

MEETING:	HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
DATE:	18 OCTOBER 2011
TITLE OF REPORT:	PUBLIC SECTOR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
REPORT BY:	DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Purpose

To inform the Health and Wellbeing board about the local communications strategy, which supports the locally and nationally driven changes to public services, what activities have been achieved to date and how the Health and Wellbeing Board agenda fits into the overall strategic communication considerations.

Recommendation(s)

THAT: the Health and Wellbeing Board

- (a) Note the updated communications strategy and joint key messages.**
- (b) Agree next steps to bring common communication messages and activities together**
- (c) Identify any initial key messages about the work of the Board itself or more generally about health and well being**

Key Points Summary

- There are a number of key communications and engagement activities, which are being developed to support stakeholders and organisations through the transitional period of public sector change within Herefordshire
- The Health and Wellbeing board is key in implementing many of those changes, as well as having oversight of health and social care within Herefordshire. It is therefore important that the communication and engagement priorities of the board are developed and implemented in close coordination to those of other public sector organisations.
- A longer discussion is planned for a future meeting about our health and well being engagement strategy; this report sets the scene for shared communications and updates the Board on the joint communications strategy already agreed by the PCT Board and Clinical Commissioning Group

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Richard Beavan-Pearson (01432 261721/ 07792880246)

Alternative Options

- 1 There are no alternative options, given that the Board has identified communications and engagement as a one of its key issues in the Development Framework.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 The joint communications strategy is designed to relate to all relevant areas of public sector reform within Herefordshire. As these reforms are all interdependent, a joint plan will be the most effective way of joining up the key communications messages.

Introduction and Background

- 3 A joint communications strategy was developed earlier this year to help support the partners who form the new health and social care landscape.
- 4 The scope of the strategy aims to support a seamless public-sector wide health and social care transition commissioning to the identification of key stakeholders who have a role or interest in the changes.
- 5 The strategy is designed to ensure that, regardless of who is commissioning or providing health and social care, messages are consistent and timely. This is particularly important in times of change which can be unsettling for both patients, the wider public, our partners and stakeholders.
- 6 The Health and Wellbeing Board is integral to this communications strategy due to its leading role in relation to health and wellbeing across the county - particularly because of its breadth of membership and determination to engage people in the development of its work and priorities. Crucially, however, is the requirement to engage residents, communities and all stakeholders across the county in taking responsibility for health and well being, through personal actions, informed lifestyle choices and building capacity at a local level.

Key Considerations

- 7 In order to develop the requirements of the Health and Wellbeing Board development framework and to link those expectations with the communications strategy, it will be necessary to ensure that the Board Engagement Plan is fully incorporated where appropriate and that the results of those activities influence the ongoing iterations of the plan.
- 8 Supporting the implementation of the strategy is a group of key stakeholders who regularly review the implementation of the action plan. Through this process a 90 day plan is being developed to support the more detailed activities which are relevant to the health and social care changes within Herefordshire. Key activities will range from information about the changes, informed by the key messages detailed in the plan to campaigns which are designed to support the required changes. Examples of these communications activities include:

- a) **A&E campaign launched.**

A wide-ranging information campaign was launched in September to promote the alternatives to A&E and try and tackle the rising numbers using the service inappropriately. Numbers have risen from (approx) 43,000 in 2005 to 48,000 in 2008/09. Each A&E visit costs around £93, which is a significant cost in challenging economic times.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of what A&E should be used for and alternatives to it. It has seen bus advertising and a radio campaign launched already with GP practices and pharmacists also playing key roles in getting information out to local people using those services. Posters will appear in all NHS H, council and WVNHS properties including key venues such as libraries and children's centres. Shortly, billboards around the town and at the local football club will also be brought into the campaign in time for the festive season.

b) Flu vaccination

The annual flu vaccination plan is being rolled out. However, following evaluation it was found that previous campaigns have not reached pregnant women and so this year the campaign is being run through midwives. A wider information campaign, using national promotional materials will target groups such as older people and staff.

c) Summary Care Records

Summary care records are an electronic summary of information created for every individual patient. They can be shared via NHS staff and are particularly helpful for people with long-term conditions or in emergencies. They list only medications and conditions and are fully data protected. They will be rolled out in Herefordshire in the near future.

- 9 The Health and Wellbeing Board development framework details a number of issues which will need to be implemented in order that a Health and Wellbeing Engagement Plan can be developed. Many of these issues are similar, or shared with those required to develop engagement and communications activities required to support changes elsewhere within the public sector locally. Indeed, the Health and Wellbeing Board development framework states that these are:
- *Informing residents about the change and seeking their views about how this should happen locally...* using the 9 locality areas to tailor messages to the distinctive needs of each, bringing together local GPs, Elected Members, local delivery teams, parish councils and voluntary sector groups
 - *Seeking to persuade residents to change their behaviour to promote better health for themselves and their families, to use the health and social care system responsibly and to take personal responsibility...* this is a role for all agencies (via the Herefordshire Partnership) in the context of health and well being, where a few simple messages need to be communicated repeatedly
 - *Ensuring public involvement in the new system and appropriate local accountability...* this will be a key aim for the Consortium and the Board, working with HealthWatch and the wider VCS across the County
- 10 Therefore, once the Health and Wellbeing board priorities and workplans are developed, the key areas where HPS communications and engagement teams can support the work being carried out – for example, in support of the engagement activities, through social marketing, media and information campaigns can be identified and agreed.
- 11 This will then enable those activities and messages to be coordinated through the ongoing management of the joint strategy action plan, 90 day plan, and other key activities.
- 12 The Board may wish to identify any initial key messages about the work of the Board itself or more generally about health and well being

Community Impact

- 13 There are significant implications for the community. An effective communications strategy will help to engage residents, communities and all stakeholders across the county in taking responsibility for health and well being, through personal actions, informed lifestyle choices and building capacity at a local level.

Financial Implications

- 14 None identified at present.

Legal Implications

- 15 None

Risk Management

- 16 A lack of integration between communication and engagement activities which support the health and social care changes which are underway within Herefordshire may lead to unnecessary duplication of those activities and associated messages.

Consultees

- 17 The PCT Board and Herefordshire Health-Care Commissioners have agreed the strategy

Appendices

- 18 Joint Communications Strategy

Background Papers

- 19 Health and Well Being Board Development Framework.