)
- [Trust Procedure for Filming/Recording in the Trust](#)
- [Welsh Language Policy](#)
- [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- [Procedure for Delivering Interpreter Services](#)
- [Staff Engagement Strategy](#)
- [Organisational Development Strategy](#)
- [Standards of Behaviour Framework Policy](#)
- [Data Protection Act](#)
- [Achieving Excellence: The Quality Delivery Plan for the NHS in Wales](#)
- NHS Wales Electronic Communications Policy
- [NHS Wales Guidance on Engagement and Consultation](#)
- [National Principles of Public Engagement in Wales](#)
- [All Wales Standards for Accessible Communication and Information for People with Sensory Loss](#)

Appendix A: Action and Implementation Plan 2014/15

Aim 1		To develop and maintain an excellent standard of communications, both internal and external		
Action/task	Audience focus	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Evaluation Criteria
Launch Communications and Engagement Strategy and toolkit.	All internal stakeholders	Head of Communications	August 2014	Published on Intranet, Intranet article with link to strategy, promoted on staff newsletter, global email, email briefing to managers asking them to cascade policy to staff. Measure hits / email reads to gauge success.
Provide awareness sessions for staff on implementing the Communications and Engagement Strategy, enabling them to work with Communications staff	Staff	Head of Communications/ Education and Development Manager	August 2014 – March 2015	Number of staff attending training, increased contact between Trust staff and Communications staff, feedback comments. Identify Communications Champions.
Staff across the Trust and its divisions use the Communications and Engagement toolkit.	Department / Team Managers	Managers / Head of Communications	March 2015	Increased use of communications plans for specific projects / areas of work. Measure number of downloads of the toolkit.
Explore opportunities for members of the Board and Executive Team to hold 'roadshows' to brief all Trust staff on the latest news and developments, increasing board and senior management visibility and engagement.	Staff	Head of Communications/ Director of OD & Workforce	November 2014	Feedback from staff. Better working relationships between staff and managers. Number of 'roadshows' held. Improved employee morale across the Trust and improved results from future staff surveys.

Action/task	Audience focus	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Evaluation Criteria
Ensure timely and well-judged responses to enquiries from the media and urgent briefing requests, including those from Welsh Government, MPs, AMs, and councillors	Media, Welsh Government, NHS Wales, elected members	Head of Communications/ Publicity & Marketing Manager (WBS) / Communication and Media officer (WBS)	As required	Introduce dedicated 'press office' contact details publicised on the website to enable better media access to the Trust. Introduce a system to record enquiries and ensure appropriate responses are made within journalists' stated deadlines; NHS Wales Bulletin deadlines are routinely met with appropriate material.
Promote the achievements of the organisation and its staff, both internally and externally	Public, patients, donors, media, staff and other external stakeholders	All managers and staff / Communications Team	Ongoing	Staff achievements are recognised and good practice/success routinely promoted through internal and external communications channels; successful work is identified and nominated in regional/national award schemes, particularly the NHS Wales Awards. Media monitoring shows upward trend in volume of coverage.
Develop and implement an interactive online staff magazine, accessible to all staff	Staff	Head of Communications/ Head of Information Services (VCC) / Software Development Manager (WBS)	March 2015	How many people access the new magazine site, number of posts submitted, number of article views, comments received, a survey canvassing opinion after roll-out.
Refine our internal communications mechanisms, informed by feedback from staff	Staff	Head of Communications	Ongoing	Consider opinion from representative staff members across the Trust; outcomes from other relevant work including staff surveys contribute to continuous improvement; communications mechanisms are routinely evaluated and should receive feedback

Action/task	Audience focus	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Evaluation Criteria
Ensure the correct use of NHS Wales, Velindre NHS Trust, Velindre Cancer Centre, Velindre Fundraising and Welsh Blood Service branding in line with national and local guidelines	Public, patients, donors, staff, other stakeholders	Communications staff and managers across the organisation	Ongoing	Appropriate branding is used in line with NHS Identity guidelines and local style guides; brand guidelines should be available for staff to download from the Intranet sites.

Aim 2	To embrace and develop digital communications services appropriately			
Action/task and priority	Audience Focus	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Evaluation Criteria
Design and implement a new website for the Trust	Public, patients, donors, other external stakeholders	Head of Communications	September 2014	<p>Patient Liaison Group Feedback on the new site, opinion from service users and external stakeholders, user forums.</p> <p>Comments, data from the public collected through the website and surveys.</p> <p>Compliant with accessibility guidelines and the Welsh Language Framework.</p>
Translate and introduce a new website for Velindre Cancer Centre (site already designed).	Public, patients, other external stakeholders	Media Development Officer (VCC) / Head of Communications	September 2014	<p>Patient Liaison Group Feedback on the new site, opinion from patients and external stakeholders, user forums.</p> <p>Comments, data from the public collected through the website and surveys.</p> <p>Compliant with accessibility guidelines and the Welsh Language Framework.</p>

Action/task	Audience focus	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Evaluation Criteria
Further develop the use of new media as a tool for delivering strategic communications and engagement	Public, patients, staff, media, other external stakeholders	Head of Communications	Ongoing. Comms strategy and toolkit in August 2014; development work ongoing. All Wales NHS Social Media Policy due Sept 2014.	Visitor figures demonstrate an increase in use of the Trust and divisional websites and Facebook pages; use of the staff website by registered users increases; positive feedback is received from external and internal evaluation; protocol for using new media is adopted and disseminated internally.
Develop and build capacity for social media in support of organisational priorities	Public, patients, carers and families, public	Head of Communications / Communication and Media officer (WBS) / Media Development Officer (VCC)	Ongoing	Statistics and anecdotal feedback from service users and the public
Use social media channels to assist with engagement for programmes of work.	External stakeholders Local Community	Programme managers	As required	Engagement plan for all strategies/programmes; evidence of use of public engagement intelligence within all initiatives.

Aim 3	To manage and enhance the Trust and service division brands and reputation amongst stakeholders			
Action/task	Audience focus	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Evaluation Criteria
Continue and develop the campaign to attract patients and carers to join the Patient Liaison Group at VCC.	Public, patients, other external stakeholders	Head of Communications / PLG Chair	December 2014	Feedback to the campaign, increased interest in joining the Patient Liaison Group

Action/task	Audience focus	Lead	Timescale	Success/ Evaluation Criteria
Work closely with the Velindre Fundraising charity to help raise its profile amongst the public and its stakeholders.	Staff, public, patients, charity stakeholders	Head of Communications / Head of Fundraising	Ongoing	Higher output of good news stories detailing the charity's activities Evidencing where charitable funds are spent. Increased funds raised by charity.
Work with NHSBT (English Blood Service) to ensure all stakeholders with an interest in the All Wales Blood Service are engaged	Staff, staff representatives, donors, public, hospitals, clinicians, media, Welsh Government	Head of Communications / Head of Blood Collection / Publicity & Marketing Manager (WBS)	Ongoing until 2016	Feedback from stakeholders. Communications and Stakeholder Engagement plan has been produced in conjunction with NHSBT to guide activity. Monitoring and evaluation results from donor forums / campaign activity.
Develop a publicity campaign to attract more donors, particularly those aged between 18 and 30	Public, donors, partner organisations	Publicity & Marketing Manager (WBS) / Communication and Media officer (WBS) / Head of Communications	December 2015	Feedback to the campaign, social media activity, press coverage, numbers of new donors, number of new donors aged 18-30
Raise the profile of the VCC Clinical Trials Unit, which has been open 20 years in 2014.	Public, patients, staff, external stakeholders, partners, Welsh Government	Clinical Trials Unit Manager / Head of Communications	October 2014	Press coverage, more patients aware of clinical trials (measured through the Annual Cancer Patient Survey), web page hits
Build effective relationships with external stakeholders Welsh Government, local universities and 3 rd Sector organisations to support organisational intelligence around service user/public needs and preferences.	External Stakeholders, Welsh Government	Senior Managers / Board Members	Ongoing	Evidence of results of externally obtained information informing development and implementation of strategies and services

SWOT Analysis of Velindre NHS Trust's Communications and Engagement

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent Board Member lead for communications • There is organisational drive and a clear vision for the Board / Exec Team • VCC, WBS and Fundraising possess strong brands and reputations among the public • Velindre NHS Trust has a strong reputation with partners, including Welsh Government, Cardiff University and the Third Sector • The Board / Exec Team has identified the need for effective communications and engagement and is supportive • Establishment of a virtual Trust Communications team with a new Head of Communications • The organisation has a good understanding of national, regional and local issues • There is a growing understanding of the importance of good communications & engagement across the Trust • Developing media relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps in communications/engagement capability within the organisation • Staff survey consistently states there is poor communication with management / organisation • Staff survey also shows that staff don't feel they are listened to, or involved in decision making. • There are few people within the Trust who have communications and marketing expertise. • The Trust's divisions – VCC, WBS and Corporate – are somewhat disconnected from each other. • Not all staff are linked to email or computer systems • Limited understanding of the communication issues of some stakeholders (hard to reach groups in particular) • Under developed Trust website • No Trust-wide Intranet system (3 divisional systems) • Not all staff have regular access to computers / Trust systems
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop ways of working amongst virtual Communications team • Develop core values for Trust staff • Senior leaders to hold face-to-face meetings / briefings • Better promote Velindre Fundraising • Redevelopment of the Trust's website • Chance to introduce a new Trust-wide online staff magazine • Development of social media channels for the Trust and VCC • Opportunities to demonstrate how communication can support the delivery of the Trust's objectives • High calibre clinical staff are potential ambassadors for the Trust • Help managers to better engage with staff • Encourage all members of staff to act as ambassadors for the Trust • Developing of new Trust and VCC brands could create potential for new marketing possibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational culture and 'silo working' which may hinder the development of a consistent approach to communications • Staff and stakeholders potentially not signed-up to the Trust's strategic objectives • Limited opportunities for 2-way conversations • Increasing number of reactive media enquiries and FOI requests from journalists • Reduced resources due to changing economic climate