Purpose of report
To inform the Health and Wellbeing board on the work of the communications and engagement group, with a view to considering its future and further development.

Recommendations
The Board is recommended to:

1. Acknowledge existing action and opportunities for development to provide assurance that there is comprehensive engagement at every stage of Health and Wellbeing Board processes with local communities, including people who use services, carers and the voluntary and community sector through robust engagement processes.

2. Agree further development of the communications and engagement group, supporting attendance/involvement from their organisations and encouraging a continuum of dialogue with the residents of Northumberland

Background
The communications and engagement group has been in operation since the inception of the Health and Wellbeing Board. It played an integral part in consultation with the wider audience on the five key priority areas. It has strengthened relations with key partners leading on communication and engagement, giving an opportunity to demonstrate a collective responsibility in communication and engagement activities.

Shared engagement activities have been undertaken i.e. listening events, Healthwatch information events and others - working together when engaging with patients and public. Some areas have led to improved communication with interest groups on particular issues and service delivery changes. They have also produced positive outcomes relating to patients and public gaining a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of commissioners and providers.

Examples of the work are as follows
- Facilitated a day to work with all key stakeholders and encourage partnership working in engagement activities with a view to avoiding duplication and
demonstrating a joined up approach to health and wellbeing priorities in Northumberland.

- Establishing an Engagement Calendar for all partners to share engagement plans and work together, seeking to avoid duplication
- Sharing patient interest groups existence to enable effective engagement opportunities. Reaching a wider audience of health and care service users.
- Involvement in the production of the HWB newsletter- including aligning areas of activities to the five key priorities.
- Linking with the peoples panel and other LA stakeholders
- Informing partners stakeholders on the work of the HWB
- A successful HWB event in North Northumberland was well received, informing patients, carers and public on the priority areas and also demonstrating the collective vision with all partners on the health and wellbeing board.

Key issues

- The Health and Wellbeing board looks to supporting the formulating of the engagement calendar, sharing of data on engagement activities and ensuring that patients and public are informed through an agreed mechanism.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board to agree to share engagement feedback information and its impact on decisions being made.
- To invite the board to consider the refreshing of an agreed communications and engagement plan.
- To invite the board to review its five key priorities to share a ‘You said we did’ approach to these to instil public confidence in the consultation processes.

Key messages from review: benefits of being part of the Communications & Engagement Group

- Opportunity to share and coordinate consultation and engagement with the range of strategic partners. This group has an opportunity to realise efficiency savings for our relevant organisation through co-produced consultation and engagement activities. As well as being able to access other organizations networks and client groups.
- Shared information then cascaded to relevant audiences
- Dissemination of information in a more efficient and cost effective way
- An opportunity to share engagement activities
- Being aware of activity across Northumberland and any potential issues affecting everyone.
- Ensuring the right messages gets out to the widest audience
- Cross linkage and joining up to maximize communication & feedback. Encouraging a Continuum of dialogue with the residents of Northumberland.
• Reaching a wider group on important activities and information
• Further engagement with young people through the various partners.

Identified Challenges:
• Maintaining momentum and building upon the progress achieved to date, whilst acknowledging the diminishing resources that organisations are faced with.
• Wide enough representation
• Finding time/making time – or appointing a deputy to attend
• Sign up from all partners and attendance is key. The broad membership will maintain opportunities to add value. Attendance is key.

Dissemination of information in an efficient and cost effective way: Reaching a wider group on important activities and information
• HWB newsletter – maintaining communication with the resident of Northumberland. Providing up to date information on the work of the HWB and the five priority areas. The newsletter was disseminated through the partners.
• Consultation exercise on the HWB priorities
• HWB event with communication and engagement partners.
• Shared engagement/information events
• PNS consultation dissemination.

Improvement opportunity: Cross linkage and joining up to maximize communication & feedback
• Action focused areas to work on for the group – we need to get some strategic direction from the HWB, driving the work of the group
• Sharing data – explore creating a shared library of resources
• The general feedback from all responses was positive and seen as effective way of working in partnership. However it was stressed that attendance and sharing of information relating to communication and engagement activities was paramount in order for this group to be effective.
• The connection with the work of the Health and wellbeing board was seen as beneficial; undertaking the discussions taking place and what impact this has on partners.
• An engagement calendar has been established and partners are encouraged to share planned engagement plans in order to encourage others to benefit and
perhaps attend. Sharing of data and feedback would be of great benefit. All agreed that all engagement activities should provide feedback on comments and issues raised. This data would then be able to affect change to benefit everyone.

- “Public and patients regularly state that they do not receive feedback from engagement activities and consultation exercises. They need to feel that their comments and views are valued and make a difference in improving services, and influencing change”.

BACKGROUND PAPERS


IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE REPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>The requirement to work across organisational boundaries and jointly with the community is relevant to the role of the Health and Wellbeing Board.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance and value for money</td>
<td>No new expenditure is proposed in the report. Much of the action to which it refers is carried out by partner agencies and aims to make best use by developing and coordinating existing communication and engagement opportunity to better effect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>There are no specific issues for human resources. No changes in existing roles are proposed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>No specific issues arising from this report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equalities</td>
<td>No specific issues arising from this report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>The activity which is the subject of this report will increase the co-ordination of communication and engagement to improve opportunity to manage available resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime &amp; Disorder</td>
<td>No specific issues arising from this report.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Customer Considerations

The activity which is the subject of the report is consistent with our approach which is aimed to align with the requirements of the Health and Wellbeing Board, individuals and the communities in which they live.

Wards

All

Author and contact details

Report Author: Cynthia Atkin – Chair, Health and Wellbeing Board Communication and Engagement Sub Group

Phone:
Email: