

APPENDIX 1

NHS Grampian Winter 2022/23 Communications Activity

1. Background

Based on learning gained through the pandemic and successive winters, NHS Grampian's (NHSG's) approach to external communications during winter 22/23 will again adopt a 'campaign' approach that packages messages together under complementary themes. Each theme will use selected channels to reach audiences tactically, rather than adopting an 'everything everywhere' approach. This will enable specific workstreams (such as the vaccination programme and unscheduled care) to be supported, whilst seeking to reduce inappropriate attendances and minimise both confusion as well as message fatigue.

2. Summary

The NHS Grampian Winter Communication Plan for 2022/23 will be implemented between November 2022 and March 2023 - with the main focus of activity taking place in December and January.

Communications with the public, patients and staff will make use of all available mediums, including traditional (TV, radio, print) and social media, as well as the digital screens being installed in clinical settings, fleet signage plus internal communications channels. An agile approach will ensure messaging remains both relevant to seasonal factors including the weather and impactful in order to stand-out in a busy media landscape.

A media launch marking the start of NHS Grampian's Winter Campaign will be held at the beginning of December (timed to follow national activity commencing late November and the availability of the Public Health Winter Wellness Guide) planned national activity), creating an opportunity for exposure and marking the start of seasonal activity.

3. Agility & Collaboration

Effective communication protocols are in place across NHS Grampian and between key partners. Structures that enable timely action and collaboration to achieve message consistency as well as improved reach are well established.

Corporate Communications attends meetings of the Whole System Decision Making Group to monitor and react to system pressures raised by clinical colleagues. It also continues to work closely with partners through the cross-system Communications Cell, monthly Public Communications Group and the Grampian Engagement Network to agree and share communications priorities. This ensures all activity is cohesive and efficiently delivered.

4. Activity

The overarching aim of NHS Grampian's winter communications is to help manage and, where possible, reduce the pressure on local healthcare services. The themes running through planned activity will therefore be; prevention of ill-health, helping people access the right care in the right place (reducing inappropriate attendances) and encouraging winter wellness and self-care. Within these themes, specific activity is planned around:

- Encouraging uptake of winter vaccines ('flu/COVID-19) among eligible groups
- Supporting and educating individuals on how to stay well this winter (includes working with partners to keep our communities safe and healthy)
- Winter preparedness (from medicine cabinet staples, to being 'weather ready')
- Raising awareness of the options for medical care (from self-care, to pharmacists, to emergency care etc.)
- Increasing understanding of when it is appropriate to use services and encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their own health via refreshed 'Know Who To Turn To' materials
- Encouraging self-care when appropriate

This approach, of empowering people to choose the best way of getting help, builds on our winter marketing & communications campaigns over the past two winters,

which successfully reduced the need for redirection following inappropriate attendance by 34%.

5. Enhanced targeting

Planned activity this winter has been refined further through data analysis. Using local data Corporate Communications has identified four specific areas of focus, which will receive dedicated support and monitoring to measure resulting impacts and apply learnings to future campaigns.

For example, NHSG data for Emergency Department (ED) attendances between 2015-2020 shows minor eye-related complaints accounted for 3853 attendances (representing 2.4% of total attendances and 885 wait hours per year). These people could have been seen by an optician and so messages about eye-related conditions forms one component of this year's activity.

6. Campaign Elements

6.1 Internal Communications

It is important that NHS Grampian colleagues are the first to be made aware of initiatives that support them and are intended to reduce pressure.

This recognises their intrinsic role as partners in the delivery of care and has the ability to address anxiety within teams as well as improve morale. It is also important to recognise the asset of having staff who are sufficiently well-informed to be able to advocate and share messages about the organisation with their family and friends as a further channel of communication.

NHS Grampian's Intranet and Daily Brief for staff will be the first line of timely communication throughout the winter. Prominent promotion of latest news, links to staff wellbeing support as well as links to relevant external sources of information (such as cost of living guidance) will underpin our communication with colleagues.

6.2 Partner Communications

As referenced above, there are a number of meetings and distribution networks that enable NHS Grampian to act in concert with partners on a reciprocal basis. Two-way communication through frequent meetings and electronic channels enable messages to be shared and disseminated across one another's internal and external channels. From sympathetic scheduling to avoid competition over media space, to sharing social media posts for amplification, collaboration with partners including first responders, Health and Social Care Partners (HSCPs), Integration Joint Boards (IJBs) and the third sector is already both well established and rehearsed.

6.3 Working with the media

Throughout winter we will facilitate visits from a range of media outlets to spotlight how our services are coping and promote key messages. There is a need to ensure that this is spread across the whole system and not just at the front door of the hospital, so we work closely with our communications colleagues in the HSCPs to ensure that balance is reached.

For example: we worked with partners to facilitate STV filming week commencing 7 November 2022, giving extensive access and interviews across health & social care. This content formed the basis of several in-depth features that were aired later in November and kick-started our winter narrative. This is important because television is the most popular way for people in Scotland to access news; STV comes second only to BBC 1 nationally, so we need to meet them where they are.

6.4 Winter campaign launch

A media launch at the start of December 2022 will be held to inform the public about our key winter messages and sources of information/support.

6.5 NHSG Public Website

Timed to coincide with the media launch, communications is creating a winter support section within its website. This year we know that winter will be compounded by other factors including the cost of living crisis and is therefore likely to lead to further pressure on the system (modelling indicates that the cost of living crisis could increase bed occupancy by 10-12%).

The website will therefore provide information on a range of topics including how to be prepared for winter, how to stay healthy and signpost third-sector providers for cost of living support. The webpage will also provide links to relevant national and partner websites as well as information on local activities and events.

6.6 Know Who To Turn To (KWTTT)

The NHS Grampian's KWTTT campaign has become one of our most successful initiatives, having established itself over several years and become well recognised by staff, patients and the public (between Dec 2021 and Feb 2022 the [KWTTT website](#) received over 13,632 views).

This year a refreshed creative treatment and updated website content will continue to communicate local information, advice and signposting to self-help messages as well as highlighting the range of services available to the public and how and when to access them. All advertising will signpost to www.know-who-to-turn-to.com

6.7 Public Health – Winter Wellness Campaign

Communications is coordinating with Public Health, to promote a range of local activities it is undertaking that support a preventative approach focussing on the most vulnerable groups (including but not limited to; 65+ but particularly 85+ years, geographical areas of deprivation, the homeless, socially isolated and refugees/asylum seekers).

Media launch activity and spokesperson interviews in early December will incorporate a Winter Wellness guide which is being produced and will include a range of information to support people and, in turn, alleviate winter pressures.

6.8 Winter Vaccination Programme

Ongoing communications via media releases, social media and paid advertising will encourage participation in the winter vaccination programme. The local grampianvax.com website has been improved to inform the public and health and social care staff on the NHSG vaccination programme.

6.9 Four Areas of Focus

As mentioned above, local data, has highlighted four areas which this year's winter campaign can meaningfully target to achieve measurable benefits. These are:

1. Eye Health - Eye related attendances account for 3853 attendances (2.4% of total attendances; equates to approx. 550 attendances per year) and 6201 hours (2% of total hours; equates to approx. 885 hours per year). By promoting opticians as the place to go for those who have minor eye problems, communications will aim to reduce the number of people attending the ED department.
2. NHS Inform symptom checker – the symptom checker is being refreshed this winter and NHS Grampian will be actively promoting it to encourage people to undertake self-care and reduce inappropriate attendances. This activity reflects data gathered from NHS 24, which handles 11,000 calls per month from Grampian of which 49 per cent are directed towards self-care at home.
3. Pharmacy First and Minor Ailment schemes – GPs are seeing increasing demand - with more than 3.0% of population now being seen by GP practices (c.1.7% pre-covid; GMS contracts set at 1.4%). Communications will support signposting away from GPs (and ED) by promoting the services they provide, which many people are unaware of.
4. Colds and flu – Specific support for the 'antibiotics don't work' message will also be incorporated into activity at the request of GP colleagues.

Signposting to pharmacies for over the counter remedies and providing self-care advice will aim to reduce GP attendances for this.

6.10 Advertising:

In addition to PR aimed at delivering TV, radio, print and social media exposure, NHS Grampian will also deliver a targeted paid winter advertising campaign which is being funded by Unscheduled Care in recognition of the role communications plays in alleviating system pressures. This will help ensure that our message reaches less engaged audiences across Grampian for whom health and social care is not a key concern.

Whilst our presence on social media compared to other boards - our Facebook likes are equivalent to roughly 10% of the Grampian population (across all our platforms, roughly 1 in 5 people in Grampian follow us) - social media is not enough.

Nearly 9 in 10 adults in Scotland listen to the radio for an average of 20 hours each week. Commercial stations are more popular in Scotland than the rest of the UK, with the Bauer network (owners of Northsound and Moray Firth Radio (MFR)) leading the way. Therefore our advertising will be deployed across the following media channels.

6.11 Know Who To Turn To

- **Social Media** – paid for advertisements will guarantee geographic visibility, rather than relying on people following Grampian channels (potential reach of 425,000 across Grampian)
- **Radio** - Northsound 1, Northsound 2 and Moray Firth Radio (potential reach 154,720 Northsound 1&2, & 121,888 for MFR)
- **Evening Express** - full page feature in the EE promoting range of service and how to access them appropriately additional messages on self-care for winter illnesses and winter wellness (potential reach 17,000)

- **Fleet Vehicles** - large advertising banners will be produced for display on 2 of NHS Grampian's 7.5 tonne trucks, which will travel the length and breadth of the region between December–March
- **Digital Display Screens** - advertisements will to be displayed across over 40 digital screens situated in: Dr Gray's, Hospital, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (ARI), Royal Aberdeen Children's Hospital (RACH), Aberdeen Maternity Hospital (AMH), Royal Cornhill Hospital (RCH), the Health Village and Woodend Hospital
- **Posters** 1500 A3 posters will to be distributed to key public locations including; supermarkets, pharmacies, GP surgeries and community venues (e.g. libraries, community centres)

6.12 Pharmacy services (Winter Self-Care)

- To support the winter self-care message, a video for social media use and radio advertisement will be produced to highlight pharmacy services for ailments including coughs and colds/sore throats

6.13 Optician services (Emergency Eye Care)

- a video for social media use and radio advertisement will be produced to highlight the eye care support available through opticians

6.14 Agile Advertising

- Up to ten 'live reads' will also be booked with Northsound and Moray Firth Radio breakfast shows. These can be used flexibly throughout winter at times of peak surge or to reflect unplanned changes such as adverse weather etc.

7 Evaluation

Communications will continue to measure media exposure, the audience reach of its message, audience engagement, website traffic and social media interactions throughout the season. The value and effectiveness of paid advertising will also form part of a communications report once all activity has been completed.

In addition, campaign activity this winter will enable ED presentation data and NHS 24 interactions to be evaluated to identify any behavioural changes that are observed – such as reduced ED attendances for eye-related conditions.

Our approach, of empowering people to choose the best way of getting help, builds on our winter marketing & communications campaigns over the past two winters and is consistent with NHS Grampian's Plan For The Future – which advocates working together with partners in Grampian and beyond and conversations with people that enable them to be partners in their own care.