

Communications Policy Appendix 1 – Internal control guidelines for communications

It is difficult to cover all possible circumstances but in general the following guidelines should be adhered to. If you are in doubt about how to issue an internal or external message please contact the Communications Team on 0300 365 7167 or email shet.communications@nhs.scot.

1. **Media enquiries** – Media enquiries, no matter how they come to you (e.g. telephone, email, in person) must always be routed to the Communications Team in the first instance (contact details as above). This is to ensure we know what has been asked and how it will be answered. This can save individuals getting the same question multiple times, and also allows accuracy and consistency of response. Please see Communications Policy Appendix 2: Media Enquiries.

The only exception to this is patient condition statement enquiries that should go directly to the Gilbert Bain Hospital switchboard (see the flowchart at Communications Policy Appendix 3 for further information).

2. **Press releases** – If you wish to issue a press release this must first be signed off by your departmental director and then sent to Corporate Services at the above email address for external distribution. If you wish to control the timing of the release you must be explicit about this and have also considered availability for any follow up enquiries.

A press release template can be found at Communications Policy Appendix 4. This includes support for issuing information in an emergency.

If you would like help in drafting a press release in routine working hours please contact the Communications team on the number above.

3. **Social media** – NHS Shetland's [Social Media Policy](#) should be considered for the following:

- Establishing a social media presence for work related purposes;
- Challenging inappropriate photo or video footage;
- Responding to posts as an NHS Shetland employee;
- Writing and responding to personal posts (whilst working at NHS Shetland).

4. **All user emails** – All user emails should be used to disseminate urgent/corporate information only to staff. Managers of staff who do not have access to email are responsible for passing on urgent messages disseminated by email.

All staff emails should not be used for trivial matters that are of little or no concern to the majority of staff. Messages about charity events, bake sales etc. should be requested for circulation through routine internal communications methods such as staff bulletins and newsletters.

The ability to send an all user email is limited to a small number of individuals/departments. If you need help sending an all user email this can be done through the Communications team by contacting shet.communications@nhs.scot or through the Gilbert Bain Reception at shet.gbh-reception@nhs.scot.

Inappropriate use of all user emails may be challenged.

5. Staff newsletters – All staff are very welcome to submit articles and information for staff newsletters. Contact Communications on 0300 3657167 or shet.communications@nhs.scot to find out when the next edition deadline is.

Carolyn Hand, Corporate Services Manager

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