

Equality and Diversity Council Meeting Paper

18th October 2016

Communications Subgroup Update

Purpose and context

The Equality and Diversity Council provides visible and robust leadership on equality issues across the NHS. Establishing an effective communications approach is essential for the Council. It will provide the Council with a consistent and timely means of communicating its work to the system, reinforcing to the Council its own purpose and added value, and helping to maintain its credibility and momentum across the NHS whilst promoting equality issues and entering the debate where necessary.

The refresh of the work programme and membership of the Council highlighted key recommendations for its future communications element. This paper presents an update on the arrangements in place for the Council's communications workstream.

EDC Theme and objective (s) the paper links to

Communications is a core overarching theme of the EDC and the EDC work plan.

A EDC work plan is a two-year plan to improve three themed areas of work;

- **Inclusive Workplaces**
- **Workforce Equality**
- **Inclusive Healthcare**

Each theme has 2-3 key goals forming key successes for the EDC to:

- Communicate to the NHS
- Monitor and communicate progress
- Engage EDC members in owning and assisting successful achievement of a goal

Key Summary Milestones

The EDC Communications Subgroup meeting on regular basis – monthly meetings with Terms of Reference agreed and Work Plan drafted.

First EDC Blog by Joan Saddler, Co-chair of EDC launched, with regular Blogs from EDC members to follow.

Press release to introduce the Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) published 27th September 2016

EDC Forward View for September – November developed and will be shared with EDC

Actions taken to date

The EDC now has a range of national organisations who have nominated a specific communications expert to work on the EDC's communications element.

- NHS England
- NHS Employers
- NHS Providers
- NHS Leadership Academy
- Care Quality Commission
- Health Education England
- NHS Digital formerly known as Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC)
- Department of Health
- NHS Improvement – nomination being confirmed
- NHS Confederation

The communications subgroup will help in the dissemination of proactive, consistent and timely EDC messages across the sectors. All EDC members are now represented on the sub group.

The Group held meetings in September and October 2016, to discuss and take forward the new approach to communications agenda, ensuring greater ownership to the agenda by all council communications leads. A draft work plan is currently being populated by group members, and working to ensure all EDC communications activity is clearly aligned to the EDC Work Plan deliverables, and outlining quick wins activity for each member organisation and EDC overall for the next 3-6 months.

Group members have supported the development of Communications plans for WDES, Learning Disability employment programme, Brexit recommendations, Inclusion health group members workshop at the NHS Health and Innovations Expo 2016

Current position

The EDC sub group is currently building on the draft EDC communications work plan, ensuring all EDC communications activity is clearly aligned to the EDC Work Plan deliverables, and outlining quick wins activity for each member organisation and EDC overall for the next 3-6 months.

The current draft work plan focuses on a range of proactive deliverables and quick wins that council members will undertake with as joint products with the EDC. The first EDC Blog, written by Joan Saddler, co-chair of EDC, on the key decisions and outcomes from the 26th July EDC meeting was launched at the end of September. There was a learning process for the group in regards to governance, timescales and managing any potential risk to the image of EDC.

The draft work plan maps 3-6 month delivery of communications and social media activity; and developed a 12 month view of activity, focusing on regular blogs post EDC meetings, articles on key areas of work, showcasing key activity of council members of equality and diversity issues.

The EDC Forward Plan mapping activity for September – October has been produced
An EDC Infographics is currently being planned.

On 27th September, EDC launched the press release to promote the Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES), outlining the key decisions made by EDC in July to mandate the WDES in the NHS Standard Contract for 2018/19, with 2017/18 being a preparatory year.

Key risks

- The absence of an EDC communications element is likely to have a negative impact upon:
- Keeping equality high on the healthcare and wider NHS agenda.
 - Positively positioning the EDC as a body of influence in promoting equality and diversity within the NHS and beyond.
 - EDC members not actively promoting the equality agenda.
 - Promoting the key work products of the EDC in a timely and consistent way.
 - Improving understanding of how people's differences, cultural expectations and social status can affect their experiences and health outcomes.

Next steps

- To agree and finalise the work plan for 2016/17 and outline plans for 2017/18.
- To continue to implement the programme of activities as outlined in the work plan
- To continue to build on the robustness of the EDC Forward View in capturing activity and sharing on social media
- To produce the EDC Infographics on the outcomes of the EDC work plan and activity
- To continue to work with members to produce regular blogs and articles by EDC members

Recommendation and action requested

- EDC to note the above.
- EDC subgroups to ensure they feed any key communications messages into the EDC Forward Plan in preparation for each quarterly update to EDC.

Name of the chair of the sub group: Sarah Smith, Head of Strategic Communications, NHS England and Chair of the group.

Name of the sub group: EDC Communications Subgroup

18th October 2016

[Members of the Communications Group are: Sarah Smith (NHS England) (chair), Anna Jefferson (CQC), (NHS Providers), Matthew Woolford (HEE), Henry Bonsu (Broadcaster), Ruth Passman (NHS England), Ranjit Senghera (NHS England), Isabelle Hunt & Amy McManus (NHS Digital); Emily Brown, (Department of Health); Julie Johnson, (NHS Employers/ NHS Confederation); Helen Stevens, (NHS Leadership Academy),]