



# **CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT**

**Corporate Communications Framework  
and Action Plan 2008**

**Review date 2010**

## **CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND ACTION PLAN 2008 TO 2010**

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## 1. BACKGROUND

This is the second Corporate Communications Framework and Action Plan which builds on the communications foundations laid by the Framework and Action Plan approved in January 2006 and the improvements and successes delivered by that document.

Over the past two years:

- Vital Signs is now the established main corporate channel for staff to share important Information – *NHS Tayside Home | News | Newsletters | Vital Signs*.
- The Communications Forum, a network of representatives from the divisions, Community Health Partnerships (CHPs) and departments across NHS Tayside to join up communication now meets on a quarterly basis to consider innovative two-way communications methods, share good practice and identify areas for improvement – *NHS Tayside Directorates & Departments | Communications Team | Communications Forum*.
- Fifty divisions, CHPs and departments have developed and submitted internal communication plans to allow staff involvement and participation in the decision-making process – *NHS Tayside Directorates & Departments | Communications Team | Departmental Communications Strategy*.
- Seven good practice guidelines have been developed to ensure consistency of approach in communications across the whole of NHS Tayside – *NHS Tayside Home | Corporate Information | Writing & Communication of Documents | Good Practice Guidelines*.
- NHS Tayside Document Style Manual and Templates, including a comprehensive plain English Guide, have been published, and is available to all staff on the NHS Tayside intranet – *NHS Tayside Home | Corporate Information | Writing & Communication of Documents | House Styles*.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The power of good communications should never be underestimated. Effective, two-way communications must be central to everything we are trying to achieve in NHS Tayside.

By informing staff, patients and the public of what is happening in NHS Tayside and empowering them to become involved in decisions that affect them, we can foster a shared vision and move forward together as one organisation.

Through effective communications we can create a culture which embraces change and allows us to deliver NHS Tayside's strategic objectives.

This framework sets out how Corporate Communications will help deliver both internal and external communications across NHS Tayside.

- **Internal communications** are communications between NHS Tayside and its staff, contractors and volunteers.

- **External communications** are communications between NHS Tayside and its external audiences including: patients; citizens of Tayside and North East Fife; local and national elected representatives; all other NHS bodies and the Scottish Executive; emergency services; Angus Council; Dundee City Council; Perth & Kinross Council; voluntary sector organisations; higher education organisations in Tayside (University of Dundee, University of Abertay in Dundee; University of St Andrews; Dundee College, Angus College; Perth College amongst others); other organisations related to health and social care both in Tayside and nationally.

To help us deliver our aspirations, six Corporate Communications objectives have been developed and are underpinned by action plans. The action plans demonstrate that the objectives are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound.

A document 'Working with the Media' has also been developed and is appended to this Framework. This sets out how the Corporate Communications Department will work with the media.

### **3. WHY WE NEED A CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

The Staff Governance Standard requires NHS systems ensure staff are well informed, regularly receive enough information about their organisation and have the opportunity to give and receive feedback on organisational issues at all levels.

NHS Tayside needs a strategic approach to communications to underpin this and the Corporate Communications Framework clearly sets out the communications responsibilities of managers, staff and the Corporate Communications Department.

### **4. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COMMUNICATIONS?**

Everybody in NHS Tayside must take responsibility for effective communications to ensure all staff are well informed. The Corporate Communications Department is responsible for ensuring there is a strategic and consistent approach by taking the lead on the development of a Corporate Communications Framework.

#### **Corporate Communications Department**

The Corporate Communications Department provides an internal and external communications service, including public relations and news management 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week. The department provides a single point of contact for all press releases and media enquiries.

The department is a recognised source of expertise and advice and an authoritative point of reference for all communication issues and crisis management will champion effective communications throughout the organisation. The department supports the work of NHS Tayside and works together with managers, staff, the public, our partners and the media.

Our partners include:

- All other NHS bodies and the Scottish Government
- Emergency Services
- Angus Council, Dundee City Council and Perth & Kinross Council
- Voluntary sector organisations
- Higher Education organisations in Tayside (includes University of Dundee, University of Abertay Dundee, University of St Andrews, Dundee College, Angus College, Perth College)

- Other organisations and public groups related to health and social care, both in Tayside and nationally

The media includes:

- Local, national and international press, including professional journals and publications
- Local, national and international broadcast media both television and radio
- Local, national and international press agencies
- Internet

The department also provides advice on how to develop communications plans and processes, ensuring a consistent approach for communications across NHS Tayside.

For extraordinary events, such as a major emergency incident or VIP visits, the department will give advice, assist with arrangements, liaise with other agencies and coordinate the media.

The department must be flexible and responsive.

## **Managers**

Managers are responsible for ensuring a process for effective communications with their staff. Managers must develop and maintain local communications plans, which will ensure staff are 'well informed', and make sure there are opportunities for staff to raise issues and provide feedback.

Managers should proactively highlight new developments, good news stories or interesting patient stories to the Corporate Communications Department. Managers should also be aware of local communication channels e.g. CHP newsletters, departmental correspondence. For proactive news/information to be distributed to the press, see Appendix 2 – Working with the media - Proactive use of media.

## **Staff**

Staff should be encouraged, and feel able, to engage in two-way communications with managers and colleagues. Staff should also proactively highlight new developments, good news stories or interesting patient stories to the Corporate Communications Department. For proactive news/information to be distributed to the press see Appendix 2 – Working with the Media - Proactive use of Media.

## **5. CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS AIMS**

- To develop and support a culture of open and effective, two-way communications with staff, patients, public and all partners.
- To build on existing good relationships with the media, projecting a positive image, enhancing and protecting the reputation of the organisation and supporting the media's growing interest in health issues.

## **6. CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS PRINCIPLES**

Communications in NHS Tayside will:

- Be open, honest and transparent
- Be purposeful, timely and deliver relevant information to appropriate audiences

- Adhere to policies of information, security and confidentiality
- Use the most appropriate channel of communication
- Use plain English
- Be inclusive and accessible, recognising the diversity of our audiences
- Promote healthy lifestyles and health improvement, where appropriate
- Use corporate identity
- Promote NHS Tayside to the public
- Mainly be attributed, in the press, to an individual. A spokesperson will only be used when a corporate statement is judged to be the most appropriate response.

## **7. CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS OBJECTIVES**

- To use the best channels of communication, to ensure the right people get the right message at the right time in the appropriate format and develop and improve existing systems and processes which enable staff to be well informed and involved in decision-making.
- To use the corporate image for communications and develop consistent messages to make sure staff feel part of one organisation, which is moving forward.
- To raise awareness and understanding of healthy lifestyles and inequalities, which highlights NHS Tayside as a health-promoting organisation.
- To make the best use of technology, which will improve the targeting and timing of communications.
- To increase public understanding and awareness of issues, including enhancing and protecting the reputation of NHS Tayside.
- To develop networks internally and externally, which will share good practice, promote effective communications at all levels and build good working relationships.

## **8. CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS ACTION PLAN**

A programme of action is required to meet the six corporate communication objectives. This is detailed in the following Action Plan.

# Corporate Communications Action Plan

## Objective:

1. To use the best channels of communication, to ensure the right people get the right message at the right time in the appropriate format and develop and improve existing systems and processes which enable staff to be well informed and involved in decision-making.

Channel and Action	Outcome/Evidence	Audience	Timescale/ Review date	Owner	Resource
<b>Vital Signs</b>  Main corporate channel for staff to share important information - produced and distributed when information is required to be communicated. Flexible to allow issue-specific editions to be produced.  Moves are under way to introduce an electronic version of Vital Signs.	Staff provided with a guaranteed, single source of timely and accurate information to ensure they are well informed.	All staff	Annual Review	Corporate Communications Department	Corporate Communications Budget
<b>spectra</b>  Staff magazine with contributions from staff encouraged, articles written by Corporate Communications Department and distributed bi-monthly to staff and externally.	Staff contribute to their magazine by sharing information/news.  Magazine communicates what's happening in NHS Tayside, celebrates successes, achievements and good practice.	Staff Patients Public Partners Media	Bi-monthly/ Reviewed every 12 issues	Corporate Communications Department	Corporate Communications Budget and Endowment Budget
<b>Communications Forum</b>  A network of representatives from the divisions, CHPs and departments across NHS Tayside is now established to join up communications. Its aim is to open up a dialogue which will share good practice and will disseminate corporate information.	Network considers new and innovative two-way communications methods, shares good practice and identifies areas for improvement.	Staff	Quarterly meetings	Corporate Communications Department	Corporate Communications Budget

Channel and Action	Outcome/Evidence	Audience	Timescale/ Review date	Owner	Resource
<b>Departmental communications systems and processes</b>  CHPs, Divisions and Departments to develop, maintain and regularly review internal communications plans.	Communications systems and processes in place to allow staff involvement and participation in decision-making process.  Staff will be well informed and have improved knowledge, understanding and access to information.	Staff	May 2008/ Reviewed every two years	General Managers/ Directors/All Managers	Departmental Budgets
<b>Strategy/Service Change/Project Communication Plans</b>  At the start of all projects a communications plan will be developed to address the internal and external communications issues.	Clear messages to be communicated and standards for communications established.  Good communications for everyone involved in the project, including the media.	Staff Patients Public Partners Media	As required, but at start of project and reviewed at appropriate milestones	Project Director/Manager with assistance from Corporate Communications Department	Project Budget
<b>Communication skills</b>  Good practice guidelines will continue to be developed to ensure consistency of approach.	Staff are confident in their approach to communications.	Staff	May 2008/ Reviewed every two years	Corporate Communications Department	Corporate Communications Budget

**Objective:**

2. To use the corporate image for communications and develop consistent messages to make sure staff feel part of one organisation, which is moving forward together.

Channel and Action	Outcome/Evidence	Audience	Timescale/ Review date	Owner	Resource
<p><b>Document Style Manual and Templates, including plain English guide</b></p> <p>Review Document Style Manual and Templates.</p> <p>Ensure Document Style Manual and Templates are available on Intranet.</p>	<p>Document Style Manual is available to all staff.</p> <p>Consistent advice available which will ensure efficient and effective use of resources.</p> <p>Standard templates are available for all written communication.</p>	Staff	Annual Review	Board Secretary	Corporate Communications Budget
<p><b>NHSScotland Corporate Identity Guidelines</b></p> <p>Remind staff on a regular basis of this guidance.</p> <p>Ensure guidance is available on Intranet.</p>	<p>NHSScotland Corporate Identity Guidelines available to all staff.</p> <p>Consistent advice available which will ensure efficient and effective use of resources.</p>	Staff	Annual reminder	Board Secretary	Corporate Communications Budget
<p><b>Corporate Publications</b></p> <p>The Corporate Communications Department will provide advice and assistance in producing corporate publications, including strategy/consultation documents, reports, leaflets and bulletins.</p>	<p>All NHS Tayside publications will be professional, jargon-free, in plain English and will ensure best value is achieved.</p>	Staff Public Patients Partners Media	As required	Directors/General Managers/ All Managers with assistance from the Corporate Communications Department	Departmental Budgets

**Objective:**

**3. To raise awareness and understanding of healthy lifestyles and inequalities, which highlights NHS Tayside as a health-promoting organisation.**

Channel and Action	Outcome/Evidence	Audience	Timescale/ Review date	Owner	Resource
<p><b>Press releases, press interviews, features, broadcast interviews and media briefings.</b></p> <p>Used to respond to issues/questions and to highlight/promote NHS Tayside messages about Healthy Lifestyles and inequalities which highlight NHS Tayside as a health promoting organisation.</p> <p><b>Key health promotion messages will be drafted to ensure the healthy living agenda is maximised and used as appropriate.</b></p>	<p>More health promotion and health inequality messages in the media.</p> <p>Public Health messages, both proactive and reactive will be timely.</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Patients</p> <p>Public Partners</p> <p>Media</p>	On-going	Corporate Communications Department	Corporate Communications Budget
<p><b>Face-to-face meetings</b></p> <p>Corporate Communications Department will continue to develop close working relations and networks with colleagues in the Public Health Directorate, the Specialist Health Promotion Department, Public Health Practitioners and others.</p>	<p>All opportunities to share healthy living messages and advice will be maximised.</p>	Staff	On-going	Corporate Communications Department	Corporate Communications Department
<p><b>spectra features</b></p> <p>Corporate Communications Department will continue to work with NHS Tayside's Healthy Working Lives team and specialist health promotion staff to publish healthy lifestyle features and raise awareness and promote activities for staff provided by Healthy Working Lives.</p>	<p>NHS Tayside staff better informed about health and lifestyle issues and healthy activities provided by Healthy Working Lives.</p>	Staff	Ongoing/ Review every two years	Corporate Communications Department	Corporate Communications Department

Channel and Action	Outcome/Evidence	Audience	Timescale/ Review date	Owner	Resource
<b>Intranet</b>  Healthy Working Lives will have a website in a prominent position on Staffnet the new Intranet site.	NHS Tayside staff better informed about health and lifestyle issues and healthy activities provided by Healthy Working Lives.	Staff	July 2008  Will be reviewed during 2008/2009	Healthy Working Lives	Healthy Working Lives

**Objective:**

**4. To make the best use of technology, which will improve the targeting and timing of communications.**

<b>Channel and Action</b>	<b>Outcome/Evidence</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Timescale/ Review date</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resource</b>
<b>Intranet - Staffnet</b>  A New Intranet "Staffnet" is being developed which will be used as a main internal channel for communications.	Intranet in place which internally provides a single, accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date source of information and is managed and monitored for content and usage.	Staff	July 2008  For go live	Board Secretary	Corporate Services/ Communications and ICT Department Resource
<b>Internet</b>  Continue to use the internet as the main source of up-to-date corporate information.	Internet in place which externally provides a single, accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date source of information and is managed and monitored for content and usage	Staff Public Partners Media	2009/2010	Board Secretary	Corporate Services/ Communications and ICT Department Resource
<b>Staff emails</b>  Corporate Communications Department will target emails to appropriate staff groups depending on issue to be communicated.	Staff will receive information/communications which they need to know about and which affects them.	Staff	As required	Corporate Communications Department/ Board Secretary	Corporate Communications Resource
<b>Global all-staff emails</b>  Will only be used when the message to be communicated must be received by all staff quickly due to the nature of the message or for governance reasons.	Staff receive the information in the timescale required. There is an audit trail.	Staff	As required	Corporate Communications Department/ Board Secretary	Corporate Communications Resource

Channel and Action	Outcome/Evidence	Audience	Timescale/ Review date	Owner	Resource
<b>Noticeboard on Staffnet</b>  New electronic noticeboard will be available on Staffnet the new Intranet site along with featured current issue published by communications.	Staff will be able to submit posts through online form.	Staff	July 2008  Will be reviewed during 2008/2009	Corporate Communications	Corporate Communications

**Objective:**

**5. To increase public understanding and awareness of NHS Tayside issues, including enhancing and protecting the reputation of NHS Tayside.**

Channel and Action	Outcome/Evidence	Audience	Timescale/ Review date	Owner	Resource
<p><b>Press releases, press interviews, features, broadcast interviews and media briefings.</b></p> <p>Used to respond to issues/questions and to highlight/promote NHS Tayside developments and achievements such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clinical Developments and Treatments</li> <li>• Patient-focused good news stories</li> <li>• Local and national health campaigns</li> <li>• Research and Innovation</li> <li>• Awards and grants</li> <li>• New appointments</li> <li>• Partnership initiatives</li> <li>• Retirals</li> <li>• Specific events</li> <li>• Appeals for volunteers</li> <li>• Success stories</li> </ul>	<p>Published evidence of services provided and achievements.</p> <p>Explain reasons for decisions to promote a culture of understanding.</p> <p>Decision-makers accessible and accountable for actions and willing to take responsibility for decisions and explain how decisions were made.</p> <p>Responsible, open, honest and timely coverage.</p> <p>Communications are consistent, proactive, timely and planned.</p>	<p>Staff</p> <p>Patients</p> <p>Public</p> <p>Partners</p> <p>Media</p>	<p>As required, but timely</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Department</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Budget</p>

Channel and Action	Outcome/Evidence	Audience	Timescale/ Review date	Owner	Resource
<b>News Management</b>  Provide advice on media issues and potential risks to staff. Proactively work with media in an open and transparent manner.  Advise, prepare statements and brief staff who will be responding to the media.	Appropriate responses given.  Confidence maintained in NHS Tayside's services.  Honest responses to the media, even when that involves acknowledgement when things have gone wrong.	Staff Public Partners Media	As required but timely	Corporate Communications Department	Corporate Communications Budget
<b>Media Training</b>  Provide training, if required, for individuals will be responding to the media.	Staff feel confident working with the media.	Staff	On-going	Corporate Communications Department	Corporate Communications Budget
<b>Different languages and formats</b>  All corporate publications will contain information advising how different formats can be obtained.	Corporate information accessible to all citizens.	Patients Public Partners Media	As required	Responsible Department	Responsible Department

Objective:

**6. To develop networks internally and externally which will share good practice, promote effective communications at all levels and build good working relationships.**

<b>Channel and Action</b>	<b>Outcome/Evidence</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Timescale/ Review date</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Resource</b>
<p><b>Communications Forum</b></p> <p>Corporate Communications Department has established a Communications Forum in NHS Tayside with representatives from the divisions, CHPs and departments. Its aim is to open up a dialogue which will share information, good practice and disseminate corporate information.</p>	<p>Corporate information and communications disseminated throughout the organisation. Staff get the right message at the right time in the right format and are 'well informed'.</p>	<p>Staff</p>	<p>Quarterly meetings</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Department</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Budget</p>
<p><b>Partners</b></p> <p>Establish networks with communication staff working within community planning to facilitate joined-up communications and promotion of joint initiatives to staff and all other audiences.</p>	<p>Promote and improve understanding of joint initiatives.</p>	<p>Partners</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Department</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Budget</p>
<p><b>NHSScotland Communications</b></p> <p>Board Secretary and Head of Corporate Communications attend meetings to gain an understanding of national issues.</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Department aware of key messages and communications from NHSScotland.</p>	<p>Staff Partners</p>	<p>Bi-monthly meetings, daily contact via website, email and phone</p>	<p>Board Secretary/ Head of Corporate Communications</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Budget</p>
<p><b>The Media</b></p> <p>Corporate Communications Department will establish further networks of media contacts and will continue to build on good relations with the media.</p>	<p>Understanding of issues facing NHS Tayside demonstrated and an accurate and balanced account of issues/events portrayed in the media.</p>	<p>Media</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Board Secretary/ Head of Corporate Communications</p>	<p>Corporate Communications Budget</p>

Channel and Action	Outcome/Evidence	Audience	Timescale/ Review date	Owner	Resource
<b>Localised events and networks</b>  More local and specialised staff network groups will encourage dialogue, share information, good practice and disseminate corporate information.	Groups of staff are better informed about what their departments colleagues are doing across the whole of Tayside.	Staff	Meetings as required	Individual staff groupings	Individual department budgets

## **9. MONITORING**

Monitoring will be on-going and carried out in the following ways:

### **Internal**

- The Communications Forum - The Forum will provide feedback on the effectiveness of corporate communications channels and share good practice regarding what works well in departments. The exchange of ideas and views in this group will help generate new ideas and improve existing channels/methods of communication
- Feedback mechanisms - All internal corporate publications, for example spectra and Vital Signs, have a feedback mechanism.

### **External**

- Daily monitoring of press coverage and a daily email report of all stories concerning NHS Tayside is produced, circulated and posted on the intranet
- A weekly report of press releases issued, responses given and media coverage received is produced, circulated and posted on the intranet
- Considerable effort is put into dealing with media enquiries, which do not result in publication – these will also be recorded and monitored.

## **10. REVIEW**

The Corporate Communications Framework and Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis. The Communications Forum will undertake the review in partnership with staff by using the most appropriate communications channel.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

Effective communications is a shared responsibility of everyone in NHS Tayside. Success depends on the creation of a culture where communication is valued and effective communication is seen as a priority in practice, as well as in principle.

**Corporate Communications Department  
May 2008**

## **CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS CONTACTS**

### **Corporate Communications Department**

Phone: 01382 424138

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### **Communications Managers**

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### **Communications Officers**

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# COMMUNICATIONS GOOD PRACTICE GUIDELINES

## Working with the Media

- ❑ These Good Practice Guidelines have been produced for all staff.
- ❑ Copies of the guidelines will be available on the Communications Website and on the Intranet at NHS Tayside Home | Corporate Information | Writing & Communication of Document | Good Practice Guidelines.
- ❑ It is intended all staff would adopt this good practice.
- ❑ It is recommended that these guidelines are issued to new staff during induction.

## **WORKING WITH THE MEDIA**

### **PROACTIVE USE OF MEDIA**

News regarding NHS Tayside developments and achievements can be promoted by the use of press releases, prearranged interviews, staff magazine articles and in discussions with reporters/journalists, or in the staff magazine.

Communications Managers are a resource available to NHS Tayside staff, patients, carers and partner agencies and other organisations. Support, advice and assistance can be sought from Communications Managers regarding the promotion of:

- Clinical developments and treatments
- Patient-focused good news stories
- Local and national health campaigns
- Research and innovation
- Awards and grants
- New appointments
- Partnership initiatives
- Retirals
- Specific events, such as open days, anniversary celebrations, patient news
- Appeals
- Success of any sort!

### **NEWS MANAGEMENT**

NHS Tayside receives daily enquiries from local and national journalists, professional magazines, local and national broadcast and radio.

We are committed to maintaining and developing existing working relationships with all media contacts and constantly seek to update and expand our contacts base.

When a media enquiry is received, Communications Managers ensure they:

- Know what the questions are
- Agree a deadline for response – and keep it
- Refer to previous responses on similar matters
- Respect confidentiality

Communications Managers will give advice, draft responses and press releases for the media, arrange broadcast and radio interviews and brief the members of staff prior to any media interviews.

## **NHS Tayside will always respond with a named individual rather than a spokesperson.**

By keeping updated with issues in the local and national health and political environment, it is possible to identify issues and anticipate potential media interest. Identifying these issues early and maximising advance preparation assists in responding to an enquiry if it is received.

Issues of confidentiality are particularly important in relation to patient care and it is vital to ensure any response is in line with those safeguards. Communications Managers will ensure that confidentiality and the safety of patients and staff is not compromised by the media's interest in a story. The patient, next of kin or guardian and staff will always be notified before the media regarding any responses to be given.

Communications Managers will support joined-up communications and foster links with colleagues in other organisations.

## **KEY MESSAGES**

These messages will, as far as possible, be included in all Communications from NHS Tayside:

- NHS Tayside will deliver care for people as near as possible to where they live.
- NHS Tayside will strive to reduce health inequalities.
- NHS Tayside will involve patients and the public in decisions, which affect them.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

### **Condition Checks**

Communications Managers will not disclose any information without the permission of the patient, next of kin or guardian.

If the media seeks a condition check, the Communications Manager will contact the ward and ask the senior nurse or consultant to obtain the necessary permission from the patient, next of kin or guardian.

### **General Enquiries**

If an enquiry is received from the media relating to the treatment of a patient, the Communications Managers will not disclose any information relating to individual cases. However, we will comment appropriately on policy or procedures.

### **Photographs**

The Communications Managers will obtain permission from a patient, next of kin or guardian before any photographs are taken.

## **MONITORING**

Monitoring of media activity will be ongoing and carried out in the following ways:

- Daily monitoring of press coverage and a daily report of all stories concerning NHS Tayside is circulated.
- A weekly report of media coverage received and responses given is produced and circulated.
- Considerable effort is put into dealing with media enquiries, which do not result in publication – these will also be recorded and monitored.

## **GUIDELINES FOR STAFF REGARDING MEDIA ENQUIRIES**

Media enquiries usually come by phone and therefore any member of staff can find themselves answering a media enquiry. When a media enquiry is received it is vital that it is dealt with efficiently and promptly.

**The following procedure should be carried out:**

1. Obtain the name of the enquirer and the newspaper, TV or radio station, or other media outlet they work for.
2. Write down the information requested by the caller and make sure you understand what is being asked. Alternatively, you may wish to ask the caller to email you the request.
3. Journalists work to deadlines, therefore check the timescale in which a response must be received.
4. Contact and brief the senior manager in your department. Make sure they are aware of the agreed response time.
5. Once the information requested has been collated, the responsible person should ensure that the response to be given out is agreed with the communications department.
6. To avoid the wrong message or information being conveyed to the journalist, it is good practice to obtain the journalist's email address so you can send the written response.
7. If you do not feel comfortable speaking to the media, or the senior manager is not available, the call should be directed to the communications department or the on-call communications manager if out-of-hours.

### **Condition Reports**

Condition reports can be given by the most senior member of staff on duty in the department if the patient or relative gives permission.

**Corporate Communications Department**

Call 01382 424138 – extension 71138 for 24-hour press office.