

**Health Professions Council
Communications Committee 24th May 2007**

**External Exhibition Evaluation Report
Thomas Heiser**

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Introduction

Each year, the Communications Department participates in various external conferences by taking a stand in their exhibitions. Up to six exhibitions are visited per year with the aim of promoting the work of the HPC and to raise our profile with key audiences including registrants and the public.

Decision

This paper is for information only. No decision is required.

Background information

The attached evaluation reports relate to the Patient Information Forum in London in February 2007 and the Managing Long Term Conditions in March in Telford.

We will be exhibiting at the following conferences in 2007 – 2008:

- Primary Care, May 2007. The largest event in Europe for primary and community care professionals.
- Institute of Biomedical Scientists, September 2007 (BS renewal period). Communications department attending together with members of UK reg.
- NHS Employers, October 2007. Over 1,000 professionals from the NHS and private sectors with an interest in workforce issues.
- Health and Wellbeing, March 2008. Conference for HR professionals and all those involved in the health and wellbeing of working people.
- UK Public Health Association, April 2008. Large conference for professionals involved in health promotion from the NHS, local government, charity and private sectors.

Resource implications

None

Financial implications

None

Appendices

External Exhibition Evaluation Report for the Patient Information Forum
External Exhibition Evaluation Report for Managing Long Term Conditions

Date of paper

24th May 2007

External Exhibition Evaluation Report

Name of Event: Patient Information Forum

Date: 28 Feb 2007

Location: Novotel, Hammersmith International Centre, London

Details:

- 155 delegates
 - Patient information managers, PALs officers, communications and publications officers.
- 20 stands
- 2 hours 55 minutes delegate contact time
- 29 visits to the stand
- HPC used large pop-up stand
- Laptop showing website and HPCheck
- Registrant and patient facing literature
- Two members of staff: Jacqueline Ladds (am), Philippa Richardson (pm) and Thomas Heiser (all day)

Publications distributed:

- "Be safe, Be sure" (in delegate packs) 130
- How to make a complaint 2
- Ethics/Standards 4
- Standards of CPE 5
- Be sure be safe (from stand) 5
- Welcome to the HPC 3
- CPD (long guide) 1
- Making a complaint 3

General thoughts:

The meeting brought together multidisciplinary professionals, the majority of whom were involved in the production or distribution of patient materials. While most had not heard of the HPC many found that we were relevant to their work either as an additional patient resource or as a contact for registrant related matters. Our presence presented a good opportunity for us to explain the organisation and to promote the HPCheck site and patient safety messages.

Contact made:

- *Senior Nurse from Southampton General Hospital.* Setting up an allied professionals group. Was very interested to learn about us. Took literature and website details.
- *NHS Live Associate.* Possible avenue for reaching NHS employees. To be investigated further.
- *Asthma UK.* Interested in our work with regard to OTs as a group of professionals that they recommend to their clients. Took literature, HPCheck leaflets and website details.
- *Employee of the RNIB.* Interested to know how the HPC would be involved if a registrant did not make information available to patients in large enough type/brail. She was informed that the HPC could become involved under the standards of conduct, performance and ethics point seven. This contact will also prove beneficial with regard to the review of HPC publication and accessibility issues. Philippa to follow up.

- *Medical Director from the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI), also involved in medical research ethics hearings.* Was interested to know about the HPC regulations with regards to unethical research by registrants. Would this fall under the HPC and what would be the mechanism for HPC to become involved?
- *Cancer Research UK, Director of Comms.* Met with Jacqueline and agreed to discuss communications at a later date.

Comments received:

- The general feel from the exhibition was that people had either not heard of the HPC or were unsure of exactly what we did. This may have been due to the delegate make-up. Most were there to pick up ideas of communications best practise rather than take on information from additional sources although those we met appeared interested in the HPC.
- Many people requested some simple introductory literature explaining what we do however neither the registrant nor patient facing literature seemed wholly appropriate.

Benefits:

For those people who we spoke to we were able to communicate the work and aims of the HPC. People came away with a better understanding of what we did and in some cases took away publications for future reference. The HPCCheck site and patient facing literature were well received by a number of delegates and may result in library stocks being requested. The majority of interest seemed to be from Patient Advice and Liaison services and libraries.

Drawbacks:

Low delegate numbers and the small amount of time in which delegates were in the exhibition hall reduced the effect of our participation in the event.

Conclusions:

Although the conference delegates were involved in patient literature and information the event was geared towards creation of this literature rather than collection of it. That said, the day did help to raise the profile of the HPC and provided a good avenue for the distribution of materials, although to small numbers.

Recommendations for the future:

- Evaluate delegate numbers, make up and anticipated contact time before committing to an event
- Develop more of an introductory text on the HPC for general distribution
- Ensure that a more complete version of the website is available off-line, perhaps also including a test version of the register
- Perhaps invest in some table-top literature racks for the stand

Repeat the Exhibition?: No

Although some delegates did benefit from our involvement at the exhibition it is likely that more beneficial opportunities can be found.

External Exhibition Evaluation Report

Name of Event: Managing Long Term Conditions

Date: 29 March 2007

Location: Telford International Centre, Telford

Details:

- 250 delegates
 - PCT dept. Managers, various programme managers from the NHS and private organisations, reps from pharmaceutical companies, charities and the DOH.
- 75 stands
- 2 hours 25 minutes delegate contact time
- 5 visits to the stand
- HPC used large pop-up stand
- Laptop showing website and HPCheck
- Registrant and patient facing literature
- Two members of staff: Sarah Giles and Thomas Heiser

Publications distributed:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| • “Be safe, Be sure” (left on tables) | 125 |
| • 10 Benefits of registration | 1 |
| • Standards of Education | 1 |
| • Welcome to the HPC | 3 |
| • Standards of C/P/E | 1 |

General thoughts:

Although the meeting was well received by delegates and many stands had a fair amount of interest the HPC stand was approached very rarely. When approaches were made to delegates it seemed that HPC was not specifically relevant to them. Good contact was achieved however with the few people who did visit the stand.

Contact made:

- Psychologist interested in the possibility of future regulation. Explained that the image of the HPC from within the psychology field was fairly negative and wanted to find out some information from our side. Had specific concerns about the way we would regulate the standards of education with regard to the post-grad qualifications.
- General Nurse. Interested in what the HPC do and the interaction amongst other professionals. Literature provided.
- Commissioning Manager. Interested in knowing about checking registrant details as an employer. Shown the HPCheck website and given details to take away.
- *Unknown*. Wanted to know about referring patients. Shown the HPCheck website and given details to take away.

Comments received:

- The numbers of delegates who we spoke to during the meeting was extremely low and while most had heard of us (hence them coming to the stand) the overall impression of the day was that that the HPC did not tie in very closely with the delegates reason for being at the event.
- Again – in many cases it may have been useful to have some simple introductory literature explaining what we do as neither the registrant nor patient facing literature seemed wholly appropriate.

Questions raised:**Benefits:**

For those people who we spoke to we were able to communicate the work and aims of the HPC. In the case of the Psychologist who visited the stand we were able to provide a friendly contact and to hopefully allay some of his fears. Generally, through passing comments with delegates, we will have raised the profile of the HPC to some extent and have promoted the HPCheck site. The *Be safe, Be sure* leaflets which we left on the tables throughout the exhibition may also have led to increased knowledge of the HPC but did not seem to generate any increase in visits to the stand.

Drawbacks:

Low delegate numbers and the small amount of time in which delegates were in the exhibition hall reduced the effect of our participation in the event. The delegates who were in attendance also seemed to be visiting stands that they already knew in some way, rather than browsing the exhibition. Perhaps the lack of interest in the HPC stand is due to the fact that registrants, even though they know us, often do not have much of a day-to-day relationship with the HPC and so may not feel the need to come and talk to us.

Conclusions:

The HPC stand did not generate a lot of interest at the event. This is likely to be due to a combination of the type of delegates present and the lack of time with delegates. It is also worth considering whether the lack of an obvious message to draw people to the stand, and possibly the infrequent need for contact of the HPC/registrant relationship contributed to the lack of interest.

The messages and our methods of communicating them need to be very clearly defined, especially when trying to attract an audience that has little awareness of the HPC or our relevance to them. These messages may benefit from being reflected in the stands we take a long. A more inviting, patient-focused / HPCheck branded stand might attract more people at an event such as this, rather than the more professional looking stand we use currently. It might also be worth considering briefing staff on the key messages before they attend a conference.

Recommendations for the future:

- Evaluate delegate numbers, make up and anticipated contact time before committing to an event
- Develop more of an introductory text on the HPC for general distribution

- Ensure that a more complete version of the website is available off-line, perhaps also including a test version of the register
- Perhaps invest in some table-top literature racks for the stand
- Look at the branding of the stand for the events we take part in – to be discussed as part of the update to visual identity

Repeat the Exhibition?: No

Although some delegates did benefit from our involvement at the exhibition it is likely that more effective opportunities could be found.