

NHS England

Job description and person specification

Position			
Job title	Strategic Communications Manager	Directorate/ Region	Strategy
Pay band	AFC Band 8a	Responsible to	Deputy Director of Communications
Salary	AFC (including inner London weighting)	Accountable to	Head of Strategic Communications
Tenure	Permanent	Responsible for	Directly works as part of the Strategic Communications team. Responsible for day to day work of the team
Funding Arrangements	Choose an item.	Base	Central London required
Our Organisation		NHS England Values and Behaviours	
<p>NHS England leads the NHS in England to deliver high quality care for all. We support NHS organisations to deliver better outcomes for our patients and communities, work to get the best possible value for taxpayers, and drive improvement across the NHS.</p> <p>Through our seven regional teams, NHS England supports local integrated</p>		<p>We aim to create a healthy and high performing organisation, underpinned by the NHS Constitution values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working together for patients • Respect and dignity • Commitment to quality of care • Compassion • Improving lives 	

<p>care systems, made up of public services that provide health and care – NHS organisations, primary care professionals, local councils, social care providers and the community, voluntary and social enterprise sector – to improve the health of the population, improve the quality of care, tackle inequalities and deliver care more efficiently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyone counts <p>Our people all have a part to play in helping to shape and develop our culture and in embedding and living these values.</p> <p>Our behaviours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leading by example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We prioritise patients in every decision we take. ▪ We listen and learn. ▪ We are evidence-based. ▪ We are open and transparent. ▪ We are inclusive. • We strive for improvement.
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Service and team	About the role
<p>The Public Accountability, Communications and Engagement function sits within the Strategy directorate. Public Accountability, Communications and Engagement works to deliver NHS England’s obligations under the NHS Constitution that all NHS bodies must “engage in a full and transparent debate with the public, patients and staff”.</p> <p>NHS Communicators put patients at the heart of everything we do and our work is one the ways that patients, stakeholders and service users are involved in the delivery of care. We support NHS England - and the wider NHS – to be accountable in line with the Constitution’s requirements of transparency by performing vital functions such as FOI, parliamentary engagement and patient engagement. We help the NHS provide high quality care that is safe, effective and focused on patient experience through different types of communications and engagement, such as public health, behaviour change campaigns, uptake and adoption of products, services, education and training with and to the service.</p> <p>The Strategic Communications team is a part of Public Accountability,</p>	<p>As a Strategic Communications Manager, the post holder will work as part of a multi-skilled team to ensure a strategic, joined up, and effective approach to communications across the organisation. The successful candidate will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the Deputy Head of Strategic comms with oversight of the NHSE strategic planning function, including coordination of regular meetings to identify risks, opportunities, and interdependencies • Be able to produce high quality and concise communications strategies to support NHS England’s strategic objective and execute their delivery and evaluation • Take ownership of key portfolio areas on behalf of the strategic communications team and play a key role in managing long term grid of activity across national, programme and regional communications • Use insight and data to drive innovation in communications activity ensuring appropriate channels are used to reach and engage with different target audiences

Communications and Engagement. The Strategic Communications team *coordinates and informs NHS England's strategic communications priorities by shaping planned activities across national, regional and programme comms teams and with senior leaders. The team promotes and supports best practice and continuous improvement in using audience insight for measurable and evaluated communications activities that improve outcomes across the organisation. The team manages the communications grid, a weekly briefing pack of key messages and line to take; and a daily update for the executive group keeping them informed on all comms activity that NHSE is undertaking. The team is responsible for the development of a strategic communications function across the NHS, with professional development programmes supporting NHS communicators at all levels across the country.*

- Lead and oversee the effective analysis of evaluation metrics to measure the impact of communication activities and functions
- Drive awareness and alignment across programme communication teams to enable cross-working
- Manage reporting from communications teams to the NHSE Communications SMT
- Understand the political context and media environment in which the organisation operates
- Co-ordinate big set pieces, such as major announcements, that require delivery from all communication disciplines often to tight deadlines, and evaluation of this work
- Work with regional, central and Directorate teams to agree communications plans, establish areas of responsibility, agree reporting and evaluation measures, and identify risks, opportunities, and interdependencies
- Create and commission creative content that supports our communications objectives
- Ensure accurate and open communication and co-ordination with a range of organisations and individuals
- Research and draft briefings and copy for a range of audiences both internal and external to the NHS
- Be a key member of the team working to support effective joined up communication and stakeholder management, both internally and externally
- Work as part of the management team to monitor staff performance and development, set objectives, support professional development, and ensure effective use of talent across the team
- Build relationships with senior leaders and provide communications planning advice, challenge, and support as appropriate, on

	<p>communication activities including providing or commissioning any necessary training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own assigned projects and act as a central contact point for relevant programme or regional leads.
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Key Job specifics and responsibilities	Key accountabilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use insight to inform communications activity. • Continuously evaluate and learn from actions and plans. • Embrace new ideas and innovative ways of communicating and engaging with audiences and stakeholders. • Work with colleagues to ensure all activity is planned and delivered in line with NHSE's policies, priorities and processes. • Work effectively within an environment of intense media and political scrutiny and accountability. • Support, value and respect each other's work, perspectives and needs. • Ability to work flexibly and at pace across priorities. • The postholder is required to be flexible and responsive, this may require occasional out of hours working or participation in a formal on call rota. • Work will be directed by your manager based on the organisation's needs and may be assigned to any business priority/directorate within the NHS England Comms Team • High quality writing and presenting skills • Uphold professional government and industry standards for communications and engagement <p>Improving quality and outcomes</p>	<p><u>Key Functional Responsibilities</u></p> <p>Operational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To oversee team members to deliver requirements listed above and engage and liaise with key stakeholders, in particular; ○ To support the delivery of day to day activities, projects and programmes ○ Motivate and support communications colleagues to understand and use NHS England's overarching narrative to help tell the long-term story of improvement ○ Demonstrate the ability to produce comms for a range of audiences and channels, and understand the importance of evaluating this content ○ Produce high quality written briefs under pressure and often to tight deadlines ○ Analyse policy and statistics and produce accessible and high quality written briefs to summarise key policy areas ○ Be confident in briefing senior leaders • Oversee the daily running of the NHSE Communications Planning Grid • Oversee the production of key products such as briefing packs 	

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Works on own initiative yet recognises when an issue warrants escalation• Build trust and credibility as a communications adviser, providing advice, support, constructive challenge and counsel, and build strong relationships within their assigned area(s) |
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- To provide clear and up-to-date understanding of our audiences' motivations, barriers and behaviours and recommendations on how to reach them.
- Quality assure communications plans using an in depth knowledge of the range of interventions and communication levers at their disposal, ensuring the most effective combinations are chosen.

Enabling patient and public involvement

- To ensure all public and patient communications is of highest professional standard, seeking patient and public views on concepts and material for communications at the appropriate time in the decision-making process to ensure as far as possible that they are shaped around patient need and preferences
- To advocate for patient and public involvement within NHS England at all levels of decision making.

Promoting equality and reducing inequalities

- To uphold organisational policies and principles on the promotion of equality.
- Take account of diversity and inclusion in developing communication plans and materials to ensure that they are accessible, meaningful and understandable to the greatest number of audiences, including the use of plain language, diverse images, and accessible content.
- To create an inclusive working environment where diversity is valued, everyone can contribute, and everyday action ensure we meet our duty to uphold and promote equality.

Partnership and cross boundary working

- Upskill the wider communications team in best practice
- to support the teams organisation's operational objectives

- To take line management responsibility and drive delivery of a range of business initiatives and projects
- To operate in a highly political and sensitive environment
- Support the portfolio of initiatives in demonstrating value for money for the current spend
- To monitor, interpret and quality assure progress against deliverables to NHS England that often require adjustments specifically in relation to the complex corporate business agenda, strategic objectives and the business planning process
- To develop business plans and provide expert strategic and policy advice and guidance on all areas of the National Director's portfolio

Project Management

- Lead the team in the delivery of project plans, allocating tasks as appropriate, identifying risks, issues and dependencies, considering best practice and current options and ultimately making decisions in the best interest of the project.
- Pro-actively manage stakeholders, respond to and resolve conflict when this arises through facilitation or other appropriate mechanisms.
- Be responsible for a high standard of work supporting the delivery of projects on time, to quality standards and in a cost-effective manner.
- Maintain the project initiation document and associated plans with regular team meetings to monitor progress and resources.
- Demonstrate effective stakeholder management.
- Support other project managers as and when required.
- Take into account the impact of any change the projects will have on the business and oversee handover of any products to ensure full ownership and buy-in within the business Advocate the projects at senior and executive levels and ensure active engagement and sponsorship within NHS as a whole.

- To develop systems and processes that help the team to plan, monitor and evaluate NHS England's communications activities

Leadership for transformational change

- To model a collaborative and influencing style of working, negotiating with others to achieve the best outcomes. Embedding this approach across the Directorate.
- Deliver successful strategic communications activity providing clear, consistent and accurate messages to key audiences about the organisation's work, aligned to NHS England business priorities and operational objectives

Using insight and evidence for improvement

- Maintain excellent knowledge and understanding of topical issues, emerging communication channels and technologies
- To use evidence and insight ensure the effectiveness of different channels
- Support teams across NHS England to appropriately target communication activities.
- Use insight and evidence from within NHS England and the wider system to shape and inform communication content and approach.
- Draw on comprehensive insight into the needs and communication preferences of different audiences to ensure that communication outputs are appropriately written and targeted

Developing an excellent organisation

- To ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all staff within the department.
- To ensure compliance with all confidentiality and governance requirements within the department.
- To adhere to the NHS Managers Code of Conduct and any other relevant professional codes of conduct at all times.

- Ensure that the projects maintain business focus, have clear authority and that the context, including risks, is actively managed in alignment with the strategic priorities of NHS.

Financial and Physical Resources

- Act in a way that is compliant with Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions in the discharge of budget management responsibilities, monitor expenditure on a regular basis.
- Budget holder for assigned function/team, budget setting with the Head of Department. Responsible for ongoing monitoring of expenditure against budget and ensuring the appropriate documentation is available for scrutiny.
- Identify products, equipment, services and facilities for assigned activities, achieving stakeholder buy-in as required. Placing orders and signing invoices.
- Responsible for making recommendations, providing advice and able to prepare strategic reports/briefings for the Head of Department, and relevant forums.

People Management

- Directly manages the team of staff, responsible for day to day work assigned to Team.
- Responsible for recruitment and selection.
- Responsible for undertaking appraisal and personal development and managing any employee relations issues.
- Forge close positive working relationships, in order to support an effective matrix approach to achieve NHS objectives.
- To support, motivate and develop people within the team. Managing third parties (such as consultants/interims) to ensure deliverables are met in a timely manner and within budget.

Information Management

- Drafting detailed reports summarising status on issues, appraising outcomes, and providing progress reports for the Head of Department.
- Collate as required, a range of information and lead appropriate analysis to develop robust business cases and contribute to project 'products'.
- Analyse, interpret and present data to highlight issues, risks and support decision making.

Policy and Service Development

- Responsible for proposing and drafting changes, implementation and interpretation to policies, guidelines and service level agreements (SLA's) which may impact service.
- Proposes changes to own function making recommendations for other service delivery.
- The post holder will need to maintain a good knowledge of emerging policies from government departments for example pensions, change management, constitution.

Research and Development

- Plan, develop and evaluate methods and processes for gathering, analysing, interpreting and presenting data and information
- Co-ordinating Research & Development initiatives, delegating as appropriate.

Planning and Organisation

- Contribute to the strategic planning of team projects, identifying interdependencies across projects/functions, potential impacts on the

wider organisation, resource requirements and building in contingency and adjustments as necessary.

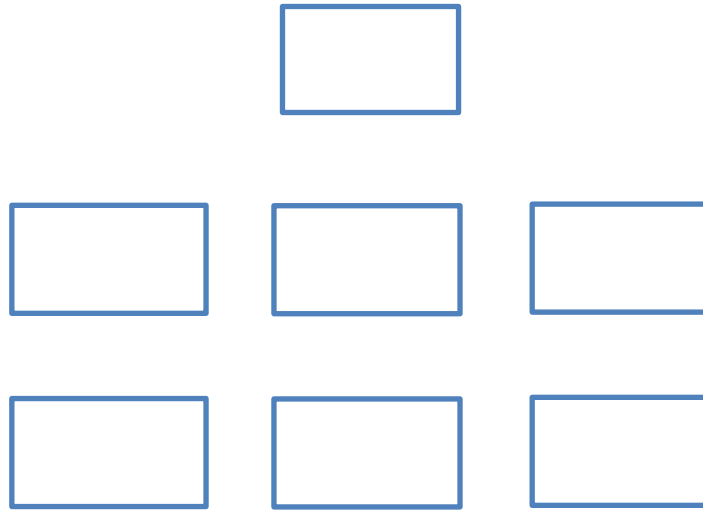
- Contribute to short, medium- and long-term business plans, achieving quality outcomes.

Key Working Relationships

- Operate effectively in a flexible and demanding environment and proactively engage with key stakeholders.
- Work effectively with a variety of external consultancies working on other projects and programmes within other NHS directorates as required.
- Communicates and provides highly complex information to a wide range of internal and external stakeholders. (verbal, written and numerical)
- Work and engage constructively with stakeholders on a range of business sensitive issues.
- Nurture key relationships and maintain networks internally and externally.
- Ensure close liaison with the Communications and Stakeholder team on public relations and marketing activities.
- Apply a structured change management approach and methodology in relation to change management.
- May deputise for senior team members as required.

Organisational structure

Add team structure here



Person specification				
Criteria		Essential	Desirable	Evidence*
Qualifications	Educated to masters level or equivalent level of experience of working at a senior level in specialist area.	√		A/I
Knowledge and experience	<p>Excellent understanding of the background and aims of current organisational priorities and objectives and understand how communications and engagement can deliver this</p> <p>Experience of working in a fast paced environment, delivering against competing priorities and deadlines while also directing the work of teams/individuals.</p> <p>Good understanding of varied communication channels, their impact, limitations, risks and opportunities, and good experience in their use.</p> <p>Extensive knowledge of specialist areas acquired through post graduate diploma or equivalent experience or training plus further specialist knowledge or experience to master's level equivalent.</p> <p>Evidence of post qualifying and continuing professional development.</p> <p>Comprehensive experience of project principles techniques and tools such as Prince 2 and Managing Successful Projects.</p> <p>Have an understanding of the background to and aims of current healthcare policy and appreciate the implications of this on engagement.</p> <p>Have an appreciation of the relationship between the Department of Health and individual provider and commissioning organisations.</p> <p>Experience of managing and motivating a team/virtual team and reviewing performance of the individuals.</p> <p>Experience of identifying and interpreting national policy. Member of relevant professional body.</p>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>	<p>A/I</p> <p>A/I</p> <p>A/I</p> <p>A/I</p> <p></p> <p>/I</p> <p></p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>

Skills, Capabilities & Attributes	Demonstrate excellent levels of written and verbal communication, with the ability explain complicated issues fluently and persuasively.	√		A/I
	Excellent ability to spot the “story” in the detail of policy, whether that be one of opportunity or risk.	√		A/I
	Analyse complex situations and provide advice to senior managers.	√		A/I
	Able to quickly understand complex health, social care, political and business issues and to use that understanding to develop effective approaches, providing advice to staff and colleagues.	√		A/I
	Ability to manage the development and delivery of plans in complex environments and for highly sensitive issues, working with a high degree of uncertainty and ambiguity, with impacts across the health and care system.	√		A/I
	Confidently engage with stakeholders to generate commitment to goals.	√		A/I
	Recognise when business or communications activity is likely to create risk and consult with senior colleagues, contributing to resolving the problem with the ability to anticipate and resolve problems before they arise.	√		
	Demonstrate a good ability to deliver at pace in complex environments.	√		
	Demonstrate a credible ability to build consensus on difficult and very complex and detailed issues.	√		
	Some line management experience and ability	√		
	Work autonomously	√		
	Understanding of accessibility in communications	√		
	Good writing, drafting, note taking and reporting skills	√		
	Good research and data management skills	√		
	Advanced keyboard skills and good knowledge of packages e.g. Microsoft, Outlook, Excel, Sharepoint	√		
	Must be able to provide and receive highly complex, sensitive or contentious information, negotiate with senior stakeholders on difficult and controversial issues, and present complex and sensitive information to large and influential groups.	√		
	Ability to negotiate on difficult and controversial issues including performance and change.	√		
	Ability to analyse complex facts and situations and develop a range of options	√		
	Ability to make decisions autonomously, when required, on difficult and contentious issues where there may be a number of courses of action, working to tight and often changing timescales.	√		

	<p>Demonstrates a strong desire to improve performance and make a difference by focusing on goals.</p> <p>Must be able to prioritise own work effectively and be able to direct activities of others.</p> <p>Must be able to use initiative to decide relevant actions and make recommendations with the aim of improving deliverables and compliance to policies</p>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>		
Values and Behaviours	<p>Commitment to and focused on quality, promotes high standards in all they do.</p> <p>Willingness to learn from others people's experiences, expertise and perspectives.</p> <p>Appreciates the importance of communications and engagement in delivering for patients, improving services and supporting frontline staff.</p> <p>Believes in the importance of helping colleagues.</p> <p>Able to make a connection between their work and the benefit to patients and the public.</p> <p>Ability to operate in a value-driven style consistent with the values of the public services and specifically with the new organisational values</p> <p>Works across boundaries, looks for collective success, listens, involves, respects and learns from the contribution of others</p> <p>Values diversity and difference; operates with integrity and openness</p> <p>Works well with others, is positive and helpful, listens, involves, respects and learns from the contribution of others.</p> <p>Consistently looks to improve what they do, look for successful tried and tested ways of working, and also seeks out innovation.</p> <p>Actively develops themselves and supports others to do the same.</p> <p>Needs to have a thorough understanding of and commitment to equality of opportunity and good working relationships both in terms of day-to-day working practices, but also in relation to management systems.</p>	<p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p> <p>√</p>		A/I
Other	Able to travel across various sites where applicable	√		A/I

* Evidence will take place with reference to the following information:

A	Application form
I	Interview
T	Test or Assessment
C	Certificate

KEY TO JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPECIFICATION COLOUR CODING		
Light Blue	JOB SPECIFIC INFORMATION:	Text can be amended or additional information inserted
Dark Blue	ORGANISATION SPECIFIC INFORMATION:	Text should not be amended
Black	NATIONAL GENERIC INFORMATION:	Text denotes banding levels hence should not be amended

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