

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SOCIAL SERVICES  
AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

**COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**

**FOR THE**

**REGIONAL REVIEW**

**OF**

**CLINICAL PATHOLOGY / LABORATORY  
SERVICES  
2003/4**

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## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

On 10 April 2003, the Chief Medical Officer, Dr Henrietta Campbell announced the Department's intention to undertake a review of clinical pathology laboratory services. This proposed review aims to provide the Department with a strategic plan for strengthening and developing effective, high quality, clinical pathology laboratory services, responsive to the needs of the patients and users. This will take account of the work in progress both locally and nationally, including North/South dimensions, and will address the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee Report on Laboratory Pathology Services.

The review will also address:-

- The requirements of primary and community care, local hospitals, and acute hospitals in the context of "*Developing Better Services*"
- The need for cost-effective pathology services
- Developments in clinical services and the impact on laboratory pathology services
- New and emerging technologies
- Staffing implications
- Quality issues, including professional qualifications and attaining/retaining accreditation
- The requirements of clinical governance within the HPSS, and
- Capital resource requirements, to include buildings, equipment and IT.
- Teaching and training.
- Research and development
- Management and governance arrangements.

## **2.0 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT**

The purpose of this paper is to establish protocols for managing communications with key stakeholders throughout the course of the regional review of clinical pathology laboratory services in Northern Ireland. It sets out the mechanisms, processes and guidelines to achieve them. It aims to ensure consistency and professionalism of approach and promote productive working relationships and a timely and effective outcome for the review.

## **3.0 STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Two-way communication between the Department of Health, Social Services, and Public Safety (DHSSPS), the Project Board and key stakeholders is crucial to an effective conclusion of the Review

## **4.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES**

The overall aim of the strategy is to initiate, implement, maintain and monitor effective systems of communication within the review process, which will ensure that the information reaches all who are likely to have an interest in it.

Key objectives are:

- To maximise the opportunity for a successful outcome to the review through effective communication systems with appropriate mechanisms to improve everyone's understanding of the review's aims and objectives.
- To consult with key stakeholders and understand their perspective.
- To facilitate the understanding of all laboratory personnel about the review and create interest and opportunity forums where they can exchange and input ideas.
- To build on existing relationships, partnerships, and alliances.
- To establish new relationships with key stakeholders.
- To clarify roles and responsibilities in respect of communication throughout the review.
- To further develop and strengthen the network of laboratory medicine throughout the province.
- To develop a formal consultative process including documentation in accordance with statutory and legislative requirements.

## **5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Responsibility for Communication**

The DHSSPS and the Project Board have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that effective communication systems are established.

### **Project Board Members**

All Members have a responsibility to ensure that:-

The Communication Strategy is implemented in full within his/her area of responsibility / interest using the appropriate means.

There is timely provision of accurate, relevant and understandable information to key stakeholders.

### **Project Team**

Project Team Members will have responsibility for the production of documentation, maintenance of web-page, maintenance and management of communication systems and collation of information received for consideration by the DHSSPS and the Project Board.

### **Stakeholders**

Stakeholders have a responsibility to participate in the communication process and maximise the opportunity which it presents and thus ensure its effective operation. During the course of the review it must never be forgotten that communication is a two way process.

## 6.0 TIMETABLE

The review will take place over the period of one year commencing 1 December 2003. Detailed project plans will be developed as the review progresses. However, it is envisaged that the project will consist of the various key stages:

**Phase 1      Project Initiation** (November / Dec 2003)

**Phase 2      Survey Existing Situation and Identify Issues**  
(January 04 – April 04)

- review current supply
- review current and future demands
- identify wider contextual issues
- prepare Interim Report

**Phase 3      Consultation** (May – July 04)

**Phase 4      Preparation of Draft and Final Reports** (August – Nov 04)

## 7.0 KEY ACTIONS TO IMPLEMENT STRATEGY

The following is a list of key actions that will be undertaken to ensure effective communications throughout the review. It will be reviewed and refined as the project develops.

### 7.1 Publications:

Throughout the course of the review documents will be available to all interested parties. These will be available on the Website. They will include:

Project Initiation Document (PID)  
Minutes of Project Board Meetings  
Notes of Project Team Meetings  
Interim Report – April 2004  
Consultation Document – June 2003  
Equality Impact Assessment – September 2004  
Final Report – November 2004

### 7.2 Meetings:

**Project Board.**– The project board will meet once every two months

**Project Team** - The project team will meet once every two weeks

**Reference Group** - A reference group of key stakeholder organisations will meet quarterly to quality assure the process. Interested organisation can nominate a representative to participate in this group.

**Adhoc meetings** – Adhoc meetings may be arranged at the request of interested stakeholder organisations or may be convened by the project team to address specific issues as they arise.

**Workshops** - There will be general workshops arranged at least twice during the course of the review for the Project Board and Team to participate with key stakeholders in a two-way exchange. The workshops will provide an opportunity to discuss: progress; opportunities; areas of concern; problems; review current issues; and provide suggestions for improvement etc. Information coming from these meetings will provide feedback and influence the outcome of the review.

**Structured Interviews** - It is proposed to undertake a series of in-depth structured interviews with Clinical Directors of Laboratory Medicine and / or the Medical Director of the HPSS Trusts.

**Focus Groups** - It is proposed to hold a number of focus group meetings with a small cross section of staff from each laboratory site. Each site will be asked to put forward a cross section of staff to participate. This should include, as far as possible representation from Medical, Scientific, Technical. Staff side, MLA, Administrative, trainee, support staff, senior Management, users up to a maximum of twelve people. The purpose of these focus groups will be to obtain a local perspective on issues

impacting on the regional review. The format will be available prior to the group meetings.

**7.3 Site Visits** - Members of the Project Team will visit all laboratory sites throughout Stage 1 of the review. The purpose of these visits will be for them to obtain an overall perspective of the local situation.

#### **7.4 E-Communications**

The opportunities presented by electronic communications will be maximised throughout the review. This will include:

##### **Web-Page**

A web-site will be developed on the DHSSPS website. This will be in operation by the end of December and will contain information as it becomes available.

Information which will be posted on the Web-site will include:

- PID – The Project Initiation Document
- Publications – Project Documents
- Who's Who in the project structure
- Contacts
- Progress Reports

##### **Use of e-mail**

All enquiries and suggestions in connection with any aspect of the Review can be made directly to the Project Manager Mrs Louise Skelly at the following e-mail address:

`pathologyreview@dhsspsni.gov.uk`

**KEY STAKEHOLDERS INCLUDE:**

Patients & patients' representatives  
General Public  
Service Users  
Staff  
General Practitioners  
Ministers  
MLA's  
MPs  
Staff Side Organisations  
Voluntary Organisations  
Health Committee  
Councillors  
Civil Servants  
Clinical Pathology Accreditation UK Ltd.  
UK NEQAS  
Laboratory Medicine Directors Forum  
Pathology Business Managers Forum  
Regional Tissue Pathology Network  
Northern Ireland Blood Transfusion Services  
Institute of Health Care Management  
EHSSB Area Medical Advisory Laboratory Medicine Sub-Committee  
Regional Advisory Groups ( Cervical Screening and Breast Screening)  
Northern Ireland Office – State Pathology Services  
Cross Border Bodies  
ROI Healthcare Organisations  
UK Healthcare Organisations  
Chief Executives Forum  
Media  
Local Health and Social Care Groups  
HSS Boards  
HSS Trusts  
HSS Councils  
Government Agencies  
Labsac  
Royal College Of Pathologists  
Professional Organisations  
ACB  
IBMS  
Sacpath  
Universities  
Private Sector  
DHSSPS  
Training Organisations  
HSS Trusts  
Private Sector  
Cancer Services Network