

Communications Committee 5 November 2009

Introduction to the communications strategy 2007-2011 and communications workplan 2009-10

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

This paper is intended to provide the Committee with an introduction to the Communications strategy 2007-2011 and the communications department annual workplan (2009-10).

Decision

The Committee is requested to note the document. No decision is required.

Background information

The Communications Strategy 2007-2011 outlines the organisation's strategic and operational priorities and the communications objectives and messages that support these priorities. It details our key audiences as well as the organisation's guiding principles and the communications values. It also references the implementation of the strategy and highlights methods of measurement and evaluation.

The strategy is underpinned by the department's annual workplan which summarises our key activities for the year and shows how these link to the communications objectives set out in the communications strategy. It also details resources and communications tools which will be used across the year as well as sets out the priorities and issues for the year. It outlines potential risks and the mitigation of these risks and highlights in brief some proposed activities for the following financial year.

The Communications Strategy and departmental workplan are reviewed each year by the Communications Committee. This process starts in November with the Committee's strategy workshop. The final strategy and workplan is submitted for discussion and approval at the February committee meeting.

The budgeting process runs alongside this and appended to this report is the paper that was presented to the Communications Committee in January 2009 which highlighted the key areas of spend within the 2009-10 communications budget.

Resource implications

Resource implications are set out in the departmental workplan.

Financial implications

The activities set out in the departmental workplan are accounted for within the communications budget.

Appendices

2007-2011 Communications strategy

2009-2010 communications workplan

Communications department draft budget 2009 – 2010 headline figures

Health Professions Council
Communications Strategy 2007- 2011

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1 Introduction

Good communication is essential for the HPC to engage effectively with its audiences and to fulfil its primary role of protecting the public. As a regulator of healthcare professionals, it is important that we tell the public about our role in protecting their health, inform and educate our registrants as to the benefits of regulation and what we require of them and communicate our successes to stakeholders.

Much has already been achieved. The research undertaken by MORI in 2005 provided a valuable insight into the perceptions, needs and priorities of the public and our registrants. We have worked to increase public and professional awareness of our role. In particular, our activity has focused on explaining to members of the public what registration means, our powers to protect common professional titles and the importance of checking that health professionals are registered.

The 2007 - 2011 communications strategy aims to build on this work, actively seeking to promote the core work of the Council and its Committees. It covers the period from now until the next Department of Health review of regulation in 2011 (as indicated in the Foster Report) and is intended to provide focus and support for the objectives and priorities set out in the HPC's Strategy.

2 Strategic and operational activities

The HPC's strategy, set out in the Strategic Intent is "to continually improve the organisation, influence the regulatory agenda and promote best practices."

In addition to this, there are a number of strategic and operational activities highlighted in the Strategic Intent. These include developing our home country engagement, undertaking continuing professional development audits and proactive regulation of aspirant groups. In addition to this, the organisation is committed to developing online facilities to improve our service to registrants.

The White Paper, issued in February 2007, sets out the Government's vision for the future of healthcare regulation and impacts on the working of the organisation in a number of ways, in particular its corporate governance arrangements and the intention to regulate new professions, for example applied psychologists, counsellors and psychotherapists.

The communications strategy will seek to drive and deliver these activities and the work of the Council and its committees through the actions set out in the annual workplan.

3 Communications objectives

The overarching objective of the communications strategy is set out in Article 3 (13) of the Health Professions Order (2001) which states

- The Council shall inform and educate registrants, and shall inform the public, about its work

The main purpose of the communications strategy is to directly implement this objective and we will aim to do this with the following five objectives:

1. To raise awareness and understanding of the HPC's role in regulation across all our audiences
2. To extend our reach to the public enabling them to access easily information about the HPC
3. To influence the regulatory agenda through ongoing dialogue and engagement with key stakeholders
4. To engage with our registrants to ensure they understand the benefits of regulation, the work of the Council and what is required of them
5. To further strengthen and ensure effective internal communications within the organisation

4 Communications messages

In all our communication activities we will promote the following core messages to all our audiences:

- The HPC's primary role is to protect the public
- We are a multi-professional regulator, regulating 175,000 health professionals from radiographers to physiotherapists, paramedics to biomedical scientists, dietitians to podiatrists
- We protect the public by setting standards of education, conduct and performance for the health professionals we regulate, by dealing with complaints and by ensuring that health professionals who do not meet our standards are held to account
- We are a modern, efficient and effective regulator which aims to be at the forefront of professional regulation
- We actively contribute to the health regulation agenda and promote good practice and standards

These core messages are not fixed and can be modified in line with changes in the organisation and its strategic intent.

5 Key audiences

It is important that we communicate our messages efficiently and effectively with all our audiences and the table below sets out the different people with whom we need to communicate.

These key audiences have been drawn from the full list of stakeholders set out in the HPC's Strategic Intent.

Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Members of the public• Patient groups• Consumer associations• Referrers• Clients and service users
Registrants	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Existing registrants• New registrants• Prospective registrants
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parliamentarians from the four home countries• Professional bodies• Employers• Other regulators• Trade Unions• Higher Education Institutions• Other education providers and education organisations• Other health organisations
Internal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employees• Partners• Council

6 Guiding principles and communication values

The HPC uses six guiding principles which are set out in the Strategic Intent:

- protect the public
- communicate and respond
- work collaboratively
- be transparent
- provide value for money and audit
- and deliver a high quality service

The communications strategy and workplan will adhere to these principles and will ensure that all our published communication will be

- Accessible
- Accurate
- Clear
- Honest
- Open and transparent
- Professional
- Timely

- In accordance with the HPC's house style and visual identity
- Meet Plain English guidelines where applicable

7 Implementing the communications strategy

The Communications Department and Council will be supported in the delivery of the communications strategy by the Communications Committee which exists to

- oversee the implementation of the communications strategy
- monitor the delivery and evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy
- advise the Council on the strategy

It should be recognised that whilst the communications strategy is the primary contributor to delivering recognition for the HPC, the consistent high quality delivery of operations and activities is also an essential factor in how the organisation is perceived by its key audiences.

The Communications Department is responsible for the day to day management of the strategy and its related annual workplan, however, the success of the strategy also rests with the Council and Executive.

8 Measurement and evaluation

The effectiveness of the communications strategy and the communications department annual workplan will be gauged through continuous measurement and evaluation, including

- Feedback from HPC events
- Participation and evaluation of exhibitions
- Attendance and feedback from talks, presentations and conferences
- Web statistics
- Market research
- Bi-annual opinion polling
- Press coverage

The HPC's strategy is to continually improve the organisation, and the information gathered through this measurement will be used to formulate further activities and strategies.

Communications Workplan 2009 – 2010

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Introduction

The communication workplan for 2009 - 2010 details our main areas of work and sets out how we will work towards achieving the objectives of the communications strategy.

The communications department is both proactive and reactive in its work and requirements may change, particularly in light of business needs. Significant issues may arise during the course of the year and the department will need to be flexible in the delivery of its workplan in order to respond accordingly.

This document

This document is divided into several sections. It details our resources, the communications tools we will use as well as our priorities for the year and how our activities link to the communication objectives set out in the communication strategy.

Communications Department

The communications department consists of eight employees as follows:

Jacqueline Ladds	Director of Communications
Daniel Knight	Team Administrator
Susan Carini	Events Manager
Victoria Smyth	Communications Manager (currently on maternity leave)
Ebony Gayle	Communications Manager (to cover Victoria's maternity leave)
Tony Glazier	Web Manager
Jonathan Jones	Publications Manager
Nina Blunck	Public Affairs Manager
Mark Potter	CPD Communications Manager

The Director of Communications is responsible for the overall management of the team, the day to day running of the department, the development of the strategy and workplan and the development of new projects.

The Team Administrator provides support to the department across all its activities, particularly booking travel and accommodation, responding to requests for information and publications and the organisation of all employee events.

The Events Manager organises all the HPC's internal and external events, particularly the Listening Events, our attendance at exhibitions, all employee awayday and the co-ordination of the external presentation and talks programme.

The Communication Manager leads on our public facing campaigns, press and media activity and the development of the internal communications function.

The Web Manager is responsible for maintaining and developing the HPC website, the hpcheck microsite as well as the Council extranet and employee intranet.

The Publications Manager leads on all aspects of the publications process, including the visual identity and house style, provides support to departments in the production of

publications and produces the registrant-facing HPC In Focus newsletter and the employee facing HPC Update newsletter.

The Public Affairs Manager is responsible for developing and co-ordinating communications with a range of stakeholders and opinion formers, in particular government and is also responsible for devising and co-ordinating communications programmes with key stakeholder audiences including employers and professional bodies.

The CPD Communications Manager is responsible for managing a range of communications initiatives designed to inform and educate registrants and employers of the HPC's CPD audit requirements. This includes a programme of talks, presentations and workshops, working with professional bodies and raising awareness of the CPD standards through the professional press and the literature we produce.

Communication Activities

There are eight main areas of work undertaken within the Communications Department. The following paragraphs summarises each.

The Health Professions Order 2001 sets out our statutory responsibility to inform and educate the public and registrants of the work we do. We also have a statutory duty to consult other stakeholders, for example when setting standards or issuing guidance.

In order to fulfil our responsibility to inform the public about our work, members of the public should have access to information which promotes the importance of using a regulated health professional, and how to check as well as how to make a complaint when things do go wrong. We take a proactive approach when communicating with the public and much of this is undertaken through the public information **campaigns** we organise.

The **media** is an important tool, particularly in promoting our work through the national, regional and professional media and provides opportunities to promote the HPC and our public protection role. We have an ongoing contacts programme to build relationships with key journalists, we issue media alerts and news releases based on the Fitness to Practise hearings to promote our public protection role through the regional and national media, we have an ongoing programme of releases and articles to the professional press and we issue general organisation wide press releases on a range of issues.

The **web** is an important method of providing comprehensive information to all our audiences in a cost effective and efficient way. We have the main www.hpc-uk.org website which receives approximately 80,000 hits per month, the public facing www.hpcheck.org microsite as well as the Council extranet and the employee intranet.

The **publications** we produce provide an important source of information to all our audiences. Brochures include the Standards of proficiency for each profession, the Standards of conduct performance and ethics as well as the three corporate annual reports and information and guidance on registration, approvals and monitoring, fitness to practise and continuing professional development (CPD).

Events are an increasingly important opportunity for us to engage face to face with all our audiences and provide opportunities to present information about the HPC as well as listen and seek views. We have a programme of Listening Events across the UK which are focused at communicating with our registrants, we exhibit at a range of external conferences

and have an active talks and presentation programme where HPC employees have speaking opportunities at key conferences and events.

Employees play an active role in getting messages to our audiences and should be considered as ambassadors for the HPC. Our **internal communications** programme includes the employee intranet, an annual all employee awayday, bi-monthly all employee briefings, which are led by the CEO, team building events in the summer and winter and a bi-monthly newsletter, HPC Update.

In carrying out our UK-wide role we work closely with a number of other organisations, including professional bodies, government, employers and patient and consumer groups. We have already established good working relationships and our **public affairs** activities include building relationships with parliamentarians through face to face meetings and briefings and the dissemination of information to constituency offices to ensure they are informed of our public protection role. We are also developing a co-ordinated approach to stakeholder activities, focusing on employers and professional bodies through the development of issue specific events, targeted briefings and dedicated information on the website.

We also support organisation-wide **projects** by delivering effective communication plans and activities for projects which may be major areas of change or development for the organisation. Major projects which require communications input include continuing professional development audits; the regulation of new professions, registration and renewals, the online renewals project and the 2009 registration fee increase.

Priorities and issues for 2009 – 2010

The priorities for 2009 – 2010 have been put together in order to build on those of the previous financial year, and also to respond to the HPC's bi-annual opinion polling. 2007's opinion polling, undertaken by Ipsos MORI, included seeking information from registrants, members of the public and stakeholders, and hence provides a broad range of opinions and inputs from which issues and activities have been drawn.

Registrants

Key messages to communicate to registrants this financial year include the ongoing need to communicate the CPD standards and audit requirements, and the benefits of regulation. Informing registrants about our relationship with the professional bodies was another area that came up from the opinion polling, as was the importance of ensuring registrants know about our public information campaigns. It is evident from the research that informing the public is key, not only because it helps to raise awareness, but also because being seen to do so is another way of raising our 'credibility' with registrants, and helping registrants to understand the importance of regulation, including how registration fees are spent.

Another important message for registrants is the changes to HPC arising from the White Paper, including the new structure of the Council.

Areas of the workplan below which address these issues include the work of the CPD Communications Manager, the content of Listening Events (which has been and will continue to be more specifically refined to address the areas registrants identify as particularly useful), media work with the professional journals, our increased presence at profession-specific conferences and exhibitions and public affairs work with the professional bodies.

Key stakeholders

Feedback from the opinion polling was generally positive, with good feedback from key stakeholders about the organisation generally, and many demonstrated a good understanding of our role. Many believed we are going in the right direction, and that the way forward is for HPC to expand and to regulate more professions. Our overall objectives of influencing the regulatory agenda is also important here, both in contributing to cross-regulatory work as well as sharing our expertise with others where appropriate.

Interestingly here, as with registrants, work with the public was emphasised as a key part of our future work, and a way to ensure we are seen by key stakeholders to be fulfilling our role. This group of stakeholders also emphasised the need to communicate more with registrants to promote the benefit of regulation and understanding of the HPC.

The workplan below addresses these areas largely through the campaigns and public affairs areas of work. In particular, the stakeholder work outlined for the coming year with professional bodies, employers, and other stakeholder groups, will be an important way of responding to the feedback obtained.

Members of the public

A small increase was noted in the percentage of members of the public who have heard of the HPC, from 13% two years ago to 15%. There remains the need to do more to raise awareness with this group, in particular our work needs to be targeted and focused to make the most effective use of our available resource.

The majority of the public expressed a preference for information to be provided to them in GPs' surgeries, or on the internet. The former preference was further reinforced by the information that the majority of members of the public stated that they would see a health professional through referral from their GP.

The workplan addresses these areas largely through the Campaigns areas of work, particularly the ongoing dissemination of public-facing literature, targeting GPs and other patient and public facing organisation (eg LINKs and PALs) and increasing our presence on the internet.

Issues and priorities conclusion

Overall, drawing from the findings of the Ipsos MORI polling, our focus for the 2009 - 2010 workplan will continue to be our public information campaigns and the work we are undertaking to raise awareness amongst the public of the HPC and its role and the importance of using a registered health professional. We will be undertaking campaigns targeted at specific groups in order to maximise our effectiveness. We will also continue to focus on our communications with registrants, in particular promoting the benefits of registration and explaining the requirements of the CPD audits. A further key area of work for 2009 – 2010 will be to continue to develop our presence in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Achieving the communication objectives in 2009 - 2010

The Communications Strategy identifies five overall objectives in our communications work. In 2009 – 2010 we will undertake the following activities in support of these objectives.

1. To raise awareness and understanding of the HPC's role in regulation across all our audiences
2. To extend our reach to the public enabling them to access easily information about the HPC

3. To influence the regulatory agenda through ongoing dialogue and engagement with key stakeholders
4. To engage with our registrants to ensure they understand the benefits of regulation, the work of the Council and what is required of them
5. To further strengthen and ensure effective internal communications within the organisation

A summary of our approach to achieving the communication objectives is set out in the table on the following pages.

Monitoring and evaluating the communications workplan

The activities in the communications workplan will be continuously monitored by the communications department and progress against the plan will be reported to the Communications Committee.

A more detailed approach to measurement and evaluation is set out in the communications strategy 2007 - 2011

Objective 1: to raise awareness and understanding of the HPC's role in regulation across all our audiences, we will:

	Main activity	Description	Key deliverables	Timescale	Employees involved
1.1	Manage the publications process and support departments in the production of a range of publications	Liaise with departments including FTP and Education on annual reports. Manage the publications process, advise on content of publications and edit, proof, gain feedback from public/patients/stakeholders where relevant and ensure effective dissemination.	Present a positive image of the HPC and promote understanding of its role, Increased transparency and accountability and improved profile with stakeholders	Ongoing	Publications Manager
1.2	To identify need and produce new publications in conjunction with other departments	What is the HPC, guide to filling in your cpd profile, cpd review report, organisation review document, research and policy updates (x6)	Improved understanding of HPC requirements Increased accessibility	Ongoing	Publications Manager
1.3	Continue to distribute publications and brochures on request and ensure availability of publications in large print, Braille, Welsh etc	Respond to requests within reasonable timescale, log requests, maintain stock levels	Improved understanding of HPC requirements Increased accessibility for different audiences	Ongoing	Team Administrator, Publications Manager
1.4	Develop the website and its content by working with departments to support their requirements and identify opportunities for development	Develop website by in particular improving the navigability, and search function. Add sections for specific audiences, eg: new registrants, and students. Develop ideas, proposals and prioritise	Increased understanding of the HPC	Ongoing	Web Manager

Objective 1 (continued)

	Main activity	Description	Key deliverables	Timescale	Employees involved
1.5	Maximise the opportunities to increase coverage about the HPC in the national, regional, professional and consumer press	Continued implementation of the department's media strategy through - work with departments, identifying news stories, writing articles and issuing releases - implementation of contact programme with journalists, ensuring relevant HPC staff fully media trained and continued development of media infrastructure (eg media lists, coverage reports) in place to support this work - development of joint media campaign with professional body to raise awareness of protected title	Coverage reflects better understanding of issues by journalists and supports our leading regulator role Improved public understanding of the titles we protect	Ongoing	Communications Manager, Communications Officer, Administrator
1.6	New professions	Implement communications project plan across all communications functions, publications, web, media, events, public affairs	Communication of registration requirements and public awareness of the regulation of new professions	Ongoing, but specific work dependant on the passage of legislation White Paper timetable	Director/all

Objective 2: to extend our reach to the public enabling them to easily access information about the HPC, we will:

	Main activity	Description	Key deliverables	Timescale	Employees involved
2.1	Continue to promote the Fitness to Practise hearings	Issue weekly alerts, write and issue release for suspension and strike off, focus coverage in local and regional media List hearings and include case studies in HPC In Focus	Increased level of coverage in regional media and increased promotion of public protection role	Ongoing	Communications Manager/ Communications Officer
2.2	Ensure the continued dissemination of public information literature	x 2 GP waiting room distribution, x 1 PALs, and Wales Community Health Council distribution as well as research and determine viability of distribution to pharmacies, Citizens Advice Bureaux, LINKs and local authorities Continued promotion to registrants through A5 flyer in renewals, professional press, events	Promotion of public protection role -- focussed, cost effective way of reaching the public	July and January July Ongoing	Communications Manager
2.3	Promote "registered with the HPC" concept to registrants and ensure continued access and usage	Promote through existing channels, eg HPC In Focus, A5 renewals leaflet, Listening Events	Engaging with registrants and working with them to promote public awareness	Ongoing	Communications Manager

Objective 2 (continued)

	Main activity	Description	Key deliverables	Timescale	Employees involved
2.4	Continue internet and advertising presence through existing channels, eg Yell.com and develop new channels	Maintain a presence in Yellow Pages, renew Yell.com adverts and Google adwords Research websites where we should have a presence, make contact with relevant organisations	Continued reinforcement of public protection role	Ongoing	Communications Manager/ Communications Officer
2.5	Ensure GPs and referrers are informed about the HPC	Undertake research into best way to reach GPs, develop appropriate programme of communications based on research eg direct mail, referrers guide, conferences and events	Improved understanding of HPC's role	September	Director/ Communications Manager
2.6	Continue to participate in patient and public involvement activities through participation in the joint UK health regulators PPI group	Undertake joint activities as set out in the agreed PPI group workplan, including joint leaflet, development of website	Promotion of public protection role and raised awareness of HPC	Ongoing	Communications Manager

Objective 3: to influence the regulatory agenda through ongoing dialogue and engagement with key stakeholders, we will:

	Main activity	Description	Key deliverables	Timescale	Employees involved
3.1	Develop HPC's profile in the home countries and devise channels of communication which ensure stakeholders are informed and fully aware of our work and role in healthcare regulation	Work with Policy, continue to research contacts and ideas, develop contact programme and encompass public affairs work across all stakeholder audiences, including Parliamentarians, employers, professional bodies and various health departments Undertake at least 2 visits to each home country for meetings with stakeholders and conference attendance	Improved understanding of the HPC's role in healthcare regulation	Ongoing	Public Affairs Manager
3.2	Continue to keep Parliamentarians informed and aware of our work and role in healthcare regulation	Contact and meeting programme, fringe speaking membership of the Health Hotel, participation in all three main political party conferences, written briefings – especially around new legislation, parliamentary roadshows and exhibitions, attendance and exhibitions at home country political party conferences, development of e-politix exposure and advertising/editorial/ interview opportunities opportunities in relevant magazines and publications and continued parliamentary monitoring	Raised awareness and improved signposting of our role in the future of regulation and public protection	Ongoing	Public Affairs Manager, Communications Officer

Objective 3 (continued)

	Main activity	Description	Key deliverables	Timescale	Employees involved
3.3	Continue to keep employers informed and engaged with the HPC across all activities and on specific issues	Programme of at least five Employer Events across the UK, communication in the form of letters and emails on key areas of importance such as renewal of registration, speaking engagements, exhibitions and conferences and rolling programme of news items in bulletins and on the website	Promote the HPC's key messages to employers, improved understanding of HPC's role and how we can assist employers	Ongoing	Public Affairs Manager, Communications Officer
3.4	Continue to keep professional bodies informed and engaged with the HPC across all activities and on specific issues	Rolling programme of meetings including annual meetings on renewals and cpd, ongoing communication and updates on key issues, attendance and speaking engagements at conferences and exhibitions, ongoing articles and news stories in professional body journals, newsletters and website, advertising/editorial opportunities in relevant journals and publications	Promote the HPC's key messages to professional bodies and therefore registrants Improved relationship and understanding of the role of the HPC and increased ways of working together	Ongoing	Public Affairs Manager, Communications Manager
3.5	Ensure patient representative groups, advocacy groups and service users are informed and engaged with the HPC	Research contacts (eg LINKs) and ideas (eg local authorities), implement contact programme as required, attendance at relevant events and conference, promotion of public information materials	Improved understanding of HPC's role	Ongoing	Public Affairs Manager, Communications Manager

Objective 4: to engage with our registrants to ensure they understand the benefits of regulation, the work of the Council and what is required of them, we will:

	Main activity	Description	Key Deliverables	Timescale	Employees involved
4.1	Continue participation in external exhibitions by taking stands and researching new opportunities	Focus on professional exhibitions, research new conferences to attend, ensure literature and banners up to date and relevant, ensure right representation from HPC (eg Registrations, Fitness to Practise)	Communication of messages Opportunity to listen to feedback and raise HPC profile and present positive image	20 per year	Events Manager/ Communications Manager
4.2	Organise Listening Events across the country for registrants	Review presentation, develop interactive format, ensure UK-wide presence, source and brief panel, book venues, issue invitations and produce evaluation reports	Opportunity to listen to feedback Improved understanding of the HPC's role and activities	8 UK wide	Events Manager, Team Administrator
4.3	Continue to communicate HPC's work and activities in the professional press	With departments identify news/stories, issue releases, write articles. Issues to cover include fees increase, cpd audits, council appointments, registration and renewals and key projects and activities	Improved understanding of what we require of registrants and increased level of coverage	Ongoing	Communications Manager/ Communications Officer
4.4	Communicate with registrants through HPC In Focus, developing its content and circulation	Undertake development work across this year (re: content, distribution, media) Continue to work with depts on content and identify opportunities to increase distribution through for example adverts in professional journals, A5 flyer with certificates, sign up sheets at talks etc.	Better informed registrants	Six times a year	Publications Manager

Objective 4 (continued)

	Main activity	Description	Key deliverables	Timescale	Employees involved
4.5	Launch and maintain the information programme for students on HPC approved courses	Work with Registrations and Education Departments, identify needs of audience Implement new media including DVD/website, provide guidance for course tutors etc	Improved understanding of HPC requirements of registrants and stimulate debate about importance of registration	May 2009	CPD Communications Manager
4.6	Ensure registrants are aware of our continuing professional development audit requirements	Manage communications element of project plan, participate in project meeting, co-ordinate communications activity across team. Manage and undertake programme of presentations.	Communication of CPD standards and guidance to registrant and employers	April to July 2009	CPD Communications Manager/ all
4.7	Support the registration and renewals process	Liaise with registration regarding the ongoing renewal of professions' registration. Feed information into ongoing communications with employers and professional bodies. Ensure clear information provided online.	Communication of requirements, support lower lapse rates	Ongoing as professions renew	Director of Communications/ all
4.8	Communicate the 2009 registration fee rise	Manage communications element of project plan, including media, web and events where relevant	Clear communication to registrants of what fees pay for, and why independent regulation is important.	March 2009	Communications Manager/ all
4.9	Support the online applications and online renewals project	Manage communications element of project plan, participate in project group, input to the technical development of this project (Web Manager) and advise on design of the web pages as required (Publications Manager).	Communication to applicants and registrants about online facility.	Ongoing	Director of Communications/ all

Objective 5: to further strengthen and ensure effective internal communications within the organisation, we will:

	Main activity	Description	Key deliverables	Timescale	Lead
5.1	Organise all employee meetings	Set dates in advance, book council chamber and catering, organise programme of speakers, ensure correct set up on the day	Improved understanding of HPC's ongoing work and activities and the Council's direction	6 All employee	Team Administrator
5.2	Maintain the intranet ensuring it is up to date, business led and accessible	Liaise with departments re: currency of information, and updating information. Gain feedback from employees on content. Develop processes and content in response.	Provide information which enables employees to deal efficiently and effectively with enquiries	Ongoing	Web Manager/ Communications Officer
5.3	Organise all employee events	Set dates, book venues Agree format, issues invitations Evaluate	Improved internal communications and team building	Summer bbq Christmas dinner	Team Administrator
5.4	Organise the annual all employee awayday	Set dates, book venue Agree format, speakers, issues invitations Evaluate	Improved understanding of the HPC's strategic aims and direction	May 2009	Events Manager
5.5	Produce the all employee newsletter	Work with departments to collect copy, write and edit content, ensure printed for each all employee meeting	Improved understanding of cross departmental and organisational activities	Six per year	Publications Manager/ Communications Officer

2010 - 2011

Beyond the financial year 2009 – 2010, there are further objectives for our communications work, and these are set out below:

- Further communications work with hard-to-reach groups, building on the work we have done with older people. This could include work looking at communicating with people from black and ethnic minority communities, and different groups of disabled people.
- The on-boarding of new professions continues to be important, particularly in the light of the government's intentions as stated in the White Paper of February 2007. Communications activities will continue to play a vital role in the successful onboarding of new professions, communicating not only with aspirant professional associations, but also with future registrants, and with members of the public.
- Raising the HPC's profile in the home countries will continue to be an important focus for our work, including revisiting the question of whether we should have some kind of physical presence outside England, and if so what form this should take.
- Continuing to raise HPC's profile outside the UK, particularly with key audiences in the European Union, will also be a key future objective. Building on the various pieces of work already undertaken across the organisation, including by the Chief Executive, the Policy and Standards Department, and the Registration Department, it will be important to be involved in future pieces of European legislation at an early stage, in order to influence how they progress. Continued membership of the Alliance of UK Health Regulators on Europe provides a solid foundation for this work.

Risk

The key risks for HPC which relate to the Communications Department are failure to inform public, loss of support from the professional bodies, and inability to inform stakeholders following crisis. The management of these risks is inherent through the whole of the Communications workplan , but particularly through:

Campaigns and the Website

These activities help to inform the public and also help to raise our profile with the professional bodies. Likewise, the effective maintenance of the website, including the ability to update it remotely, helps to mitigate the risk of not being able to communicate with stakeholders after a crisis.

Public Affairs

This area of activity is important in indirectly raising our profile with the public (for example with members of the public who attend their MPs surgeries and may seek information on how to complain about the care they have received), but particularly important in developing our relationships with professional bodies.

Disaster Recovery

Although not situated in Communications, the HPC's approach to disaster recovery is an ongoing piece of work, and the disaster recovery plan is regularly reviewed and updated. Through the Executive Management Team, the Director of Communications contributes to its ongoing currency, and this provides an important safeguard against the risks posed to the organisation by any disaster occurring.

Communications Committee, 21 January 2009

Communications department draft budget 2009 – 2010 headline figures

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

Set out below are the headline figures for the communications department draft budget 2009 – 2010. The activities set out in the draft workplan for 2009 – 2010 have been drafted on this basis.

Decision

This paper is for information only. No decision is required.

Background information

The draft annual budget for 2009 – 2010 will be submitted to the Finance and Resources Committee for approval and subsequently to the Council.

The Communications draft budget for year end to March 31 2010 is divided as follows:

	£*
Salaries (salaries, pensions)	382,000
Travel and subsistence (travel, subsistence, accommodation)	41,000
Office Services (stationery, couriers, postage)	10,000
General communications (includes campaigns, internal and external events, stakeholder activities, public affairs, opinion polling and research, publications and literature, media, etc.)	650,000
Specific departmental costs (subscriptions, training, fees)	36,000
Total	1,119,000

*To nearest £'000

Resource implications

The resource implications of this budget are expressed within the assumed employee numbers in the draft workplan for 2009 – 2010.

Date	Ver.	Dept/Cmte	Doc Type	Title	Status	Int. Aud.
2008-02-14	a	COM	PPR	Communications budget headline figures	Final DD: None	Public RD: None

Financial implications

As set out above.

Appendices

Not applicable.

Date of paper

21 January 2009