

Equality and Diversity Council Meeting Paper

6th May 2014

Communications Subgroup

Purpose and context

The EDC provides visible leadership on equality and health inequalities issues across health and social care. It was agreed at the first meeting of the refreshed EDC, that an appropriate approach was needed to communicate the work of the EDC and its key messages to the wider health and care system, and beyond.

Action taken to date

An EDC System Alignment workshop was held at the Health and Social Care Innovation Expo event in March 2014. The workshop focused upon the work of the System Alignment Subgroup and was well-attended and communicated.

Working with EDC members, the Communications team at NHS England has scoped the initial key EDC messages and a draft strategy for communication. (see Annex)

Current position

Current communication mechanisms for the EDC include a webpage, email and Twitter accounts.

An initial draft Communications Strategy for the EDC has been developed and is circulated to EDC members for comments (see Annex).

It was discussed at the previous EDC meeting that convening a virtual communications group – composed of communication experts from the major health and care organisations – would help in the dissemination of consistent and timely messages across the sectors.

Key risks

The absence of an EDC-wide communications plan is likely to have a negative impact upon:

- Keeping equality and health inequalities high on the agenda.
- Positively positioning the EDC as a body of influence in promoting equality and tackling health inequalities within the NHS and beyond.
- Promoting the EDC and how everyone can work together to promote equality and tackle health inequalities.
- Improving understanding of how people's differences, cultural expectations and social status can affect their experiences, health outcomes and quality of care and how EDC can help shape that process.
- Promoting *EDS2* – the refreshed Equality Delivery System for the NHS.

Next steps

- EDC colleagues/organisations represented on the EDC to give comments and input to the draft EDC Communications Plan.
- Engagement to be undertaken with EDC colleagues/organisations represented on the EDC, with regard to appropriate branding for the EDC, during May 2014.
- To convene a virtual EDC Communications Group by July 2014 – composed of communications experts from the major health and care organisations represented on the EDC.

Recommendation and action requested

For the EDC to note and agree the above cited next steps.

Ronan O’Conner and Henry Bonsu

On behalf of the Communications Subgroup of the EDC

23 April 2014

Annex

DRAFT Communications Strategy

Equality and Diversity Council (EDC)

Background

The Equality and Diversity Council (EDC) provides leadership on equality and health inequalities issues across health and social care. Its purpose is to help shape the future of health and social care from an equality, health inequalities and human rights perspective and to improve the access, experiences, health outcomes and quality of care for all patients, service users, carers and the workforce.

The Council works through NHS England and other partner organisations and stakeholders to facilitate influence and to empower. The strength of the council lies with its members and their role or position within the NHS.

Purpose

The purpose of this communications strategy is to outline the key messages and channels of communication to support the work of the EDC.

Stakeholder engagement

Effective stakeholder engagement will be vital. There are a wide range of stakeholders who will have varying levels of interest in the equality and health inequalities agenda. Key stakeholders are:

- public, patients, family and carers, in particular those who face the greatest equality and health inequality issues;
- organisations represented on the Equality and Diversity Council;
- CCGs and NHS provider organisations;
- regional health and social care systems;
- Health and Wellbeing Boards;
- NHS England, DH, Public Health England Strategic Partners (Community and Voluntary Sector);
- national equality organisations, including The National Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Network, Stonewall, The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Partnership and other organisations doing key work around protected characteristics;
- managers and volunteers from local HealthWatch and other groups that represent patients and local communities;
- community development workers and patient and public engagement and experience leads;
- Local authorities;
- GP practice staff;
- carers/patient groups;
- the business community
- elected members and MPs;
- media; and
- Think tanks and academic and research bodies.

Stakeholder prioritisation:

It is important that the groups are segmented in order to ensure the right message is getting to the right people at the right time. A matrix has been used to segment the identified stakeholder groups by their level of influence and the level of communications they need.

Stakeholders broadly fall into four categories:

- Group 1 – **Key players** – from whom we need strong buy in. These stakeholders are a priority as they have a big role to play in supporting the service;
- Group 2 – **Active consultation**. These stakeholders could be a big influence and have the ability to be supportive or obstructive and therefore require active consultation;
- Group 3 – **Keep informed**. It is important to keep these stakeholders informed due to their significance, but they have little or no ability to support or de-rail objectives;
- Group 4 – **Monitor**.

Key players	Active consultation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations represented on the Equality and Diversity Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community and voluntary sector • Public, patients, families and carers • Regional health and social care systems • National equality organisations • Local HealthWatch and other patient groups • Staff and staff side organisations • Think Tanks and academia
Keep informed	Monitoring
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal staff of organisations represented on the Equality and diversity Council • Community development workers/patient and public engagement leads • GP Practice staff • MPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business community • Media • Academic and research bodies

Communications strategy

This communications strategy will be delivered to support the following key areas of activity for the EDC. All activity will be undertaken in partnership with key organisations, potentially with a virtual communications group (NHS England, DH, HEE, NHS Employers and PHE) set up to maximise publicity.

EDC Statement of Declaration – During the NHS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Week (12-16 May) NHS England will work with its partners to promote the EDC Statement of Declaration which will be finalised with all 24 signatures.

Summit (Autumn 2014) – This Autumn it is planned that the next NHS Values Summit will take place in the Midlands and East region, to bring together a diverse range of people to create a greater understanding of how people’s differences, social status and cultural expectations can affect their experiences of health and care.

Launch of Equality Hub (End of 2014) – The equality hub is an online library portal, hosted on an organisational website, that brings together all resources, tools, guidance documents, good practice case studies, legislation documents and links, relating to equality (and health inequalities) into one place. It will

also include the 'EDS Dashboard'. This dashboard will bring together in one place, the names of NHS organisations implementing the EDS. It will identify which EDS outcomes/equality objectives each organisation is focussing upon and for what time period.

a. Communications objectives

The communications objectives are:

- to communicate the work of the EDC and promote understanding of and support for equality and health inequalities, externally and within NHS England;
- to keep equality high on the agenda of the NHS and its partners;
- to promote a positive, equality-focussed culture within NHS England;
- to build relationships with partner organisations and develop communication channels with key stakeholders;
- to positively position the EDC as a body of influence in promoting equality and tackling health inequalities; and
- to promote EDS2, the refreshed Equality Delivery System toolkit, and encourage its use.

b. Key messages

Key messages will be tailored to each stakeholder in the next section but the top-line key messages are:

- ensuring equality and tackling health inequalities is at the top of all organisation's agendas;
- our aim is to bring to life the values of the NHS Constitution;
- everyone has equal opportunities and treatment;
- everyone is treated with dignity and respect and when they complain we listen and put things right;
- EDS2 is a tool to help make the difference that our patients, public and staff need and deserve;
- the EDC seeks to raise ambition at every level of the health care system;
- it will help empower the health and care sector to continuously improve;
- the strength of the EDC comes from its members;
- the EDC is here to provide visible leadership on equality and health equality issues across the NHS; and
- the EDC is committed to being as transparent as possible, internally and externally.

Key messages by stakeholder:

Stakeholder	Targeted message(s)
Public/patients/family/carers	<p>We are committed to ensuring equality for all.</p> <p>Please tell us when you are not treated fairly. We will listen and try to put things right.</p>
CCGs and providers	<p>Help us commission and provide services that are fair for all.</p>

	We need to be able to ‘flex’ our services and workplaces, within reason, to meet the needs of all patients, carers and staff.
Local authority and other partner organisations Regional health and social care systems Health and Wellbeing Boards	Work closely with us so we can ensure equality across the whole of health and social care.
National equality organisations	Let’s work together to ensure our work complements each other.
Healthwatch and patient groups/voluntary and third sector	We will keep you informed about our work and we hope you will get involved in promoting equality
GP Practices	Work with us to deliver higher quality services by helping us address health inequalities
Employee organisations - HEE, BMA, Royal Colleges	We will work with you to embed equality and health inequalities training in undergraduate training programmes.
MPs	We will keep you informed on the progress of our work
Media	We are committed to addressing health inequalities, working with the rest of the health and social care system
DH	We will keep you informed on the progress of our work
Public Health England	Let’s work together to reduce health inequalities across the country
Think Tanks/Academic and Research bodies	Let’s work together to ensure our work complements each other.
NHS England staff	Please be aware of our legal duties towards equality We will keep you informed on the progress of our work

Risks and issues

Risks and issues	Mitigating actions
There are many organisations involved and we don’t act as one voice	Ensure joined up/partnership working with all key players through EDC and other forums

Further work on developing the risks and issues section is being carried out.

Evaluation

It is important to continually measure what activities are achieving our objectives. Evaluation will be undertaken through:

Internal:

- Staff surveys;
- Patient surveys;
- Feedback forms; and
- Quarterly board report.

Externally:

- Annual NHS staff survey;
- Annual NHS patient surveys;
- Monitoring tweets;
- Public and stakeholder comments; and
- Media coverage.