

Item 1 – Communications Committee 5th July 2004

Communications Update July 2004

Summary

The Committee are asked to note the report as an update of how the Communications strategy is being fulfilled.

Action

The Committee are asked to approve the next Communications Committee meeting being held in Bath, England on Thursday October 28th to coincide with a CPD consultation event held on the same day.

Communications Update - July 2004

Customer Service

Bonnie Hart has joined the Communications team as customer service manager. Initially on a six month contract Bonnie previously worked in International/Grandparenting. Since her arrival we have developed a customer service process which sees over 90% of letters answered within five days of receipt at the Communications department. This is a significant improvement on the beginning of the year statistics where none were being answered in this time frame.

All staff members at HPC have completed two rounds of introductory customer service training. Team leaders have been appointed in UK and International and will now receive specialist 'coaching' skills to maintain staff development in this area.

Customer service statistics since January 04 are attached. (Appendix 1)

Events

Catherine Dawson replaced Eleanor Price as Events Manager in May. Catherine is on a full-time HPC contract and initially worked within the HR department at Park House.

Listening events have been held in Aberdeen, Bournemouth and Bristol since the last Communications Committee meeting with around 300 people attending. There will be no further listening events this year due to the CPD consultation but two have been arranged for early next year in Blackpool and Manchester. Feedback from the events is continually monitored and analysis of the last two events is attached. (Appendix 2)

HPC has taken stands at;

- HR in the NHS – Birmingham
- International Dietetics Conference – Chicago
- Unison Healthcare – Glasgow
- BAPO Annual Conference – Birmingham
- Institute of Chiropractors and Podiatrists – Bedford
- Information day for AHP's – London

These days remain worthwhile and more patient/public focused conferences will targeted over the next few years rather than simply professions specific ones.

The CPD consultation is at an advanced planning stage events wise. The draft schedule includes 22 towns and cities across the UK. (Appendix 3)

Our first Annual General Meeting will be held at Park House on July 16th where the annual report (s) will be launched. So far 15 people have indicated they will attend this small event.

Initial invited have been sent to over 400 partners regarding the inaugural Partners Conference to be held in Manchester on September 23rd-24th. So far 130 people have indicated they would like to attend with others waiting on the finalisation of the agenda for the two days.

The Committee should note that HPC have moved the event from the original venue on moral grounds after it hosted a BNP conference there earlier in the year. The hotel was informed the exact reasons for the cancellation of the contract with them.

All Council members are invited to attend over the two days.

Advertising

See separate agenda item

Website

Our website gained the internet crystal mark from the Plain English Society for clarity and usability. It is one of only a handful of organisations across the UK to do so.

Number of visits to the website is attached (Appendix 4)

Annual reports

Both the council report and accounts and the annual fitness to practise report will be published on July 16th. Distribution this year will be on a request basis only after the feedback received from registrants last year. It will be made available in full on our website. Council members will receive copies of both reports automatically.

Issues raised at the previous Communications Committee meeting

- The fitness to practise department have informed us that there are no other alternatives to 'founded' and 'well founded' when it comes to publicising cases.
- Potential media training consultants for Council have been sourced and will be asked to pitch for business shortly.
- Health and disability communications will be tackled in a separate agenda item.
- Public and patient involvement has been tackled through an all-day event in Birmingham in which 110 members of the public attended an HPC workshop. The event was supported by Unison, the Department of Health, and the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health. Feedback from the event is still being analysed but an agenda for the day and a statement from Laura McMurtrie, Chief executive of the Commission are attached (Appendix 6)

Chris Middleton
Director of Communications, HPC