



Sussex Community
NHS Foundation Trust

Communications and Engagement Plan 2022

SCFT's approach to communicating and engaging with its staff, patients, communities and stakeholders



*Excellent care at the
heart of the community*

Reader Box	
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Notes	

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Our commitment to communications and engagement

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust (SCFT) is committed to delivering excellent care at the heart of the communities we serve.

Our organisation provides more than 80 different NHS community healthcare services across Sussex.

We are a team of over 5,500 dedicated and compassionate staff and more than 500 volunteers. Together, we touch the lives of 9,000 adults and children every single day. We couldn't be prouder of the work that we do and the difference we make.

Community services hold a unique position in the NHS, working more closely with our GP partners, acute hospital colleagues, social care, care home colleagues and mental health services than any other part of our National Health Service. As such, we provide care and support for members of the community through every stage of their lives, from health visiting for newborn babies through to community nursing and palliative care for people at the end of their lives.

In everything we do we are driven by some core ambitions: to improve the health of the communities we serve; to ensure that our services are shaped and improved by the experiences of our patients; to make sure that we constantly learn; and to ensure that we always prioritise the health, wellbeing and support of our staff, so that they have all they need to deliver the highest standards of care to others.

To support these ambitions we have developed this communications and engagement plan, which sets out principles by which we will develop and improve the Trust's future internal and external engagement and communications.

Looking to the future

Responding to COVID-19 tested the NHS in ways we could never have imagined.

Our teams rose to unimaginable challenges, showing incredible resilience, bravery and compassion.

The way we delivered healthcare might have changed but our commitment to being there for anyone who needed our services never wavered.

At the height of the pandemic we were delivering thousands of virtual consultations with patients a week. Our community nurses never stopped visiting patients in their own homes. And we were supporting people in our hospitals who couldn't have face-to-face visits by enabling virtual ones instead.

Staff across all of our services adapted with great speed and compassion to ensure that we could keep going.

As a Trust we also stepped up to play a pivotal role in delivering the COVID-19 vaccination programme. We mobilised five large-scale vaccination centres across Sussex, recruited more than 1,500 additional people and 500 extra volunteers to run them, and established roving immunisation teams to support the vaccination of thousands of care home residents, as well as residents whose ill health meant they were unable to leave their own homes.

During the autumn and winter of 2021, our school immunisation service delivered the COVID-19 vaccination to tens of thousands of 12 to 15 year olds.

Our challenge is to hold on to the engagement and communications improvements that we introduced at pace by necessity as a result of the pandemic and build on them. We balance this with the recognition that while some might have felt more connected to the NHS or this Trust through digital innovation, there will be people for whom the pandemic heightened their isolation.

That's why this communication and engagement plan is underpinned by the following pledges:

- We will make sure we can be contacted easily, and we will ensure all of the information that we publish is accessible for all of our patients and staff - and jargon-free;
- We will be transparent, welcoming feedback from our staff, patients and wider stakeholders;
- We will use feedback to improve the care we provide and the working experiences of our people;
- We will continue to build positive relationships with our corporate stakeholders and community partners for the benefit of the Sussex communities we all serve.

This plan should not be read in isolation. It supports the Trust's existing Patient Experience Strategy, Workforce Strategy, Membership Strategy, Volunteer and Membership Engagement Strategy, and Three-Year Vision. It will be refreshed when the Trust updates its strategic goals in 2022.

Siobhan Melia
Chief Executive

Who we are and what we do

Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust is the largest provider of community services in Sussex. Our teams help people plan for and manage changes in their health, supporting patients and their families to live more independently.

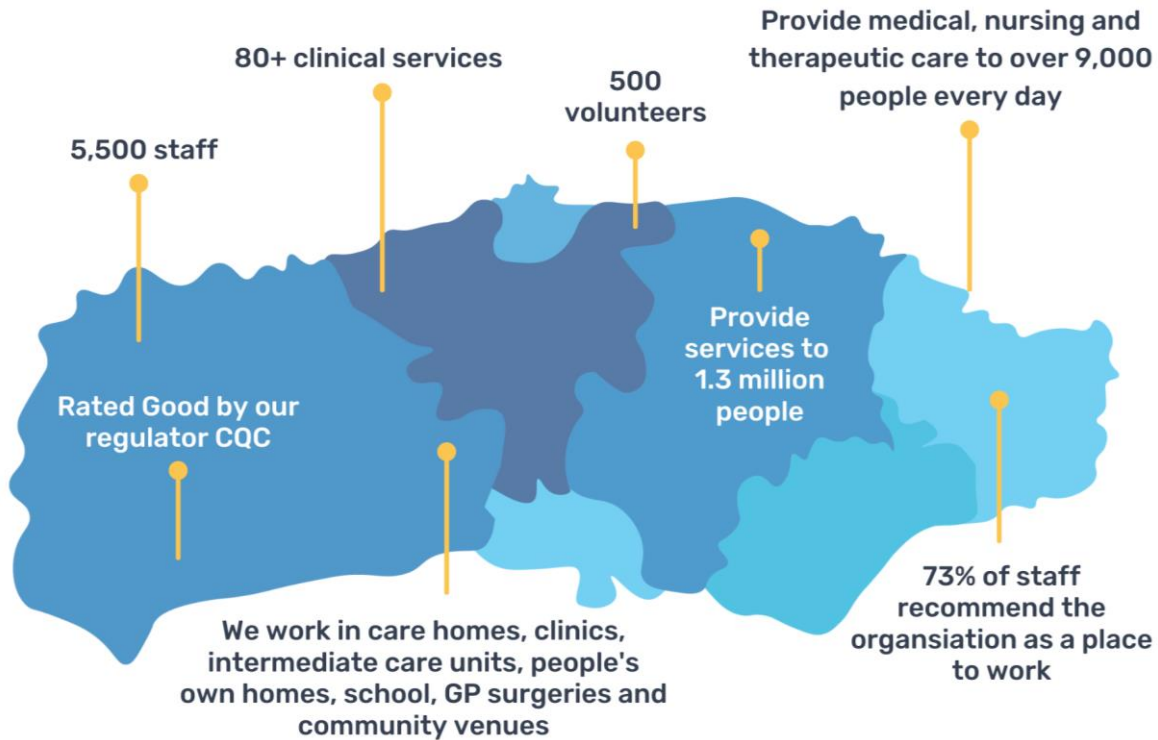
We provide medical, nursing and therapeutic care to adults, children and families both in the community and in dedicated clinical areas.

Our staff work in multi-disciplinary teams which combine a range of specialisms and backgrounds, and they link closely with our health and social care partners to offer joined up care to our patients.

Services we provide include community inpatient services, community health services for adults, community health services for children, young people and their families, end of life care, community dental health services, sexual health services, psychological talking therapies, urgent treatment centres and minor injury units.

We are proud to be rated 'Good' by our regulator, the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

SCFT at a glance:



Our vision

Excellent care at the heart of the community

Our values

**Achieving Ambitions
Compassionate Care
Delivering Excellence
Working Together**

Where we are now

We are committed to taking every opportunity to hear from our staff, patients, carers, relatives and wider community and encourage their active participation in designing and shaping the way that we deliver services.

This includes involving patients in decisions about their own care, seeking feedback about their experiences, and engaging with stakeholders in planning future services.

We are working to develop more inclusive and accessible means by which people can give us their feedback so that we can hear from even more of our patients and carers.

We have good relationships with our Integrated Care System partners, as well as our corporate and community partners, enhanced by the way we have worked to deliver our part of the COVID-19 vaccination programme across the county.

We know that by keeping our stakeholders informed, included and involved, our reputation will not only grow but there will be a broader understanding of, and support for, our ambition to deliver excellent care at the heart of the community.

There is always more we can do to improve the way we communicate and listen.

For example, we will pursue opportunities to further build the good relationships the Trust has with local and regional media partners to highlight the work of our staff and the positive difference they make.

Part of our Trust mission is to be the best employer for our people and ensure that our workforce is thriving.

We know that consistent, credible communication and engagement opportunities help our workforce to feel informed and valued.

We regularly monitor the impact of our communications and engagement. Our 2020 Staff Survey showed that 83% per cent of colleagues agreed or strongly agreed that the care of our patients and service users was the organisation's top priority.

Highlights from the 2020 survey results also include:

- 73% of staff recommended SCFT as a place to work, up from 71% in 2019 and 61% in 2014;
- 81% of staff said that if a friend/relative needed treatment they would be happy with the standard of care provided by the organisation, up from 79% in 2019 and 72% in 2016;
- 83% of staff said the care of patients was the organisation's top priority, up from 81% in 2019 and 73% in 2016.

Further detailed staff research carried out in 2020 gave insight into how our staff want to be able to connect to each other, to the organisation and to information that supports them to do their job.

Staff told us, broadly, that they wanted:

- To feel more connected to the organisation and each other through better use of technology, communication channels and networking opportunities focused on their skills and professional disciplines;
- To be able to more easily access patient feedback to improve their services;
- To quickly access information that is up to date.

Our audiences

The Trust needs to maintain positive relationships with all internal and external stakeholders.

We have a range of different audiences to communicate and engage with, all of whom will have different requirements. A full list of all of our stakeholders is available in Appendix 3, but we recognise there will always be key audiences that the communications and engagement team need to work with regularly and who have differing information needs:

<p>Timely communication and reassurance on our performance and plans</p> <p>Patients Trust membership Regulatory bodies – NHSE/I CQC Integrated Care Partnership GPs Trust Boards Governors senior provider clinicians HealthWatch Sussex Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee Health Adult Social Care Committee health and wellbeing boards Specialist media local media county, city and district councils Health Education Kent Surrey Sussex MPs and councillors medical schools at universities Education partners</p>	<p>Regular communication and on-going engagement</p> <p>Staff Patients Media Governors Board Community partners Trust membership Governors Patient groups Interest groups (League of Friends) Trade Unions/Staff Side</p>
<p>Targeted information and engagement on relevant issues</p> <p>Patients and public Trust membership voluntary sector partners Interested parties: Citizens Advice Bureau, community networks, schools, members of the public already involved in the NHS specific charities faith groups and organisations</p>	<p>Timely information as required</p> <p>Suppliers Local businesses Schools</p>

Building trust with our local communities

As well as the priorities identified as part of this plan, a key focus of the Communications and Engagement team is to build trust with our local communities – not only with the people who are supported by our services and their families, but with the wide range of organisations we work with, both now and in the future.

We will be open and accountable in all of our communications, building on our existing reputation as a Trust that is honest and acts with integrity at all times.

Key to this will be our relationship with the media, and this includes social media. Positive relationships with local, regional and specialist media lead to greater coverage of the work of SCFT which, in turn, helps make our patients aware of our services, promotes us as a great place to work, helps boost staff morale and pride when they see, hear and read positive coverage of their place of work, and highlights the crucial role of community NHS services, which can often be overshadowed.

We will forge stronger relationships with local journalists and specialist writers, explaining the model of local care and its importance to the changing healthcare landscape.

We will continue to deliver an on-call service to media outlets, and on social media, for the public and our patients to protect the reputation of SCFT and deliver correct and accurate information at all times. We will regularly review our crisis communications approach, review and train key spokespeople for the Trust and support a media training programme for

colleagues to make sure they are media-trained so they are prepared for any emergency or crisis.

The Communications and Engagement team is also responsible for managing our official Trust social media sites, including our Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube accounts. These accounts have attracted an increasing number of followers over the last couple of years, and engagement with the accounts is high.

Through our social media channels the Trust has the potential to reach thousands of people within minutes. These channels can be developed further as engagement channels for local communities.

As well as corporate channels, many of our staff and services also use social media in a professional capacity. A key role of the Communications and Engagement team is to ensure SCFT employees and volunteers use social media in an appropriate way that does not damage the Trust's reputation; that patient confidentiality is adhered to at all times; and that it is an environment where individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

The team will review and refresh social media guidance, continue to support services and teams, and work to develop the Trust's social media presence.

Communications and Engagement Priorities 2022 – 2023

The communications and engagement team manage business as usual communication and engagement activity for the Trust.

This communications and engagement plan identifies key communication and engagement priorities which will support the Trust to deliver its strategic objectives. This plan will be refreshed and updated when Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust publishes its new strategic goals in 2022.

How these priorities will be achieved is set out in more detail in Appendix 1

Population health - Improving health and care outcomes for our communities

We will:

- Ensure that every contact we have with our patients, their families and carers encourages honest feedback so that we can learn and improve.
- Give people information that is relevant, timely and accessible and that supports them to stay well or recover faster. We will continuously evaluate the impact of our work by creating more opportunities for people to provide feedback. This feedback will be shared across the Trust.
- Work with our patients and our system partners to provide joined-up care for our populations.

Thriving staff – provide rewarding working lives and careers

We will:

- Ensure colleagues are informed, involved and feel valued by introducing more effective internal communications; increase engagement opportunities and chances to collaborate and learn; continuously evaluate impact by seeking regular feedback and further embed examples of 'you said, we did' into daily working lives to demonstrate the power colleagues have to make real, positive change.
- Promote the Trust as an employer of choice by authentically celebrating the stories and achievements of colleagues both internally and externally, and with our communities and health and care partners; champion our commitment to diversity and inclusion; ensure our people have access to the wellbeing support and resources they need.
- Lead positive engagement with all of our partners across Sussex and beyond to promote rewarding NHS careers in community services.

Quality Improvement - Foster a continuous improvement culture

We will:

- Work with our system partners to ensure Quality Improvement (QI) in community services is delivered at a strategic level for the benefit of the populations we serve.
- Inspire our colleagues through effective communications and engagement to embrace Quality Improvement in all SCFT roles, demonstrating the positive impact it can have for all staff and patients. We will share examples of success from others, including outside the NHS.
- Continue to embed a positive Freedom to Speak Up and Listen Up culture across the organisation, sharing learning through services.

Patient Experience - Use patient feedback to improve what we do

We will:

- Ensure the voice of our patients and community partners always shapes and influences the changes we make to our services. We will share outcomes with people who have given us their views so they know the difference they have made.
- Continue to share the positive difference that community services make to patients and communities by sourcing, writing and publishing staff and patient stories across all our communication channels.
- Lead a new programme of engagement activity with our voluntary and community partners to support public health campaigns focused on preventing ill health and improving access to services.

Value and sustainability - Improve efficiency and reduce waste

We will:

- Motivate, encourage and enable all colleagues in every role, as well as our patients, to support SCFT's green healthcare agenda and ambitions to achieve net zero carbon emissions.
- Communicate clearly with staff and patients about the different ways that we deliver care and the varied ways in which people can access our services - including digital and traditional face-to-face - explaining the benefits of each.
- Ensure our staff know how to, and are supported to, reduce waste and improve efficiency in each of their roles and services.

Conclusion:

This plan sets out our key ambitions for improving the way we communicate and engage with our staff, patients, stakeholders and wider communities.

Working with services and partners to deliver these key communication and engagement ambitions will help ensure SCFT is a Trust that is known for:

- Involving the public in decisions about their care and the services we provide;
- Listening to its staff and responding to what it hears to make improvements;
- Being a great place to work where people feel valued and motivated, and have opportunities to develop and progress;
- Being a Trust that works collaboratively with its health and care partners to ensure better outcomes for patients.

Appendix 1

Summary of our communications and engagement implementation plan:

<p>Population Health – improving the health and care outcomes for our communities</p>	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a best practice engagement toolkit and deliver training to teams to enable staff who are changing the way they provide services to seek the views of the people who will be affected early in the process to ensure we hear the voices we have never heard before • Proactively involve our staff, staff networks, non-executive directors (NEDS), governors and members in Trust campaigns, providing relevant information and toolkits so they can support work in their local communities with new briefings. • Maintain and develop a vibrant Trust website (and social media presence) which clearly explains the Trust’s role/services and signposts to health support. • Ensure our communities have the information they need - in all accessible formats - to manage their health to the best of their abilities, while acknowledging that this will be different for each community.
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<p>Thriving staff - Provide rewarding working lives and careers</p>	<p>Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace the Trust’s staff intranet, The Pulse. • Work with SCFT’s Digital Team to maximise the use of communication and engagement channels such as SNAPCOMMS, MS Teams and new digital spaces, to create more opportunities for colleagues to share and collaborate. • Introduce more opportunities for colleagues to feed back to senior leaders within SCFT through a programme of all-staff webinars/networking events. • Build on the success of the Trust’s annual awards, encouraging and fostering a culture of celebration. Encourage more nominations and create a better platform to share and celebrate innovation across the Trust. • Launch ‘Wellbeing Wednesdays’ so there is a greater awareness of the wellbeing and health support on offer to all staff. • Support recruitment activity through vibrant digital campaigns, recruitment events and webinars involving medical schools, universities and schools/colleges.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Trust is regularly submitting entries to relevant awards to recognise best practice and innovation across services
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Quality Improvement – Foster a continuous improvement culture	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a new framework for communicating patient experience through the organisation as a basis for learning. • Refresh the QI identity so that it resonates with all staff, at all levels. • Refine and improve the QI resource hub and toolkit to support quality improvement, including case studies of best practice (inside and outside the NHS), 'how to' guides, and information about where to go for extra support. • Promote the achievements of QI through the organisation .

Patient Experience – Use patient feedback to improve what we do	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Patient Experience Team to deliver the Patient Experience Strategy. Introduce more ways for patients, carers and families to share their experiences through surveys, focus groups and any other methods deemed appropriate by the people who use our services. Create a new framework to share this feedback through the organisation. • Increase the number of patient representatives who we work with to co-design communication and engagement campaigns. • Work with partners to reach into our communities who we seldom hear from using the lessons learned from the pandemic and vaccination programme.

	Actions
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<p>Value and Sustainability – Improve efficiency and reduce waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In partnership with Care without Carbon launch Trust-wide campaign to empower all colleagues to support SCFT’s green healthcare agenda and ambitions to achieve net zero carbon emissions.• Ensure that all corporate printing is only on recycled paper and that we adopt a ‘digital first’ approach to publications (printing where we need to but in reduced numbers to avoid waste).• Communicate clearly with patients about the different ways they can access clinicians and community health care information and services, including through digital technology.
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Appendix 2: Our channels

Summary of our current corporate communication channels

Channel	One way (for information)	Two way (engagement)
<u>STAFF</u>		
The Pulse (intranet)	Yes	No
WELT	Yes	Yes
WALT	Yes	Yes
All staff webinars	Yes	Yes
CEO weekly message	Yes	No
Team Talk and team meetings	Yes	No
Social media	No	Yes
Screensavers/wallpapers/alert messages	Yes	No
Face-to-Face forums/meetings	No	Yes
Board service visits	Yes	Yes
SLEC	No	Yes
Operational committees	Yes	Yes
Specific staff webinars (i.e. wellbeing and inclusion, regular Staff Network meetings/hangouts)	No	Yes
Away days	Yes	Yes
Conferences and events	No	Yes
HR induction	Yes	Yes
Consultations/surveys	No	Yes
Printed materials	Yes	No

Blogs		
Films		
'Thank you' events		
<u>PUBLIC AND PATIENTS</u>		
Website		
Social media		
Information leaflets		
Display boards		
Media		
Focus groups		
Board/Live-streamed Trust meetings		
Public events and meetings/Annual Members Meeting		
Programme of regular patient engagement events		
Focus groups		
Surveys and consultations		
Marketing campaigns		
Patient, carer and public representation on groups and panels		
Films		
Corporate reports		
<u>KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS</u>		

Performance meetings		
Engagement programme, including 1:1 meetings with CEO and Chair		
Webinars		
Email updates		
Website		
Annual Meeting		
Social media		

APPENDIX 3: Our stakeholders

Integrated Care System partners

Local council leaders and chief officers

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee/Health and Adult Social Care Committee

Health and wellbeing boards

Councillors and officers

Local authority planners

MPs and MEPs

Local/national political organisations/pressure groups

National health committees

Public

Public organisations, e.g., residents' associations, voluntary organisations and community groups

Patients/service users/carers' families

Patient groups and networks

Healthwatch

Charities

Local businesses

Interest groups (League of Friends)

Staff trade unions

Potential SCFT staff

Contractor staff

GPs

Media (including local newspapers, radio, TV, digital, professional and trade press, national media)

Board members

Medical schools and universities

Education partners

Royal Colleges

Research partners

Colleges and schools

Council of Governors

Health partners, regulators, CQC, NHSE/I