NHS Nene
Clinical Commissioning Group

Communication and Engagement Strategy

2017-19
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1. Foreword

NHS Nene Clinical Commissioning Group (Nene CCG) has an ambitious Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) that aims to continually develop and improve health and care services for the 670,633 people we serve. The STP, together with the county’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy, “Supporting Northamptonshire to Flourish”, sets out how health and social care locally will develop over the next five years. The STP covers the whole of Northamptonshire and it is essential that we listen to all our partners and involve them in testing the plans we are developing for services.

The landscape around us is changing and there are many challenges facing the local health economy; we must focus on improving the way we communicate, engage and empower local people to understand the challenges and influence the change required. Nene CCG is committed to being open and candid, enabling stakeholders to be involved in commissioning decisions.

We are delighted to introduce Nene CCG’s Communication and Engagement Strategy which details how we intend to communicate with, and listen to the needs of our communities who include patients, carers, GP member practices, our staff, public and all other stakeholders.

It is our intention to be visible in the community, engage and listen to our stakeholders to ensure they inform and shape commissioning decisions.

We will actively support local people, seldom-heard communities, member practices and partners to achieve better health outcomes for everyone in Northamptonshire, through effective conversations and timely engagement.

John Wardell  
Accountable Officer

Darin Seiger  
GP Chair

Sheila White  
Patient

At Nene CCG we support the standard of sharing information by acknowledging that not everybody has the same ability to read, write and understand publications in the same format. Please contact us if you require a copy of this document in another language, or another format such as large print, braille or audio. Telephone: 01604 651136/651446 Email: locality.admin@neneccg.nhs.uk
2. What does Nene CCG do?

Nene CCG is a clinically led organisation responsible for designing local health care in Northamptonshire. We do this by commissioning (buying) health and care services including:

- Planned care
- Urgent and emergency care
- Most community health services
- Mental health and learning disability services
- Extended primary care services via General Practice and Federations.

Nene CCG works with patients, carers, public and healthcare professionals and in partnership with local communities and local authorities.

As with every other part of England, Nene CCG is working on a local Sustainability and Transformation Plan which sets out how health and social care will evolve over the next five years.

The STP is a multi-agency plan and sets out the vision of this health community to:

“Improve the health and wellbeing of all people in Northamptonshire and reduce health inequalities by enabling people to help themselves.”

We also want to provide more choice for people by increasing their options in the community support they can find closer to home.

By doing these things we will address, at a local level, the three top priorities facing the NHS across the country:

1. **Health and wellbeing**: By promoting healthier lifestyles, we can improve people’s quality of life and reduce the pressure on our health and social care services

2. **Care and quality**: We want to ensure that needs are met by services of consistently high quality

3. **Funding and efficiency**: Efficient use of our limited resources is essential if our services are to remain effective, affordable and able to provide up-to-date treatments.

More information about Nene CCG can be found on our website: [http://www.neneccg.nhs.uk/](http://www.neneccg.nhs.uk/)
3. Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

To help people lead the best possible life from beginning to end

Our Mission

To improve quality, outcomes and clinical standards for all patients

Our Values

Effective, Compassionate, Supportive and Safe
4. Purpose of this Strategy

The purpose of this Communication and Engagement Strategy is to ensure that all stakeholders have a shared understanding of what is being achieved within commissioning decision-making and the STP. It will be supported by an action plan that will be robust but flexible and able to meet the changing face of Nene CCG and the needs of the stakeholders.

Good communication and engagement sit alongside our performance and effectiveness. It is vital to help Nene CCG to commission services that secure the best health outcomes and reduce health inequalities for the local population. We want the local population to understand what we do. This will mean they are able to contribute effectively to shaping the Northamptonshire STP and influence health care services across the county.

To develop a shared understanding of what Nene CCG are trying to do will require two-way conversations with all our stakeholders. We must listen to our patients, carers, GP practices, workforce, voluntary sector, other partner organisations and the public to help us in our decision-making.

We have been involved in engagement but we could do better. At a public engagement event we asked, “Do you know what Nene CCG does?”

With 10 being “Yes, I understand” and 0 being “No, I don’t understand” we scored an average of 3.

This indicates that we need to do better – engage proactively with our stakeholders and not wait for people to come to us.

There has been a history of our GP member practices not feeling listened to and this has meant that there have been lost opportunities in having membership involvement shaping our commissioning intentions. With 68 practices involvement can be a challenge but it is essential to know the thoughts of local GPs.

There are also the emerging Federations. A Federation is a group of practices or surgeries forming a new organisation with other healthcare partners and working together to deliver health services. The remit of a Federation is generally to share responsibility for delivering high quality, patient-focused services for its communities. This is how Nene CCG will commission some healthcare services in the community in the future. It is important that any communication plans include the Federations and their development.
Good communication and engagement with our staff has not been consistent. A recent workshop identified that staff are keen to be involved. We also need to ensure that this strategy aligns to the strategy for organisational development to ensure that the health and wellbeing of staff is supported.

We need to recognise the changing world of communication technology, embracing this in its different forms. In doing so, we aim to reach our community, member practices and workforce in a format that they are able to access.

Nene CCG currently works closely with our Commissioning Support Unit (CSU) to develop links with the media and external organisations to promote excellence and success, and also to help manage communications around difficult decisions.

It is recognised that the CCG has a statutory duty to engage but we want to evidence true communication and engagement that has an impact on the care that we commission.

Effective two-way communication is essential to deliver an improved and cost effective health service. Nene CCG is determined to play its full part in achieving this and ensuring that our service is recognised as providing successful health outcomes for our patients.
5. Objectives

1 External Communications

- Develop the reputation of Nene CCG as a responsive commissioning organisation
- Develop relationships with key partners – patients, carers, voluntary organisations, the public, GP members and other service providers – to enable involvement in decision-making and service redesign that aligns to local plans and strategies
- Ensure that information and guidance is available to local people to make healthy choices and use NHS services effectively
- Ensure that Nene CCG and its activities are accurately represented and that success is promoted through the media and other external agencies.

2 Internal Communications

- Contribute to staff morale by promoting successes and achievements within and outside of the organisation
- Actively encourage two-way conversations with staff in a format they would choose to use
- Have a culture of empowerment for our staff and GP member practices to be actively involved in service planning and improvements aligned to local plans and strategies.

3 Engagement and Involvement

- Enable the public to be heard earlier in our process, feel listened to and have a key role in decision-making
- Build continuous and meaningful engagement with the public, vulnerable communities, seldom heard groups, patients and carers to influence services and improve health outcomes
- Enable two-way conversations and respond to feedback
- Use patient experience and opinion to improve quality.
6. Stakeholders

Our Communication and Engagement Strategy will not be successful unless we recognise and understand who our stakeholders are and the most effective way to communicate with them. Stakeholders can be defined as any person or party, who receives, provides, manages or pays for healthcare.

Our stakeholders include, but are not exclusively, the following groups:

- Patients
- Carers
- Primary care membership (GPs, Practice Nurses, managers and staff)
- The public
- Our workforce
- Partner organisations (NHS England, Federations, Corby Clinical Commissioning Group, Northampton General Hospital, Kettering General Hospital, Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, Northampton County Council, Local Borough Councils, etc.)
- Voluntary Sector
- Community leaders (Members of Parliament, Councillors, Local Authority, Voluntary Sector/Third Sector Services, Northamptonshire Police, Patient Groups)
- The media.

Understanding the needs of our stakeholders is essential if they are to support and influence Nene CCG’s plans. Stakeholders make a significant contribution to the NHS, improving the quality of healthcare services commissioned and provided. Nene CCG is committed to working with seldom heard groups, vulnerable patients and adults or children at risk.

It is important to understand how stakeholders wish to be communicated with, in what format and what information they need. This will require the development of various systems of communication.
GP Involvement

Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute completes an annual survey to ensure that Clinical Commissioning Groups have strong relationships with their stakeholders. The survey allows stakeholders to provide feedback on working relationships with CCGs. The results provide a tool for CCGs to use to evaluate their progress and inform their organisational decisions. The survey also provides evidence that feeds into assurance conversations between NHS England and CCGs.

The Ipsos MORI CCG 360° stakeholder survey April 2016 had the following survey response rates for Nene CCG:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stakeholder group</th>
<th>Invited to take part in survey</th>
<th>Completed survey</th>
<th>Response rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GP member practices</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Wellbeing Boards</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Healthwatch/patient groups</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHS Providers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other CCGs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper tier or unitary local authorities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wider stakeholders</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the GP member practices are of particular interest as they identified that of those that responded only:

- 14% agreed that they had been able to influence Nene CCG’s plans and priorities
- 12% agreed that comments had been taken on board
- 29% agreed that the CCG had effectively communicated its plans and priorities
• 10% agreed the plans and priorities were the right ones.

This is disappointing and evidences that there is much work to be undertaken. There have been some positive actions in recognising what should be done:

• Appointment of an Accountable Officer (the senior manager responsible for ensuring Nene CCG fulfils its statutory duties)
• Appointment of a Clinical Executive Director with responsibility for GP member engagement
• Appointment of three Commissioning and Membership Engagement Executives (CMEEs)
• Appointment of a Primary Care/GP Communication and Engagement Manager.

Recent GP roadshows have proved to be extremely successful and these will continue to form the basis of meaningful two-way conversation.

Nene CCG will work with the newly developed Federations to ensure that there is two-way conversation between us. We will also support the development of Federation communication strategies with their members. The newly appointed CMEEs will facilitate GP member engagement; ensure awareness of decision-making and how they have influenced the decisions in the design or commissioning of services.
Staff Involvement

There has been a history of staff feeling under-valued and not engaged over the last few years since the development of Nene CCG. The challenge for us is to ensure that when we do communicate and engage it is meaningful to staff. Results from the annual staff satisfaction survey will be reviewed to ensure that Nene CCG is engaging with staff and ensuring that people want to work for us.

Recent changes to the Executive Management structure has responded to the need to ensure engagement and communication with staff is improved. Effective leadership at all levels will be a priority.

Staff should feel safe to raise concerns or “whistleblow” and policy and practice must reflect this absolutely.

Recent staff engagement events have identified a number of ideas that will help to include staff in decision-making and support their understanding of what is happening across Nene CCG. There are many excellent examples of existing good practice that need to be shared more effectively across the organisation. This not only boosts the morale of those staff directly involved, but also provides exemplars and spreads the feeling of achievement.

It was also interesting to hear the thoughts of staff about the different ways they like to be communicated with. Face to face contact was by far the preferred method and this needs to be a priority for staff engagement.
The staff survey feedback will inform the detailed action plans for implementing the Communication and Engagement Strategy. It will also link closely with the strategy for Organisational Development.

Patient and Public Involvement

Patients and the public have been instrumental in developing this strategy via surveys and engagement events. There are some excellent examples of engagement with the public by teams at the CCG:

- Locality Engagement Groups
- Focused Health and Wellbeing Forums
- Events aimed at young people, such as the University Freshers’ Fair
- Events held in public places where we ask people for their opinions
- Detailed work to engage specific patient groups, e.g. young mothers with learning difficulties.

It is recognised that we are missing sections of the community (seldom heard groups) and the intention is to go out to the public and community groups rather than expect them to come to us. The strengthening of good links with children and young people, learning disability groups and mental health groups will be a priority.

Nene CCG plans to develop Patient Leaders to be actively involved in the design and procurement of services and to attend quality assurance meetings with providers. The intention is that Patient Leaders will represent the diversity of Northamptonshire residents.
7. Locality Teams

Our staff teams play a critical part in enabling meaningful conversations between Nene CCG, the wider community and all our stakeholders. It is essential that all staff and members of Nene CCG recognise what good communication and engagement is, why it is important and their responsibility for embedding it into the organisational culture. We need to be better at recognising and recording when we engage and strive to make every contact count.

Nene CCG is divided into three localities, already established forums for communication but they need to be strengthened in response to feedback from our stakeholders. Recent events have helped us to recognise that we need various methods of engagement including meetings, newsletters and wider use of social media.

The three localities are aligned to the populations and areas served by the newly formed Federations:

- North locality broadly aligned to 3Sixty Federation
- Northampton locality aligned to GP Alliance Federation
- South locality aligned to DocMed PML Federation

Each locality has an elected GP Commissioning and Membership Engagement Executive (CMEE) who is responsible for communication and engagement with GP practices and GP members within each of the areas. The CMEE represents member practices at Nene CCG Board of Directors and Governing Body.

The aspiration is to have Patient Leaders aligned to the Localities/Federations who are patient experts in particular subjects.

**Patient Congress** – chaired by a Lay Member with a lead on communication and engagement and with representation from Localities/Federations.

**Locality Engagement Groups** – public led events that are open to anyone with an interest in health and social care to work together with the CCG to influence and inform local decision-making. There is a group aligned to each Locality/Federation area with representation from Practice Patient Participation Groups.

**Health and Wellbeing Forums** – a countywide Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) is established that includes members from across Northamptonshire’s Health and Social Care Economy. An HWB forum is established in each locality that enables informed decision-making to take place at a local level; there is a Nene CCG representative on each of these forums. One of the aims of the HWBs is to enable the implementation of the STP.
Nene CCG recently held a series of events on engagement with patients, GP member practices, staff and the public. The diagram best describes the different forms of communication and engagement that we need to develop with our stakeholders.
9. Commissioning Cycle

Commissioning is the planning and purchasing of health services to meet the health needs of the local community. This ensures the delivery of the best quality health outcomes and clinical standards for patients and reduces health inequalities within the resources available. It is essential that at all stages of the commissioning cycle there is wide stakeholder engagement; patients must be at the centre of these activities.

Courtesy of The NHS Information Centre for health and social care. Full diagram available at: [www.ic.nhs.uk/commissioning](http://www.ic.nhs.uk/commissioning)
10. Monitoring and Evaluation

It is a priority of the Communication and Engagement Strategy to feed back to patients, carers, GP member practices, staff, voluntary sector, public and all stakeholders, ensuring that we demonstrate how their views and comments have been used in the decision-making process of Nene CCG.

An action plan that fully details the implementation of the strategy’s objectives will accompany this document. The progress and achievement of the objectives will be monitored through Nene CCG Communication and Engagement Group. This will make sure that we deliver against the priorities described in this strategy and that we can demonstrate this in an open and transparent manner. The action plan will be aligned the findings of the Ipsos MORI survey, RSM Stakeholder Audit and NHS staff satisfaction survey to ensure progress and improvement is being achieved. Achievement against the action plan will be measured against the Balanced Scorecard through Governing Body.

Reports detailing communication and engagement activity will be provided to Patient Congress, Locality Engagement Groups and Locality/Federation Boards and available to Governing Body on request. Details of how stakeholders’ views and opinions have been utilised in decision-making, and providing evidence of how this information has been used, will be included in these reports. The Governing Body meetings are public and include question and answer sessions so members of the public can fully participate.

Details of engagement and communication activity will be included on Nene CCG’s website and promoted via social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter.
Webpages to access documents referred to within this document:

Sustainability and Transformation Plan


Supporting Northamptonshire to Flourish


Reference documents used to produce this Strategy:

Ipsos MORI CCG 360° stakeholder survey 2016

RSM Stakeholder Audit 2016

NHS Staff Satisfaction Survey 2016

This document can be made available in other languages on request, please email:

communications@neneccg.nhs.uk