

<b>Report title</b>	<b>Working Draft: New Frimley Park Hospital Communications and engagement strategy</b>
<b>Meeting and date</b>	Frimley Park Hospital JHOSC 25 February 2025
<b>Agenda item</b>	<i>Item 8: NEW FRIMLEY PARK HOSPITAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY</i>
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<b>Executive Summary</b>	<p>Excellent communications and engagement are a critical part of the new Frimley Park Hospital programme. We want to have a real understanding of what matters to our patients, the populations we serve, our stakeholders, members and staff.</p> <p>Therefore, we have developed a <b>working draft</b> Communications and Engagement Strategy that aims to ensure patients, staff, and the wider community are well-informed, actively involved, and empowered to shape the future of healthcare.</p> <p>Key components of our strategy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Clear objectives:</b> Building trust and credibility through transparent communication, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility, fostering continuous engagement, leveraging digital tools, and aligning with national healthcare policies.</li> <li>• <b>Collaborative approach:</b> Co-designing and involving stakeholders in decision-making, ensuring that engagement is meaningful and inclusive, and addressing the needs of diverse patient populations.</li> <li>• <b>Stakeholder engagement:</b> Using a variety of methods and channels to engage with stakeholders, including focus groups, member events, emails, newsletters, and social media to gather feedback and foster collaboration.</li> <li>• <b>Evaluation and improvement:</b> Continuously reviewing and refining communication tactics based on insights and engagement metrics to ensure effectiveness.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Crisis management:</b> Developing a robust crisis communication plan, appointing trained spokespeople, and ensuring transparency and active listening during crises.</li> </ul> <p>By following this structured and proactive approach, this strategy will support the successful delivery of the new Frimley Park Hospital programme, ultimately enhancing healthcare outcomes for our patients and staff.</p>
<p><b>Action</b></p>	<p>The JHOSC are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide <b>feedback</b> on the New Frimley Park Hospital Communications and Engagement Strategy working draft and <b>endorse and support</b> its key components and principles.</li> </ul>

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**Frimley Health**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# New Frimley Park Hospital Communications and engagement strategy

March 2025 to programme completion



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## Executive summary

Frimley Health is committed to transforming healthcare delivery through the New Hospital Programme (NHP).

This Communications and Engagement Strategy aligns with our Clinical Strategy 2030 and the Frimley Health 2030 Trust Strategy, positioning effective communication and meaningful engagement as pivotal to our success.

Our strategy ensures that patients, staff, and the wider community are well-informed, actively involved, and empowered to shape the future of healthcare. By embedding our vision of being compassionate, effective, and modern, we aim to foster trust, transparency, and collaboration across all levels of the organisation and with external stakeholders.

Key components of the strategy include:

- **Clear objectives:** Building trust and credibility through transparent communication, ensuring inclusivity and accessibility, fostering continuous engagement, leveraging digital tools, and aligning with national healthcare policies.
- **Collaborative approach:** Co-designing and involving stakeholders in decision-making, ensuring that engagement is meaningful and inclusive, and addressing the needs of diverse patient populations.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** Using a variety of methods and channels to engage with stakeholders, including focus groups, member events, emails, newsletters, and social media to gather feedback and foster collaboration.
- **Evaluation and improvement:** Continuously reviewing and refining communication tactics based on insights and engagement metrics to ensure effectiveness.
- **Crisis management:** Developing a robust crisis communication plan, appointing trained spokespeople, and ensuring transparency and active listening during crises.

By following this structured and proactive approach, we will support the successful delivery of the new Frimley Park Hospital programme, ultimately enhancing healthcare outcomes for our patients and staff.

## Introduction and purpose

Frimley Health is embarking on an ambitious journey to transform healthcare through its New Frimley Park Hospital Programme (NHP), ensuring the delivery of the right care, at the right time, in the right place. This transformation is underpinned by a modernised infrastructure and digital advancements that will enhance healthcare outcomes for our patients and staff over the next decade.

This Communications and Engagement Strategy aligns with our Clinical Strategy 2030 and the wider Frimley Health 2030 Trust Strategy. Effective communication and meaningful engagement will be at the heart of this transformation, ensuring that patients, staff, and the wider community are informed, involved, and empowered to shape the future of healthcare.

Our approach will foster trust, transparency, and collaboration across all levels of the organisation and with external stakeholders, our Trust members and patients. By embedding our vision - **Compassionate, effective and modern** - into our communication and engagement efforts, we will create a healthcare system that meets the evolving needs of our local population.

### The start of a great opportunity

It is an exciting time for Frimley Health. We have new trust and clinical strategies that will underpin the strategic outline case for our new Frimley Park Hospital and ongoing investment in our other sites.

These strategies will be the transformative catalyst for a new way of working, engaging our staff, patients and stakeholders - and delivering world-class healthcare services.

### The New Frimley Park Hospital communications and engagement approach

Excellent communications and engagement are a critical part of the new Frimley Park Hospital programme. We want to have a real understanding of what matters to our patients, the populations we serve, our stakeholders, members and staff.

This strategy sets out a structured and proactive approach to communication from March 2025 to programme completion. It integrates lessons from previous stakeholder engagement efforts and aligns with national healthcare transformation goals.

Our approach is based on creating a collaborative and responsive dialogue that is inclusive, accessible and ensures even the most seldom heard have a voice that is listened to.

While this strategy is owned by the new Frimley Park Hospital programme communications and engagement team, responsibility for its delivery will be shared across the entire hospital programme team and our wider system partners.

## About Frimley Health

Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust was established in 2014 and by 2024 had grown into a £1bn turnover organisation.

We have 13,500 diverse and professional colleagues, representing around 100 different nationalities, and with our 870 valued volunteers, provide NHS hospital services for 900,000 people in Berkshire, Hampshire, Surrey, South Buckinghamshire and beyond.

The Trust also provides specialist acute consultant delivered services across a wider catchment for cystic fibrosis, heart attacks, stroke and vascular surgery, plastic surgery and renal cancer.

### **Frimley Health delivers services across three hospitals and multiple community sites:**

- **Wexham Park Hospital** – emergency and planned care for the north of our geography.
- **Heatherwood Hospital** – our award winning planned elective care centre located centrally in our geography.
- **Frimley Park Hospital** - emergency and planned care in the south of our geography
- Outpatient and diagnostic services at **community sites** across our geography.

We are a key partner in the Frimley Health and Care Integrated Care System and work with other system partners to provide integrated care services and patient pathways across the catchment.

## Our vision, values and strategic objectives

Our Frimley Health vision is: **Compassionate, effective, modern** and we will deliver this by practising our values in all we do – we are:

**Committed to excellence:** We are committed to excellence in everything we do, striving to be one of the best acute trusts in the country.

**Working together:** We are working together as one team dedicated to meeting patient needs.

**Facing the future:** We are facing the future, continuously improving our performance and adapting services to meet demand.

And we will use our **four strategic objectives (satisfied patients, engaged people, modern infrastructure, excellent quality)**, which form a virtuous circle, to ensure that our **patients are satisfied** by **focusing on our amazing people**, to deliver **high-quality clinical outcomes** and **improving our infrastructure** to make Frimley Health a great place to deliver and receive care.



## Our population

The increasing number of older adults with multiple long-term conditions will significantly shape future healthcare demand and service provision. Frimley Health must collaborate with system partners to deliver compassionate, effective, and modern care while actively engaging patients and the wider community.

### Our population growth trends

By 2041, the overall population we serve will rise by 5.35%, with a notable increase in those aged 60 years and over and teenagers. However, the working-age population is not growing at the same rate, posing workforce challenges.

### Wider determinants of health

People that live in recognised areas of deprivation will often have poorer outcomes and on average will have a 10year lower healthy life expectancy. While most of our population don't live in areas of deprivation, all areas contain pockets of deprivation, though these can be less visible due to nearby affluence.

### Languages spoken

There are 122 different spoken languages in our population, with Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi, Polish and Romanian being the most common amongst the 98,000 residents in our ICS who do not have English as their main spoken language. Given that language barriers can impact a persons' ability to access and navigate health and care services, it is crucial that our communications and engagement strategy includes tactics to reach these communities.

### Frimley Health population insights: deprivation, ethnicity and disease prevalence

Chronic conditions such as diabetes, COPD, and heart failure are one-and-a-half to two times more common in deprived areas, while cancer and atrial fibrillation appear less prevalent, potentially due to under-diagnosis.

Our communications and engagement needs to be targeted, inclusive, and integrated to support ethnic disparities in health conditions:

- **Asian / Asian British:** Higher rates of diabetes, coronary heart disease, and non-diabetic hyperglycaemia; lower rates of depression, COPD, and atrial fibrillation.
- **Black / Black British:** Higher rates of diabetes, hypertension, chronic kidney disease, and obesity; lower rates of COPD, depression, and atrial fibrillation.

## Our priorities

The new Frimley Park Hospital gives us a once in a generational opportunity to truly transform health and care provision across our population, taking a system-wide, multi-organisational approach in how, where and by whom care is delivered.

There is also a unique opportunity to enhance the way we communicate with, engage and involve our people and those we serve.

We will use robust, independently supported research to co-design the way we do this, ensuring that our approach is both fully inclusive and fully accessible, with a commitment to:

- **Transparency** – communicating openly, honestly, and in a timely manner.
- **Inclusivity** – engaging diverse communities, including underrepresented, seldom heard and vulnerable groups.
- **Collaboration** – partnering with patients, staff, and stakeholders to co-design solutions.
- **Innovation** – leveraging digital platforms and new technologies to enhance engagement.
- **Sustainability** – creating enduring relationships and lasting impact beyond the life of the programme.

Thereby ensuring that communication and engagement efforts are effective, equitable, and aligned with the dynamic and evolving needs of our healthcare system.

## Local, system and national context

The NHS is facing significant pressures at national, system, and local levels, impacting both service delivery and patient care.

Workforce shortages, rising demand, and financial constraints are driving the need for innovative solutions and strategic planning.

Frimley Health, as the sole acute trust within the Frimley Integrated Care System (ICS), is working collaboratively with its system partners to address these challenges by integrating data, improving service access, and enhancing digital capabilities.

With a focus on reducing health inequalities, expanding virtual care, and modernising infrastructure, Frimley Health is committed to delivering high-quality, sustainable healthcare for the communities it serves.

## Legal and statutory framework for communications and engagement

The legal and statutory framework for NHS communications and engagement primarily stems from the National Health Service Act 2006.

This places a duty on NHS organisations to actively engage with patients, families, and carers in communication and decision-making processes across the healthcare system.

### Key aspects of the framework

#### Public involvement duty

The NHS Act 2006 mandates that NHS organisations must actively involve the public in decision-making through consultation and engagement activities.

#### Accessible information standard:

NHS communications must be accessible to all patients, including those with disabilities, meaning information should be available in various formats and languages.

#### Duty of candour:

This principle requires healthcare professionals to be open and honest with patients when things go wrong, including providing apologies and explanations.

#### Health and Care Act 2022:

This recent legislation further emphasises the importance of patient and public engagement, reinforcing the need for collaboration with local communities in healthcare planning and delivery.

### Key points

#### Statutory guidance:

NHS England publishes guidance<sup>1</sup> on how to effectively engage the public, outlining best practices for consultation, feedback mechanisms, and co-production of services.

#### Local variations:

While the core principles are consistent across the NHS, specific engagement strategies may differ depending on local needs and the commissioning arrangements in each area.

#### Equality and diversity considerations:

NHS communications must be inclusive and take into account the needs of diverse patient populations.

## Our communications and engagement objectives and principles

### Our objectives

These objectives will clearly define the desired outcomes of this strategy. They will support the delivery of specific goals aligned to our Trust and Clinical strategies. We will:

- **Build trust and credibility through clear, concise, transparent and proactive communication** which demonstrates that Frimley Health is a responsive organisation that listens to its people and patients and works hard to deliver high quality care while being a great place to work.
- We will build credibility and trust through regular, open and transparent dialogue that **engages staff, patients, and key stakeholders** – enabling us to speak with a single voice, presenting a strong identity for who we are and what we do.
- Our communications and engagement will be **inclusive and accessible**, both sensitive and responsive to the diverse nature of our people and the populations we serve.
- Ensure **continuous and meaningful engagement** with staff, patients, the public and carers, providing a range of mechanisms for two-way conversations that truly influence our decisions.
- We will **use the latest digital tools and innovation** available to maximise reach and for data analysis to ensure continuous improvement.
- We will ensure that the communications, engagement and involvement we use is **aligned with national healthcare policies**.

To support us in communicating with one voice we will use the style guide developed as part of the Trust brand refresh, ensuring consistency across all our outputs and channels. This will also embed a set of accessibility standards across all communications.

### Our principles

Our communications and engagement will be built on a foundation of trust, transparency, and inclusivity, that meets the needs of our patients, staff, and wider communities. The below principles will guide how we communicate, collaborate, and co-design our communications and engagement throughout the programme to deliver the objectives above (the what). They provide a clear set of guidelines, aligned to our Trust and Clinical strategies, to shape our actions and outputs (the how). These principles are:

- To be **transparent and honest**: being clear and upfront in our communications, including when there are challenges and changes.
- To **actively listen**: seeking out feedback and perspectives from all stakeholders, demonstrating genuine interest in and responsiveness to their concerns and views, respectfully and with empathy.

- To **be inclusive**: ensuring that communication is accessible to all audiences and considers all forms of diversity and need.
- Provide professional advice and guidance to support the delivery of the programme and transformative strategies.
- Manage the production and delivery of communication and engagement materials, continually measuring effectiveness and adapting plans for continuous improvement.
- Support internal and external consultation, engagement, and involvement.

## Roles and responsibilities

The new Frimley Park Hospital programme communications and engagement team is responsible for developing and executing this strategy, to ensure that the Trust informs, engages, and builds relationships with internal and external audiences.

This involves providing professional advice and guidance, including creating opportunity for effective dialogue with stakeholders, staff and communities, distributing content across various channels, monitoring feedback, and analysing the impact of communication efforts to achieve programme and organisational goals.

The team works closely with our system partner NHS Frimley Integrated Care Board's Communications and Engagement team, who have specific responsibilities in this programme.

### Our new hospital programme communications and engagement team will

- Provide professional advice and guidance to support the delivery of the new Frimley Park Hospital programme and the transformative strategies that underpin this.
- Manage the production and delivery of communication and engagement materials, tools and outputs – continually measuring the effectiveness of these and adapting delivery plans as needed to facilitate continuous improvement.
- Support the delivery of consultation, engagement, and involvement internally and externally.

### The ICB communications and engagement team will

- Lead formal consultation processes with support from the Frimley Park Hospital communications and engagement team.
- Ensure compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements and alignment with system-wide priorities.
- Work collaboratively with the new Frimley Park Hospital programme communications and engagement team to deliver this strategy.

### **Together, the two teams will**

- Identify key stakeholders and support relationship management, including stakeholder mapping and relationship management plans.
- Provide professional advice and guidance on working collaboratively with scrutiny committees to ensure appropriate and meaningful oversight.

### **Role of the wider programme team**

The wider new Frimley Park Hospital programme team also plays a crucial role in the strategy's effective delivery, including:

- Approval and support of the strategy and its outputs.
- Appropriate involvement across the programme to provide insight for relevant and timely communications and engagement activities.
- Commitment from programme and ICB executives to lead and support key stakeholder relationships with guidance from the communications and engagement teams.
- Providing media trained spokespeople and presenters for interviews/comment, as well as presenters for events.
- Understanding the role of scrutiny committees and attending, presenting at and responding to questions as needed or requested by said committees.

### **Communications working group**

We will establish a communications working group within the programme governance that drives forward this communications and engagement strategy to ensure the timely delivery of key programme outputs.

This group will have decision making authority and will advise on a comprehensive action plan, outlining timelines and channels for key messaging, engaging with the public and stakeholders, identifying and categorising key internal and external stakeholders, and assessing their interest, influence and impact.

## Programme narrative and key messages

We will use a rolling narrative (updated monthly) and set of key messages (or talking points) to support the new Frimley Park Hospital programme and transformative strategies that underpin it.

The purpose of this is essentially to provide a structured way to convey our key messages and to foster understanding and action. It will help us to craft compelling outputs that:

- Ensure consistent and accurate messaging from all spokespeople and across all channels.
- Streamline sign-off processes (and reduce the need for tactical output sign-off) as all deliverables will be produced from the agreed narrative.
- Help us build and maintain effective relationships with key stakeholders through the delivery of timely, consistent and regular messaging.
- Promote two-way dialogue using consistent talking points across the programme's identified audience.
- Support the production of materials that connect with our audiences through storytelling using information that is relatable, meaningful and where appropriate memorable.

The narrative will be written and managed by the Trust's new Frimley Park Hospital communications and engagement team, with collaborative input from senior ICB communications and engagement colleagues.

It will be taken to the New Frimley Park Hospital programme steering group for approval ahead of being submitted to the programme's senior responsible officer for sign-off. Thereafter, it will inform all communications and engagement outputs.

## Our collaborative, co-designed engagement and involvement approach

Truly effective communications and engagement depends on collaboration and co-design. By actively involving stakeholders, staff, partners, and the communities we serve, we can ensure that engagement is meaningful, inclusive, and reflects the diversity of our people and populations. This shared approach strengthens trust, encourages transparency, and fosters collective ownership - key elements for success. See [Appendix XXX](#) for a paper outlining inclusive communications principles.

## Ensuring an effective, co-designed approach that informs our decisions

To be responsive to the views of our people and those we serve, we need to ensure that public, patient and carer voices are heard and considered, from planning to delivery. Embedding this approach throughout the new Frimley Park Hospital programme will facilitate improved planning and the early identification (and addressing) of and potential problems or risks.

By identifying and understanding who will be affected by the programme, we can identify the communities and individuals we should engage with. Those who experience the greatest disadvantage and exclusion often also have the poorest health outcomes and are often more vulnerable.

They are frequently overlooked in conventional participation efforts, and as such we need to account for this as part of our planning to maximise inclusive participation that uses multiple and diverse approaches, with independently guided methodologies and a robust outcome that meets the most stringent scrutiny. Included as **Appendix XXX** is a paper that outlines the planned approach to this co-design work to be approved as part of this strategy.

## Forms and degrees of engagement

We have a range of internal and external audiences and stakeholders that we will be engaging with over the lifespan of the new Frimley Park Hospital programme, and beyond, and the success of this strategy is largely dependent on robust engagement and involvement across all these audiences, at the right level and at the right time.

Crucial to this, is appropriately involving and engaging with seldom heard communities. This refers to those groups of people whose voices and perspectives are often underrepresented in decision-making processes due to factors like systemic inequalities, cultural barriers, or geographical isolation. It also includes those disadvantaged due to diversity because of their cultural backgrounds, ethnicities, or identities. The involvement and insight from these communities will provide robust input and assurance into the Equality Impact Analysis, that will be included as part of the series of business cases for the new Frimley Park Hospital programme.

## Effective planning for engagement, involvement and participation

Using the NHS England publication that addresses planning for participation, we have adapted Arnstein's 'Ladder of citizen participation' to outline a framework to ensure that our communications and engagement activity satisfies scrutiny from statutory and regulatory bodies, informing our work as shown in the table below.



## Communications and engagement framework

<p><b>Co-production and co-design</b></p>	<p>Co-production and co-design represent a genuine and equal partnership where everyone works together, rooted in a shared commitment to collaborate. For the purposes of this strategy, we will focus this work on those from seldom heard communities.</p>
<p><b>Participation</b></p>	<p>Participation empowers stakeholders to collaborate with leaders and staff in co-designing services, improvements, or care pathways. A range of mechanisms can be used to facilitate this collaboration, enabling individuals to work together.</p>
<p><b>Involvement</b></p>	<p>Involvement is a process that goes beyond listening to stakeholder views and acting on them. It includes stakeholders in designing proposals for change and empowers them to contribute to shaping solutions and improvements.</p>
<p><b>Engagement</b></p>	<p>Effective stakeholder engagement involves identifying key stakeholders and their interests, engaging them with a clear purpose to achieve agreed outcomes. This is an important accountability mechanism, which not only communicates strategic progress, performance, and decisions, but will also actively involve stakeholders in our transformative journey.</p>
<p><b>Consultation</b></p>	<p>A targeted process designed to gather advice from subject matter experts or test an idea or proposal with a specific audience to understand various views, perspectives, and the potential impact of the proposed change. Formal consultation processes on proposals for service change are governed by law in England.</p>
<p><b>Communications</b></p>	<p>Communications are the processes and channels through which information is exchanged between people and places. This includes written, verbal, and signed information, as well as messages shared through film, podcasts, and other digital media.</p>

## Working with our local authorities as part of our collaborative communications and engagement approach

Local authority health overview and scrutiny ensures local communities have a voice in the planning and delivery of safe and effective health services. It monitors the integration of health, public health, and social care, evaluates health and wellbeing boards, and recommends improvements. Local, county and unitary authorities in England have powers to:

- Review and scrutinise local health services, including financial aspects.
- Request necessary information from NHS bodies.
- Require NHS employees to attend meetings and answer questions.
- Make reports and recommendations to NHS bodies with a required response within 28 days.
- Establish joint health scrutiny committees or delegate functions when needed.

If statutory consultation is required as a result of a **substantial change** determination by the ICB, scrutiny committees will need to be consulted. NHS bodies, commissioners, and providers must consult local authorities on significant developments or variations, as per Regulation 23 of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

Under Regulation 30, when multiple local authorities are consulted, they must form a joint health overview and scrutiny committee (JHOSC) that:

- Responds to the consultation as a single entity.
- Requests information and requires NHS staff to attend meetings.
- Reviews proposals and makes recommendations.

The JHOSC can request a review by the Secretary of State if it believes the consultation was inadequate, the proposal isn't in the local health service's interest, or if consultation was bypassed without valid reasons.

### The purpose of the JHOSC

The purpose of the JHOSC is to:

- make comments on the proposal consulted on
- require the provision of information about the proposal
- gather evidence from key stakeholders, including members of the public
- require the member or employee of the relevant health service to attend before it to answer questions in connection with the consultation

With the exception of the above, responsibility for all other health scrutiny functions and activities remain with the respective local authority Health Scrutiny Committees.

We have started engaging with local authority scrutiny committees on our proposals and have worked with them to establish a joint health overview and scrutiny committee (JHOSC). Items can be brought to the JHOSC as part of a public or private meeting.

Maintaining regular opportunities to engage with our JHOSC is an integral part of our stakeholder relationship management and crucial to the appropriate local authority oversight. As such, we will work with the programme management office to identify when the JHOSC needs to meet to receive meaningful updates and undertake its statutory scrutiny role, both in public and in private, based on programme milestones and overlay this with regular briefings to build and positively maintain relationships.

## The NHS Engagement Cycle

The NHS Engagement Cycle<sup>2</sup> is a strategic tool that helps us understand who needs to do what, to engage our people, communities, patients and the public throughout change programmes.

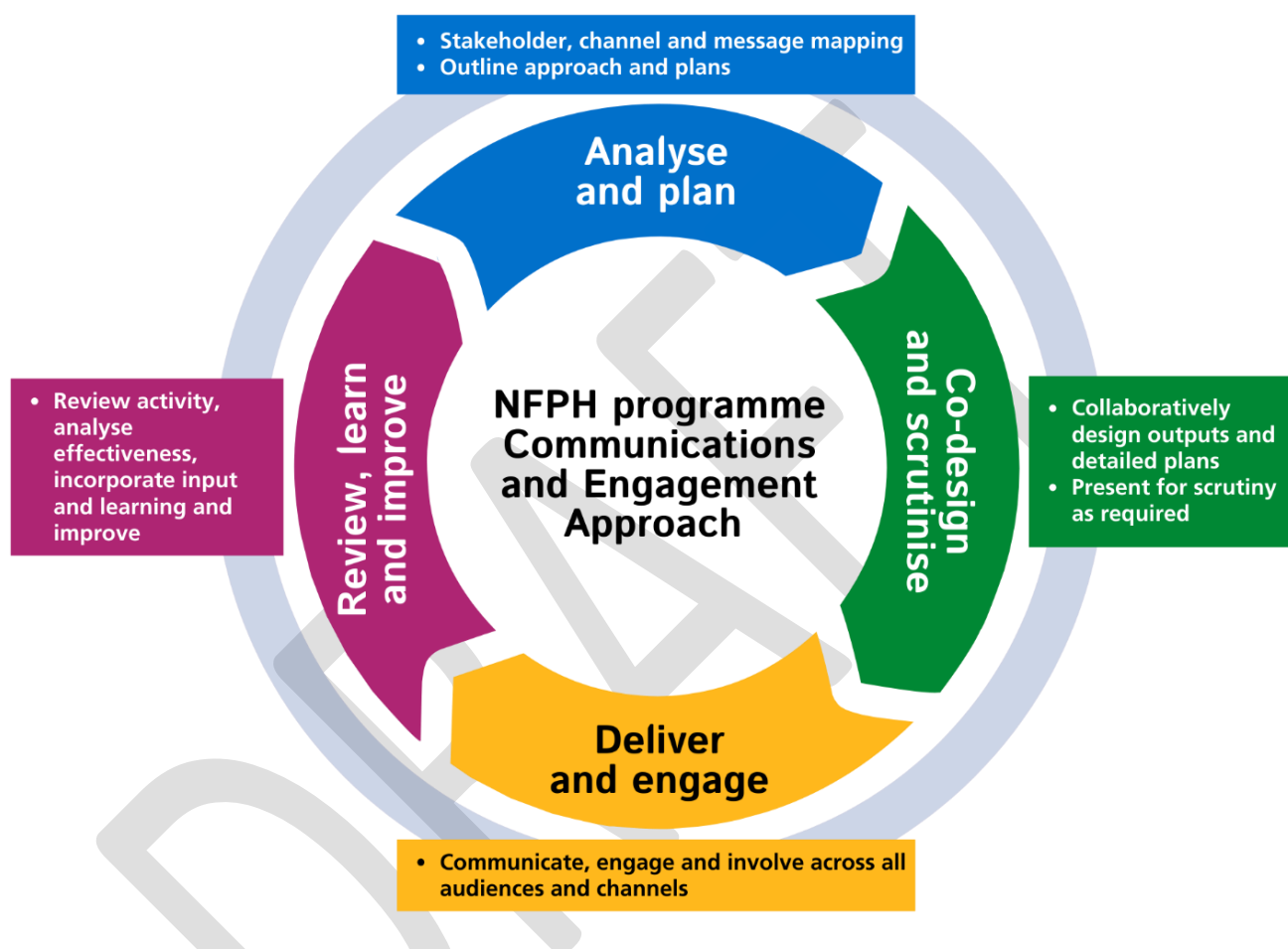
It identifies five different stages when we can and should engage with and involve our people, patients and the populations we serve.

1. To help **identify** needs and aspirations
2. To **develop** priorities, strategies and plans
3. To **improve** services
4. To **procure** services
5. To **monitor** services

At each of these five stages, the NHS Engagement Cycle provides simple advice on what to do to undertake high quality patient and public engagement that will enhance and support the decisions we need to make.

## The NHS Engagement Cycle – the overall model

We have adapted the NHS Engagement Cycle to provide an outline of how engagement will work over the new Frimley Park Hospital programme. By using an adaptation of the NHS model, we can provide assurance that we are meeting the regulatory and statutory expectations of a change programme of this magnitude.



## Stakeholder communications, involvement and engagement

Before Frimley Park Hospital was added to the New Hospital Programme, we collaborated with colleagues from other NHS RAAC trusts and our ICB to ensure a strong and unified approach. These regular meetings with other RAAC Trusts solidified support from local MPs, playing a crucial role in our successful addition to the programme in May 2023.

Identifying and engaging the right stakeholders is essential for achieving desired outcomes, managing risks, and mitigating resistance. Strong stakeholder engagement creates allies who can act as supportive, critical friends.

For the new Frimley Park Hospital programme and related transformational works, we define:

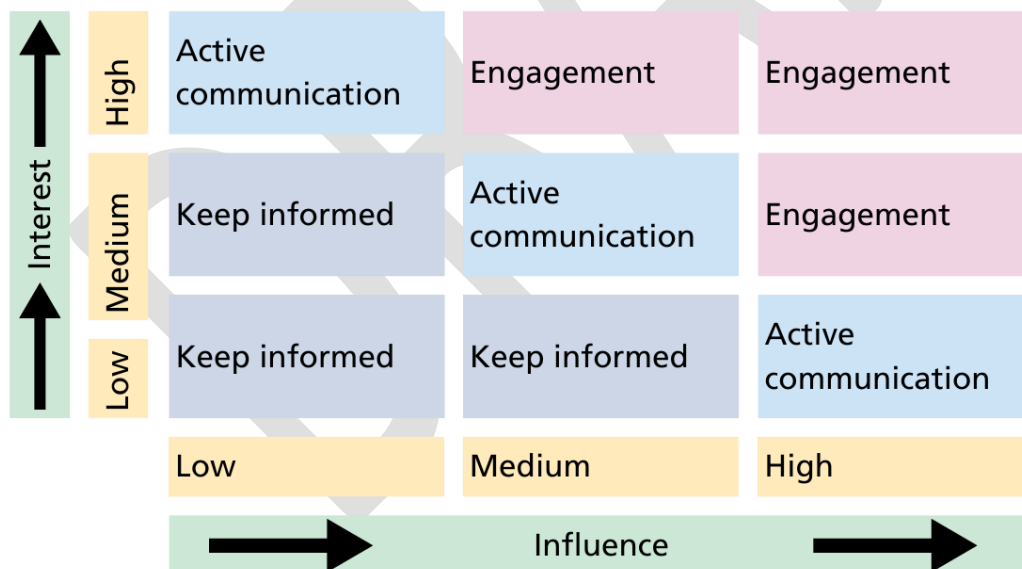
- **Stakeholder:** Any individual or group affected by or involved in a project, programme, or organisational change.
- **Stakeholder engagement:** The process of identifying, analysing, planning, and taking action to involve and influence stakeholders in a change initiative.

## Stakeholder analysis

Stakeholders can be categorised and prioritised into nine different groups based on their perceived levels of influence and interest in the new Frimley Park Hospital programme. The approach to each is then adapted accordingly. The stakeholder matrix assigns stakeholders to the three categories as follows:

- **Active communication:** stakeholders who will need to be actively involved in and supportive of the work of the programme
- **Engagement:** stakeholders that FHFT need to involve and work in partnership and seek their views to help shape plans
- **Keep informed:** stakeholders who need to be aware of the programme and kept informed

## Stakeholder matrix



The stakeholder matrix mapping is of necessity an iterative task. The nature of stakeholders' relationships to the programme must be continually reviewed and re-mapped as the programme progresses, through feedback from the project team and programme steering board and other key relationship managers and 'business as usual' relationships.

## Stakeholder mapping

Engaging the right stakeholders at the right time, and in the right way helps them understand and support our vision, reducing resistance and risk, helping us to develop appropriate and meaningful relationships. It clarifies concerns, prevents rumours, and ensures successful change, with more effective collaboration, smoother implementation of changes, and a higher likelihood of success.

We use a three-by-three matrix for stakeholder mapping, with influence on one axis and interest on the other. This map is regularly reviewed, and relationship management plans are created for key stakeholders to maintain or shift their position as needed. We map our stakeholders according to the grid below.

Approach	Level of interest/influence	Communication channels
<p><b>Engagement</b></p> <p>Balanced two-way communication, working together to develop solutions, genuine willingness on both parts to reach mutual understanding which may involve adapting approach</p>	<p>High influence, high interest</p> <p>High influence, medium interest</p> <p>High interest, medium influence</p>	<p><b>Bespoke methods:</b></p> <p>Workshops/events, one-to-one meetings, presentations, surveys, response forms, emails.</p> <p>Plus access to all channels listed for “active communications” and “keep informed.”</p>
<p><b>Active communication</b></p> <p>Share plans and ideas, discuss implementation, act on feedback where possible</p>	<p>High influence, low interest</p> <p>Medium interest, medium influence</p> <p>High interest, low influence</p>	<p><b>Adapt existing fora and channels:</b></p> <p>Dedicated area of website and online FAQs, social media interactions, drop-in events, e-bulletins/newsletters, posters, leaflets/postcards plus access to all channels listed for “keep informed.”</p>
<p><b>Keep informed</b></p> <p>Least active, one-way, factual promotion</p>	<p>Medium interest, low influence</p> <p>Medium influence, medium interest,</p> <p>Low interest, low influence</p>	<p><b>Make use of existing fora and channels:</b></p> <p>Media coverage (press releases), website, social media updates, partnerships people, posters, leaflets/postcards.</p> <p>Information readily and publicly available.</p>

### **Stakeholder relationship management**

The Trust has procured Tractivity, a stakeholder engagement platform. This will allow us to centralise and organise all information about our stakeholders, enabling us to effectively manage and track interactions, communications, issues, and commitments with them. This ultimately builds and maintains positive relationships with those individuals or groups that have an interest in the new Frimley Park Hospital and the wider Frimley Health transformation.

As such, Tractivity will be an invaluable tool in helping provide context to our stakeholder relationships and will help enable us to strengthen them over time.

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## Tools that support our engagement and involvement

We know that engaging with and involving patients, the public, and members is fundamental to the success of this communications and engagement strategy. Effective engagement is about what we do, how and why we do it - building trust, enhancing transparency, and improving outcomes. Using the right channel for the right stakeholder is crucial to ensure that our messages are received, understood, and acted upon, thereby maximising the impact of our efforts and fostering a collaborative environment. Below, is a summary of the methods and channels we will use to ensure voices are heard and considered.

Engagement tools	
<p><b>Two-way cascade</b></p> <p>Actively engage with staff across all areas of the Trust by listening to their feedback during a structured program of visits and drop-in sessions, using business as usual channels, and by facilitating meaningful connections with teams.</p>	<p><b>Deliberative panels</b></p> <p>A process for deliberation among a group of individuals who represent the demographics of a region, centred around a specific question for debate.</p>
<p><b>Focus groups</b></p> <p>A guided discussion involving approximately six to 10 participants, aimed at exploring experiences, perspectives, and ideas related to a specific theme, process, or service.</p>	<p><b>Formal consultation</b></p> <p>A formal process for consulting patients and the public on significant service changes, in collaboration with system partners.</p>
<p><b>Co-design</b></p> <p>Using the experiences of patients, carers, and staff, captured through discussion, observation, and interviews to enhance services, with support from Healthwatch ensuring a robust, independent and unbiased approach.</p>	<p><b>Staff councils and networks</b></p> <p>A mechanism for decision-making across staff so that change and improvement is led by, shaped by and owned by staff. We can use existing staff networks to ensure that we reach our seldom heard people and to ensure inclusive engagement.</p>
<p><b>Patient, carer and volunteer input</b></p> <p>A role that allows patients, carers and volunteers to have their voices heard, contributing to decision-making.</p>	<p><b>Member events</b></p> <p>A programme of member events to be held virtually and in person offering an opportunity to be involved and listened to.</p>
<p><b>Webinars</b></p> <p>Real-time interaction, providing an opportunity to share information, gather feedback, and engage with a wide audience remotely and efficiently. These can be recorded and added to the website and shared across social media to maximise reach and share information in a way that is convenient to all.</p>	<p><b>Voluntary, community, and social enterprise organisations (VCSE) (managed by the ICB)</b></p> <p>A network inviting VCSE organisations to join an ongoing partnership development programme. This collaboration aims to extend our reach to all community sections, especially those with protected characteristics or experiencing health inequalities.</p>



**Active communication tools**

**Media relations**  
Proactive media relations sharing positive stories to shape public perception and build a strong brand, while reactive media relations responds to enquiries and manages crises to ensure accurate information. Both are essential for maintaining a positive public image and engaging with the audience.

**Pop-up stands**  
A great way to engage directly with the public, providing a visible and interactive presence in locations where our audiences are already attending (shopping centres, high streets, other events), helping to raise awareness, gather feedback, and promote key messages effectively.

**Roadshows**  
A powerful way to engage directly with staff and members of the community – a mobile and interactive presence to raise awareness, gather feedback, and share key messages across various locations.

**Social media**  
An essential channel that offers a broad reach and allows for real-time interaction, raising awareness, gathering feedback, and disseminating key messages to a wide audience effectively.

**My experience stories**  
Patient, visitor and staff stories, shared in person or through various channels, helping to shape our transformation.

**Tools to help keep people informed**

**Newsletters**  
A proactive way to regularly inform and engage stakeholders. They help manage the message, ensuring consistent, clear and transparent communication keeping everyone updated.

**Surveys**  
Surveys collect valuable feedback and insights, helping to inform decisions and improve services by directly engaging stakeholders on a medium-large scale.

**Website**  
A dedicated area ‘microsite’ on the Trust’s website provides up to date information in an easily accessible format, promoting key messages, engages stakeholders, and gathers feedback efficiently.

**WhatsApp broadcast**  
Real-time interaction to a wide audience enabling quick and direct engagement, sharing updates, gathering feedback, and promoting key messages to those who have subscribed.

**Enabling tools**

**Stakeholder mapping**  
A tool to identify and map stakeholders, allowing us to efficiently manage the programme team resource throughout our relationship-building efforts, matching these to the level of interest and influence of the stakeholder, thus enhancing the success of the programme.

## Enabling materials and works

There are several pieces of work that the successful delivery of this strategy depends on. These include (for example) the co-design work with Healthwatch (outlined in Appendix XXX), media training for potential identified spokespeople, photography for collateral, and printed materials and merchandise for use at face-to-face events. These actions are fundamental to the successful delivery of this communications and engagement strategy.

## Using communications and engagement insights to evaluate and measure success

The final stage of the adapted the NHS Engagement Cycle is to review, learn and improve, which for the purposes of this strategy focuses on evaluating and measuring success through insights and engagement metrics as follows:

Review	Learn	Improve
<p><b>Data collection</b></p> <p>Gather data from social media interactions, website traffic, email open rates, survey responses, and other relevant indicators.</p> <p><b>Reach</b></p> <p>Measure exposure through impressions, open rates, follower count, and email recipient list size.</p> <p><b>Engagement</b></p> <p>Track likes, comments, shares, retweets, clicks, and time spent on a page.</p> <p><b>Conversion</b></p> <p>Assess desired actions like website visits, form submissions, or sign-ups.</p>	<p><b>Insight analysis</b></p> <p>Analyse quantitative (metrics) and qualitative (feedback) data to uncover trends and patterns.</p> <p><b>Key findings</b></p> <p>Identify what's working well and areas needing improvement.</p>	<p><b>Strategy adjustments</b></p> <p>Refine communication strategies to enhance engagement and effectiveness.</p> <p><b>Targeted interventions</b></p> <p>Match efforts in building relationships to the value of stakeholders for the programme's success.</p> <p><b>Share evidence</b></p> <p>Share evidence of the feedback received being considered and making an impact.</p>

We will use this data to check our performance against the objectives of this strategy so that we can adapt it as needed for the duration of the programme. We will compare the data against industry standards or past performance where appropriate, and we will use supplementary qualitative feedback from surveys, focus groups, or reviews to listen and respond to our staff, patients and the populations we serve.

By systematically reviewing, learning from, and improving based on communications and engagement insights, the new Frimley Park Hospital programme:

- Ensures effective strategies
- Aligns with stakeholder needs
- Improves stakeholder relationships
- Enhances reputation and trust
- Contributes to overall success of the programme.

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## Crisis management

Crisis management involves strategically communicating with key stakeholders, such as the public, employees, patients, members and partners, during a crisis to deliver accurate information, manage perceptions, and minimise reputational damage. It emphasises transparency and trust-building throughout the process.

### Key aspects of communications and engagement in crisis management

**Rapid response:** quickly disseminating information to all necessary parties to prevent misinformation from spreading.

**Designated spokesperson:** appointing a single, credible spokesperson from a list of media trained spokespeople to deliver consistent messaging across all communication channels.

**Clear and concise messaging based on the narrative and key messages:** communicating information straightforwardly, avoiding technical jargon and including a set of frequently asked questions if needed.

**Active listening:** monitoring public sentiment and feedback to address concerns and adjust communication strategies.

**Transparency and honesty:** acknowledging the crisis, providing accurate information, and taking responsibility when necessary.

**Multi-channel communication:** utilising various channels like press releases, social media, websites, email, and internal platforms to reach a wide audience.

**Stakeholder engagement:** engaging with and seeking the support of key stakeholders, including community leaders, industry experts, and regulatory bodies, to disseminate accurate information, dispel inaccuracies, address concerns and build trust.

### Stages of crisis communication and engagement

**Pre-crisis:** developing a crisis communication plan, identifying potential crises, designating spokespeople, and training employees on crisis response procedures.

**During crisis:** implementing the crisis communication plan, issuing timely updates, addressing misinformation, and managing public perception.

**Post-crisis:** evaluating the crisis response, communicating recovery efforts, and taking steps to prevent future crises.

### The importance and benefits of effective media training

Identifying the right people in the programme and wider organisation, and ensuring that they have robust media training is crucial for the new Frimley Park Hospital and wider Trust transformation programmes.

Well-trained spokespeople can confidently communicate messages, manage interviews, and navigate media platforms effectively. This ensures consistent and accurate information dissemination, which is vital for maintaining public trust and credibility.

- **Effective communication:** trained individuals can convey key messages clearly and concisely, enhancing public understanding.
- **Crisis management:** prepared spokespeople can handle tough questions and stressful situations, maintaining a positive image during crises.
- **Enhanced storytelling:** media training improves storytelling skills, making the hospital's achievements and updates more compelling.
- **Increased confidence:** media-trained personnel are more confident, resulting in better performance during interviews and public engagements.

### Risks of getting it wrong

**Misinformation:** untrained spokespeople may spread inaccurate information, damaging the hospital's reputation.

**Poor crisis management:** inadequate media handling during crises can exacerbate the situation and erode public trust.

**Inconsistent messaging:** lack of media training can lead to inconsistent messages, confusing stakeholders and the public.

This strategy assumes that a group of identified spokespeople, who will speak on behalf of the new Hospital Programme and the Trust as part of the wider transformative work, will undergo robust media training with a specialist provider. This is essential for the success of the new Frimley Park Hospital programme, from initial planning to completion and it is a crucial enabler in managing public relations effectively, building trust, and minimising risks.

The new Frimley Park Hospital communications and engagement team will provide additional coaching and support ahead of any interviews or presentations.

We will adopt and use the Trust's Media approach, which is included as **Appendix XX**.

## Risks

Ensuring effective communication throughout the programme is vital for its success. Key areas to focus on include governance, consultation on service change, stakeholder relationships, and reputational management. We will feed into the new Frimley Park Hospital programme's risk register, however, each area below presents general communications and engagement risks that need to be managed carefully.

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
<b>Governance</b>	Lack of communication at all levels of programme governance can lead to misalignment and inefficiencies.	Ensure communications is integrated into all governance meetings and decision-making processes.
<b>Consultation or robust engagement on service change</b>	Poor consultation or insufficient robust engagement can result in stakeholder resistance and lack of support for service changes. It can also lead to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Judicial review</li> <li>Being referred to the Secretary of State</li> <li>Being called in by Overview and Scrutiny Committees</li> </ul> All of which can result in significant delay and expense	Provide clear direction and understanding of the consultation or engagement process, ensuring transparency and inclusivity. Use an independent body to support the co-design work. Seek legal advice as necessary.
<b>Stakeholder relationships</b>	Inadequate stakeholder engagement can weaken relationships and reduce support for the programme.	Identify and map all stakeholder groups and tailor engagement strategies to meet their specific needs and expectations. Record all correspondence and interactions on our stakeholder relationship management tool to ensure a transparent and accurate audit trail.
<b>Reputational management</b>	Poor communication practices can damage the Trust's reputation, leading to a loss of public trust and confidence.	Adopt good communication practices, (with training) to protect and enhance the Trust's reputation throughout the programme.

By addressing these risks with targeted mitigation strategies, we can ensure that communication remains effective, aligned, and supportive of the new Frimley Park Hospital programme's objectives.

## Out of scope

This strategy does not include the completion of a statutory consultation should the ICB deem this to be necessary. This would be an additional piece of work that would be led by the ICB communications and engagement team, supported by the new Frimley Park Hospital communications and engagement for the delivery thereof. However, an indicative timeline for the preparation, implementation and reporting of a statutory consultation is shown in [Appendix XXX](#).

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## Appendix one - NHS Frimley Engagement and Consultancy Equality Principles

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## Appendix two – NHP patient and public involvement co-design plan

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## Appendix three – Milestone timeline

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## Appendix four – Media approach (working draft)

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## Appendix five – Media Training Proposal

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## Appendix six – Proposed names for media training

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## References

1. Working in partnership with people and communities: [Statutory guidance](#) (updated May 2023)
2. The [NHS Engagement Cycle](#)
- 3.

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