



Appendix A

Winter Resilience 2014/15

Communications and Engagement Strategy

21 November 2014

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1. Introduction and background

The BCCG winter resilience communications strategy and plan outlines the actions the CCG communications and engagement team, with colleagues, will undertake to support NHS services across Bedfordshire to manage the pressures of winter.

The plan has been developed and agreed with the strategy and design team, leaders of the winter resilience programme (Bedfordshire System Capacity and Resilience Plan 2014-15).

The communications and engagement team will work closely with local authority, public health, acute and community health colleagues to ensure we deliver a consistent and robust winter communications and engagement programme.

The communications and engagement activities will include:

- local implementation of national campaigns
- local targeted engagement activity
- awareness raising of services and how they should be used
- promotion of priority services to enhance reputations
- reassurance and promotion of services
- key 'stay healthy in winter' messages.

The programme will use established communications and engagement mechanisms; online, hard copy and face-to-face, as well as developing additional elements as required, such as commissioned materials and targeted engagement activities and events.

The messages for winter will be developed for the general population, as well as targeted campaigns to identified key local audiences, such as people with long term conditions, young people, and GP practices with high A&E attendances.

2. Aims of Bedfordshire System Capacity and Resilience Plan 2014-15

The Bedfordshire System Capacity and Resilience Plan 2014-15 sets out a vision and commitment from the Bedfordshire health economy to work together to deliver a responsive and high quality emergency care system.

The delivery of services in the most appropriate setting is the key driver for Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group. The schemes outlines in the plan promote, where possible, a focus on services outside of hospital. There is also a clear link in the plan to the priorities of the Better Care Fund to reduce hospital admissions and to the Bedford and Milton Keynes Healthcare Review which is underpinned by the theme of stronger out of hospital services.

In addition 'Everyone counts 2014/15' guidance and Bedfordshire CCG Plan for Patients set out clear targets which are reflected in this work.

The proposals in this plan are jointly owned by the health economy and have the approval of the system wide group.

2.1 Priorities for the communications and engagement planning

The aim of the plan is to support the most efficient areas that will deliver a reduction in emergency admissions and in the number of days people are in hospital.

Learning from the A&E evaluation commissioned by the system resilience group (SRG) earlier in the year demonstrated that there was a significant growth in A&E attenders in the 18-24 age range. The SRG requested an age-targeted approach to this year's 'Is A&E for me' campaign.

2.1.1 Flu planning

A BCCG-wide flu steering group has been formed, with key stakeholder involvement including complex care, Bedford Hospital Trust, SEPT, communications, locality practice development managers, NHS England, local authority public health and practice managers. It shares good practice and leads partnership working to increase uptake within all at risk areas. Public Health is leading the communications with media support from BCCG comms and engagement team. This has included press releases each month for a different cohort of patients, to raise awareness and to include practice flu clinic dates. Social media has been used to flank this press activity.

2.1.2 Long term Conditions

A benchmarking exercise conducted by the localities within BCCG highlighted that the rate of emergency admissions to hospital for ambulatory care sensitive conditions within Bedfordshire is significantly higher than the national average. It was identified that if Bedfordshire were to achieve the national average rate of admissions (50th percentile), as well as reducing unnecessary distress for patients and delivering improvements in quality of life savings could be realised.

2.1.3 Patient self-management

Prevention of illnesses continues to be a priority with early support available and easily accessible services and advice available outside the hospital setting.

3. Communications and engagement objectives for winter resilience 2014-15

The winter resilience communications strategy and plan will:

1. Deliver clear and relevant communications with all stakeholders, internally and externally
2. Deliver planned communications and engagement activity, reporting on its implementation, feedback and evaluation
3. Link with health and social care partners on agreed communications and engagement activity, sharing content and resources, as appropriate
4. Proactively promote the key messages and services within the plan; seeking opportunities for communications and engagement, and developing initiatives and activities, as appropriate
5. Use current communications channels and materials, developing new ones as appropriate

6. Aim to engage with, raise awareness and inform audiences
7. Aim to improve communications to stakeholders, including primary care
8. Develop overarching communications, as well as targeted communications, such as social media

3.1 Communications support

The head of communications and engagement will lead on the winter resilience communications strategy and plan.

She will be part of the strategy and design team's planning team and will liaise with them to develop and deliver a communications and engagement programme which will assist in the delivery of the Bedfordshire System Capacity and Resilience Plan 2014-15.

The head of communications and engagement will be supported by members of the communications and engagement team, who will undertake the tasks and activities as outlined in the plan. This support will be flexed according to the needs of the plan, with high and lower levels of communications support required throughout the programme.

The communications and engagement team will lead will support the project management by providing project status updates for the monthly project board.

They will be the link person for health and social care partners, working on agreed communications and engagement activity, sharing content and resources, as appropriate. They will also offer advice and support to Bedford Hospital communications team, as requested.

4. Key messages

The winter resilience programme's key messages will be developed to deliver the priorities for the plan, with any additional messages for the targeted engagement, to enhance the 'stay healthy in winter' messages.

These messages will be used across the materials and channels, to ensure consistency of messages. They can be added to the plan as winter progresses, reacting to any current and predicted issues, such as the weather conditions, health outbreaks, or pressures on services.

Messages will be used to:

- Engage with, raise awareness and inform general public and patients (GP, hospital, community)
- Communicate with 'general' audiences as well as targeted groups and audiences
- Engage with media outlets and other conduits of information
- Make best use of the different channels – ensuring the most appropriate methods, formats and content are used for the different channels e.g. Twitter, face-to-face, newspapers

- Keep colleagues informed of the plan and next steps
 - Internally - communication and engagement, strategy and design, and executive team
 - Partner organisations' communications teams
- Engage with BCCG staff – as champions in supporting the messages

5. Stakeholders

Our stakeholders will be prioritised to ensure the appropriate groups, organisations and individuals are aware of the plan, its messages and any actions they need to take.

The different groups will receive a different level of communications and engagement, ensuring the activity is focused in the right place.

The key stakeholders are:

- GPs
- BCCG staff
- General public
- People with long-term conditions
- Older people who are admitted to hospital (and their relatives/carers) and can become 'bed blockers'
- Younger people who choose A&E rather than go to pharmacy, GP, walk in clinic etc
- High users of A&E through targeted GP practices in Bedford (Victoria Road, London Road, Clapham Road, Ashburnham Road and Queen's Park. And potentially Lansdowne Road)
- Bedford Hospital inpatient (supporting their discharge planning)

6. Communications and engagement activities and materials

We will be undertaking a series of activities and initiatives to spread our winter messages and target key groups such as young people and people with LTC.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- Winter pledge – 'Look after your NHS, Choose Well this Winter' – targeting key groups (young people, people with LTC, carers), health staff in Bedfordshire, patients, public, key stakeholders, media, etc
- 'Twitterthon' – a day in the life of A&E at Bedford Hospital – targeting media and social media to raise understanding of what A&E is for
- Roadshows – 10 roadshows to encourage people to take the pledge and raise awareness of urgent care across Bedford.
- Distributions to patient groups, 6th forms, GPs etc
- Proactive media activity

- Displays at events/stands – targeting staff, GPs, public, patients and visitors (events may not be linked to winter, but engaging with the same audiences)

We will use current communications materials and develop new ones as appropriate. We will consider:

- Patient information leaflets, flyers, screens in surgeries and hospitals
- Hand-outs at key events and meetings
- Posters
- Local community / parish newsletters articles
- Social media - Facebook and Twitter
- Internal newsletters (staff and GP) and Extranet updates
- Email signature - all staff
- Merchandise - magnets
- Advertising in local press including Christmas and New Year opening – adverts and wrap-around
- A&E leaflet - urgent care and discharge priorities
- Discharge booklet (BHT)
- 'Is A&E for me' material update - posters, banners, etc
- Young people collateral
- Collateral for GP surgeries and discharge packs - e.g. credit cards, etc

7. Evaluation of communications and engagement

The evaluation of communications and engagement will cover:

- First-hand feedback from external audiences and staff (at events, forums, emails, on-line, enquiries)
- Second-hand feedback via partners
- Feedback from colleagues (internal and external)
- Public discussions / dialogue - correspondence in papers, blogs, media enquiries, radio responses/phone-in
- Extent of media coverage – print and broadcast
- Hits/Likes on Facebook
- Number of retweets and conversations on Twitter
- Number of 'pledges to choose well this winter
- Engagement reach figures

8. Communications and engagement plan

A communications plan has been developed, based on the agreement with the strategy and design team and the targeted additional engagement programme.

An overview is provided overleaf. The communications team has a detailed work plan to deliver the programme.

BCCG winter resilience communications and engagement plan – overview

October	November	December	January 15	February ¹	March
Flu media campaign starts – locality specific media release, Social media	'Feeling under the weather' campaign starts – media and social media, and advertising	Is A&E for me leaflet	Parish newsletter editorials		
GP surgery issue Flu targeted letter to patients	Flu media campaign continues – targeting LTC with press and social media	Refresh & re-issue 'Is A&E for me' posters	Keep warm, keep well campaign starts – media release and social media		
Update BCCG website	Staff Flu clinics	Launch Choose well this Winter pledge	Choose Well pledge continues		
	'Self care' campaign starts – media and social media				
	Self care – pressure ulcers - roadshow and media aimed at home carers	Roadshows	Roadshows continue		
		Distribute materials to patient groups, and others	Refresh winter resilience comms activity for Feb and March		
	Discharge booklet – for patients at Bedford Hospital (no cost to BCCG)	Material for targeted Bedford GP surgeries			
		Twitterthon in A&E at Bedford Hospital			
		Newspaper wrap-around for T&C			
		Advertising in local press Xmas and NY opening			

¹ We will reassess activity at the end of January to determine any necessary changes to messages and activity for February and March