

Are you being 'Responsive'?

Review Your Visitor Communications Now



CARE

Supporting care services

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Meeting CQC's RESPONSIVE Key Question

Review your communications strategy with the help of this guide.

Effective communication is key to the successful running of any care service. A recent Health Watch report recognised key areas for improvement when it comes to communications in care settings.

Offering clear and concise messaging which is updated regularly will ensure that your client's friends and families remain engaged with your service. Ultimately, they want to know what is happening and that their loved ones are well cared for.

Consistent messaging will give them confidence that the service you are giving is great!



A clear and concise visitor page on your website.

Conveying important information to client's family and friends is imperative especially if there are changes to the running of the care business that directly effects the residents, and their family.

Ensuring your visitor information is up to date and accurate is incredibly important. Visitor guides should be easy to find and any updates to guidance around the wearing of PPE or changes to visiting times should be clearly defined.

Tips include:

- a. Reviewing and updating the content of their website regularly.
- b. Ensuring that visitor information and guides are easy to find.
- c. Ensuring that information is easy to read, for example, using accessible fonts and colours.
- d. Ensuring that websites can be accessed and viewed on mobile phones and smart devices.

HCPA have created a template visitor page which you can embed onto your existing website. You can easily populate the fields with your details.

Visit: <https://generate.hcpa.info>

Password: DslqWXgoF3nvXnWf

Collecting family and friends details

The collection of up-to-date contact details of client's family and friends is imperative so that you can contact them quickly if the need arises. This should include:

- Email address
- Telephone number
- Address

Remember that with any storing of personal data GDPR should be in force. This means storing the data in a secure way.

Data protection guidance for care providers collecting & storing personal data of clients' family & friends

When collecting any personal data, it is important to remember the following:

- Thought must be given to security measures in place to protect this personal data (Physical security and/or IT measures for information governance).
- Thought must be given to retention periods, i.e when you delete this data.
- Please only request personal data that you would have need to use.
- You must have a lawful basis to process this information. Please remember that if you are processing this data using the data subject's consent, this consent can be withdrawn at any time, so you need to know where the data is held so it can be deleted immediately.
- All files and equipment that hold personal data must be described in your Information Asset Register (at macro level). This should then be included in your Record of Processing Activities (The document that show legal basis for processing this data; who it may be shared with, risk management and retention period).

- When sending emails to multiple email addresses, remember to use the "BCC" field, not the "To" field, to avoid data breaching.
- If a care provider breaches personal data, the enforcement action could lead to large fines and reputational damage.
- Care providers have only 72 hours to report a data breach to the Information Commissioners Office.

Details on what is considered personal/sensitive data can be found by [clicking here](#)

Advice and support on data protection and Information Governance can be accessed for free by emailing DataProtection@HCPA.co.uk or by visiting www.HCPA.info/data-protection

Those care providers who have yet to publish their data security and protection toolkit (DSPT) can receive free support to ensure they are compliant with the law.

If you have any questions over processing of personal data for family and friends of clients (or of the clients themselves, or your staff) please do not hesitate to contact the HCPA Data Protection team.

Visit: [Data Security & Protection \(DSPT\)](#)



Reasons why internal communication is important

Internal communication is essential for engaging employees and keeping everyone focused on what matters.

Internal communications are about promoting effective dialogue within an organisation, and it involves producing and delivering messages and campaigns on behalf of management and the senior leadership team.

When conveying important news, such as changes in policy or changes to the organisations structure, it is important that the communications are clear and concise, keeping everyone informed and on the same page.

Regular communication is paramount to building a good culture within your organisation by ensuring that all employees feel included. But beyond that, ensuring that all staff are aware of what is happening in other areas of your organisation will ensure a professionalism across the business. The old saying, let the left hand know what the right hand is doing, is very true in this sense!



Here are some reasons why you should adopt a good internal communication structure.

Internal communications keep your staff informed

Keeping your employees informed of upcoming events, policy changes, engagement initiatives, headcount changes, and updates on the overall health of the business helps to create a sense of transparency and openness that is respected.

To add to this, even the simplest of updates such as a change to opening hours or visiting rules should be conveyed to the whole of the organisation, this will ensure all employees are aware and can answer questions to clients and family members.

Give your employees a voice

Employees like to be heard, ask for feedback and give them a voice, everyone likes to feel that their ideas and feelings matter. It has been proven that if staff feel heard and appreciated they are more likely to go above and beyond for their employer.

Internal communications can define your organisations culture

Regular updates from the senior management team can help employees to interpret the cultural landscape of an organisation, it will ensure buy-in to the organisations mission statement and show what and who the organisation values.



Reasons why... cont.

Engagement should be what drives your internal communications

Creating a two-way conversation should be one of your main goals with your internal communications strategy. It's the difference between boring top-down messaging (probably in the form of mass emails that no one reads) and thoughtful, interactive conversations that promote engagement.

So how can we engage our staff?

- Ask thoughtful questions at team events
- Send regular messages and ask for feedback on the intranet
- Send regular thank yous and shout outs to staff
- Get people together at team meetings and coffee mornings and ask for their ideas

Internal communications help keep people calm in times of crisis

In times of crisis, internal communications are needed most. It is important to ensure that the tone is right as sometimes matters which are delicate and handled wrongly can affect the morale of the whole organisation.

Ways to communicate effectively with your staff

Email – A regular ALL staff email is a good way to communicate with teams but remember if not all of your team are desk based it may mean they do not see updates quickly.

WhatsApp - Some organisations might decide to create a WhatsApp group as a way of being able to contact employees regularly especially if they are not office or desk based and are out and about seeing clients.

Intranet – Using your internal platforms such as Microsoft Communities or Slack can give your employees a place to share ideas and best practice whilst ensuring everyone is up to date on any HR updates, any up-and-coming events etc. Celebrating work anniversaries and team shout outs are also great!

Monthly E-newsletter – There are platforms such as MailChimp or Eshot where you can build good looking newsletters, or simply building one in Word or PowerPoint and distributing to the whole organisation.

Social Media – An effective tool for conveying messages quickly...

Using social media, as a tool to reach your clients families and friends is also a quick and effective way to get a message out. It is also a great way to include friends and family members in the day-to-day goings on in your care settings.

Keep it private!

Although social media can be a great tool to communicate to friends, families, and staff members it is important to use it with caution. You should **NEVER** post personal information on your social media channels such as a personal or client e-mail address, phone number or bank details. In addition, it is important prior to posting photos/videos of the people you support on social media that you gain consent to do so. This can be done via an online or physical form. [Click here](#) to view an example a consent form.

We have created a social media toolkit for you to use.

