2015-16
Communications Plan

Brockville General Hospital
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About Brockville General Hospital

Brockville General Hospital is a community hospital, serving residents of Leeds Grenville since 1885. Accredited with Exemplary Standing, the highest bestowed by Accreditation Canada we are committed to providing outstanding quality care to our patients, creating healthy people and healthy communities. Our services include acute and complex care, rehabilitation, palliative, mental health services (including South Lanark, since 2012), plus ambulatory and specialty clinics. We are leaders in restorative care/enhanced activation, post-episode cardiovascular rehabilitation, and are pioneers in community-based hospice palliative care. For more information, follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/brockvillegeneralhospital) or twitter (@BrockvilleGener).

Vision
- Outstanding Quality Care – Healthy People – Healthy Communities

Mission
- A progressive community partner delivering an outstanding health care experience, guided by the people we serve, provided by people who care.

Core Values
- Compassionate Care
- Quality and Patient Safety
- Honesty
- Respect
- Accountability
- Teamwork
- Continuous Improvement

Our Reach*
- 850 Employees
- 160 Physicians
- 350 Volunteers

Our Impact*
- $2,400,000 Raised through the Brockville and District Hospital Foundation (Foundation)
- $102,000 Raised through Brockville General Volunteer Association (BGVA)
- 88.2% Patient Satisfaction

*Source 2014 Annual Report

Executive Summary

Brockville General Hospital’s Communications Plan (the “Plan”) is intended to guide the organization in communicating with its patients, people, community and community partners. It is recognized that good communication is everyone’s responsibility. The Plan has been created to ensure that stakeholders in the catchment area of BGH are informed of appropriate activities and actions of the Hospital. The Plan will also serve to improve the hospital’s communications culture and enhance capacity for proactive strategy (Appendix A - Action Plan).
Through the support of the Hospital’s Leadership Team and the Action Plan, BGH will develop and implement ongoing strategic communications initiatives. The Hospital is committed to providing honest, timely and straightforward communications, demonstrating the value of mutual respect and integrity to all stakeholders. The fundamental purpose of this Plan’s efforts is to present a clear and concise framework for communicating.

Mechanisms are in place to ensure the provision of succinct and relevant organizational information to both internal and external audiences.

**Stakeholders**

Our stakeholders for communication and/or engagement are:

- BGH Staff
- BGH Volunteers
- BGH Board of Governors
- Clients and Families
- Donors
- Key Clinical Staff and Referring Professionals
- Health Service Providers
- Health Care Community Partners
- General Public
- Media
- Government – Mayors, MP, MPP
- South East Local Health Integration Network

**Communication Tools**

BGH uses several methods to communicate, including:

- Community Advisory Council and Patient and Family Advisory Council meetings
- Website – [www.bgh-on.ca](http://www.bgh-on.ca)
- Facebook [www.facebook.com/brockvillegeneralhospital](http://www.facebook.com/brockvillegeneralhospital) and twitter @BrockvilleGener / @BGHCEO
- Health Service Provider’s communications
- Media releases
- Public Service Announcements
- Internal communications, including newsletters, staff forums, physician e-newsletter

The Hospital welcomes both general and initiative-specific feedback via:

- Board meeting delegation
• Community Advisory Council and Patient and Family Advisory Council meetings
• Meetings with Health Service Providers and service clubs
• Social media
• Website
• Project specific avenues such as: public meetings, focus groups, surveys, education sessions
• Telephone, mail and email

**Corporate Publications**

**Annual Report**
Following the Annual General Meeting, the Hospital’s annual report is released electronically on our website. It is also distributed in print via the weekly, free publication, St. Lawrence News. Hard copies are made available throughout the Hospital for patient, staff, physician and visitor use. Social media and a News Release further support the annual report promotion.

**General Happenings**
A monthly publication, this newsletter is prepared for Hospital staff as the key audience target. It features coming events, and news of hospital progress, people and programs. The newsletter has recently been redesigned. Stories and features are often used as content for social media use.

Future redesign includes investigating a bi-weekly, condensed version. An increased frequency will support the needs of the changing demands of the various Hospital projects.

**Caring Times**
Created through the Foundation, this quarterly publication features donor stories, and news of hospital progress, people and programs. The newsletter is emailed to donors, posted on Foundation website and mentioned in social media.

**Patient and Family Directory**
The Guide is published annually at no cost to the organization with advertising sponsorships. It is available in print for pick-up in high traffic locations, and electronically on the hospital’s website.

Future redesign includes adjusting the content and layout to better meet the needs of today’s patients and visitors, and utilizing the website for more detailed information.

**Program/Service Brochures and Posters**
These are developed as needed by program leaders using the corporate Branding Guidelines. Brochures are vetted by the Marketing and Communications department;
and available for order. Templates are designed for patient information and presentation materials.

**Media Relations**
We recognize that timely and accurate media attention can support recruitment and retention, employee and community engagement, reward and recognition, and fundraising and funding.

Every effort is made to communicate with media in a pro-active rather than a reactive manner via designated media spokespersons. Media briefings are proactively planned to ensure local media has timely and accurate information available to report to the community. Annually, the Hospital releases approximately 100 media releases.

The Marketing and Communications department is the first point of contact for media, where requests are triaged and background and key messages are drafted for the designated spokespersons. The department helps to establish, monitors and share media coverage with the leadership team, Board and other parties, where appropriate. This spokesperson model has helped to profile and build credibility for Hospital and Board leadership, and sustain consistent messaging. Any persons speaking with the media are offered coaching opportunities.

**Digital Media**

**Corporate Website**
Website traffic runs at a modest average of 10,500 visits per month. BGH’s website underwent a design refresh in the summer of 2012, but with changing communication demands, a refresh has been planned for this year. In an effort to better tailor the site to user needs, and as a cost saving initiative, the site will be brought in-house. Management of the site will be maintained by the Marketing and Communications department with support from the Information Management/Information Technology team. The site will parallel the content of the current site, but be managed in a more transactional, communications-driven manner. These changes are consistent with the evolution of web design with today’s consumer in mind. The site will continue to evolve with new and improved content.

**Intranet/SharePoint – Internal Website**
Predominantly managed via the IMIT department, the internal website is used as a portal for departmental and committee filing. Announcements are regularly communicated via the home page, through the Marketing and Communications department.
Future redesign includes re-skinning site to support digital best practices, create a workflow that is more intuitive to today’s users, and to drive more staff to review communications through this digital stream.

**Social Media**

Rapid information delivery in a 24/7 news cycle has moved us beyond traditional media to a vastly expanding social media reality. 2014 saw BGH’s entrance into social media to expand our reach and support community engagement efforts. Guided by an internal social media policy, the Marketing and Communications department creates and maintains our presence on Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. Pages are regularly updated with timely content and photographs related to hospital activities, services, disruptions (e.g. parking closure), provincially-recognized health topics, and wellness content. Our current Facebook reach strong, at approximately 1500 post clicks per week.

**Video**

Video media will be used to reinforce the efforts of the Hospital, including supporting staff recognition programs and volunteer efforts have been deemed priorities. A plan will be developed to enhance this service in the coming year, as data has proven this medium to be a powerful social media tool.

Future projects include *BGH Two-Minute Tours* to educate patients and visitors on the Hospital and its services and programs.

**Workplace Happiness Action Team (WHAT) Committee**

As an active lead in the WHAT team, the Marketing and Communications department supports all events through marketing and promotion initiatives. The mission of the team is to represent staff by supporting and maintaining an engaged healthy, happy workforce.

**Objectives**

As part of our 2014-17 Strategic Plan, BGH has identified four corporate goals:

1. Excellence in the whole hospital experience
2. High performance in everything we do
3. Champion of health system evolution
4. Mastery of information

To support the Hospital’s corporate goals, this Plan aims to ensure that staff, physicians and volunteers are well informed about the organizations strengths, opportunities for improvement and strategic directions to allow them to speak knowledgably and to confidently advocate and proudly with patients, families and the community at large.
A. Support the Corporate Strategy

Supporting and promotion the Hospital’s strategy is a key responsibility of the Marketing and Communications department. To support the 2014/17 Strategy, several initiatives are to be employed:

- A third party, public relations firm was engaged to provide assessment and recommendations on a strategic communications plan. This report addresses the current hospital and community culture and counteractions (Appendix A: Brockville General Hospital Communications Plan: Action Plan).
- Ongoing efforts to refresh both promotion and updates of the strategy. This is to occur at all levels of the organization, to ensure continual education, provide updates and reinforcement of the four-year initiative.
- Actions lead by the Marketing and Communications department to support strategy include:
  - Website enhancement
    i. Corporate website – to meet the needs of today’s consumers the site will be migrated to in-house management, with improved content flow and usability.
    ii. Internal/SharePoint website – future redesign to ensure the site meets today’s user. Enhancements will make the site more intuitive and user-friendly.
  - Fundraising events (WHAT committee) – activities designed to build staff, physician and volunteer engagement.
  - Wellness plan (WHAT committee) – activities to provide health and wellness learning and activities for staff, physicians and volunteers.
- Actions supported by the Marketing and Communications department include:
  - Patient and Family Advisory Council
  - Signage strategy
  - Identification badges
  - Health Care Tomorrow - Hospital Services (as a regional initiative, provide support as the BGH communications lead)
  - Accreditation

B. Promote the Strategic Goal: Mastery of Information

The Marketing and Communications department is committed to providing honest, timely and straightforward communications, demonstrating the value of mutual respect and integrity to all stakeholders. This is closely tied to the efforts within the goal of Mastery of Information, including the two subset goals of:

a. Enhanced analytics, decision support, report writing and adoption, and
b. Transparency and accountability through timely information to our people, our community, our patients and their families.

Several initiatives have been identified to support these goals, including a social media strategy, refreshed internal communications plan, a media relations strategy, enhanced spokesperson relations, and the implementation of a reputation management/stakeholder relations strategy (Appendix B – Marketing and Communications Department: Action Plan 2015/16)

C. Protect the Hospital Brand

The Hospital is complex and is constantly growing and evolving. Communicating with a unified appearance for all formats will help our patients, staff, physicians and community better understand who we are, the services we offer and the values we share (Appendix C – Brand Standards).

Corporate standards have been designed and implemented into the organization. Ongoing implementation and sustaining of the brand will take place to ensure a professional image.

D. Support Corporate Health Promotions

While there are a number of celebratory events in each calendar year to mark health-related weeks, accomplishments and recognitions, the Marketing and Communications department predominantly supports those at the ‘corporate’ level. In 2015/16 these are planned to include:

- International Volunteer Week – April
- Ontario Doctor’s Day – May
- Patient Safety Week – October

Nearly 20 other departmental events are planned to be recognized by various Hospital departments with the support of the Marketing and Communications office (Appendix D – Health Promotions Calendar).

E. Other Activities and Initiatives

Other initiatives include supporting the needs of all Hospital departments, including:
- **Brockville and District Hospital Foundation** – to uphold and promote the strategic plan of the Foundation and to best serve their donors
- **Brockville General Volunteer Association** – to uphold and promote the mission, vision and values of the Association and to best serve their volunteers
- **Hospital departments** – to support departments with their communications needs, to best serve the staff of these areas and to promote an outstanding patient experience, as it relates to the overarching Hospital strategy.
Evaluation

For *internal* audiences, feedback to leaders, questions in forums and meetings, attendance at meetings and special events, responses to the engagement surveys and intranet traffic help provide an indication of the effectiveness and receptiveness of corporate messaging.

Measure of *external* communication effectiveness can be gauged by media coverage (positive, negative, neutral), participation in Hospital events, letters to the editor, survey responses, social media followers, complaints related to communications, website traffic, donation influence and volunteer recruitment. Informal feedback in meetings with elected and other officials on their perception of the hospital and its programs also provides a glimpse into the usefulness of outreach efforts.

Contact Information

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Appendix

A. **Brockville General Hospital Communications Plan: Action Plan**
   Prepared by Blueprint Public Relations, June 2015

B. **Marketing and Communications Department: Action Plan 2015/16**
   Revised September 2015

C. **Brand Guidelines**
   Published April 2015

D. **Health Promotions Calendar**
   Revised September 2015

E. **Marketing and Communications Policies**
   * To be revised by the end of 2015