Communication Action Plan

Purpose

The purpose of this Communication Plan is to provide the relevant project manager/officer and reference group with a guide to planning communication with internal and external stakeholders as implementation progresses.

Approach  
  
Whether you are working in a hospital with access to communication support and expertise, or you are doing it all yourself, good communication is integral to success and should be considered a priority.

Implementing the SHRFV project across your hospital involves a process of change management. An updated communication plan will support the project and contribute to the organisation’s understanding and commitment to the work. Communication should be an ongoing process, which highlights changes to relevant legislation, policy and practice. This is a critical component of supporting the effective implementation of the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework within your hospital.

Please see [www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management](http://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management) for further information on MARAM.

Effective communication tailored to the needs of different people will be required as you progress. Using the ADKAR model1 of change management, the following steps have been identified as fundamental stages to work through from a communications perspective.

1. Creating awareness about the SHRFV project and the MARAM framework
2. Building desire to participate or partner in the project
3. Improving knowledge and skills to apply the MARAM framework
4. Developing ability (processes, procedures, infrastructure, partnerships) across the hospital to align to the MARAM framework
5. Reinforcing new information and processed to ensure sustainability of the new and strengthened approach to family violence

Communication objectives

The same broad SHRFV communication objectives will apply to all situations. The channels used to reach stakeholders will vary.

The objectives of the SHRFV communication plan need to be clear and strategic. The following examples could be used:

1. To create awareness amongst key stakeholders (internal and external) about the drivers for the project, the hospital’s position on family violence and what the project is seeking to achieve by x (date)
2. To create interest to participate in learning and development activities to ensure training targets are achieved
3. To support the implementation of operational changes by ensuring all stakeholders (internal and external) are made aware of matters that affect them
4. To devise and implement communication techniques to ensure that the hospital’s strengthened approach to family violence is sustained

Good objectives can always be measured so it is important to think about how these objectives could be measured in your environment. For example:

* How will you check that awareness has been achieved amongst key stakeholders?
  + i.e. Will Directors be required to report back? Will it be via attendance numbers at information sessions or clicks on an internal news story? Will it be participation in a fun event?
* How will you know that you have created interest in learning and development activities?
  + i.e. Maybe it will be that the target numbers have been achieved in the specified time frame for training?
* How will you know that operational changes are well supported?
  + i.e. Will you devise a thorough list of internal and external stakeholders and identify who needs to know what by when so that you can tick off the list as it is achieved?
* How will you demonstrate that the focus on family violence is maintained?
  + i.e. Will you drive and/or participate in events to engage staff and patients and their families such as the annual 16 Days of Activism Against Violence Against Women? Will you commit to placing stories about the hospital’s approach to family violence in local media and internal publications? Will you lobby to have family violence included on the agenda for leadership discussions and strategic planning meetings? Will you commit to report to the Executive data relating to the project?

Action Planning

It will be useful to spend some time creating a template for action. Using these headings will ensure everything you need to consider is covered. Having all of the relevant information in a table like this makes it an easy reference guide. The following is an example of a communication action plan regarding the implementation of MARAM.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project objective – what is this aiming to achieve? | To create awareness amongst key internal stakeholders about the MARAM framework, MARAM responsibilities, how they apply in the hospital setting and when the change in practice is due to commence |
| Target audience – who do we need to engage to achieve our objective? | Leaders in our organisation  All staff and volunteers  Prevention of violence against women stakeholders in our community |
| Key message – what do we need to communicate? What is the ‘call to action’? | The MARAM framework is legislated under the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008.* It aims to ensure services are effectively identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk.  The MARAM framework recognises a wider range of risk indicators for children, older people and diverse communities, across identities, family and relationship types and will keep perpetrators in view and hold them accountable for their actions and behaviours.  There are 10 MARAM responsibilities, all underpinned by strong foundational knowledge about what constitutes family violence.  Public hospitals are prescribed to align their relevant policies, procedures, practice guidance and tools align with the MARAM framework. |
| Method – what channels work best for our target audiences? | Staff Forum presentation  Staff e-News article by executive sponsor / CEO  Online Webinars  Roundtable for community stakeholders  Staff training |
| Person/team responsible – who will make this happen? | Project manager with CEO/project sponsor |
| Time frame – when does this need to happen? | Copy developed by X  Staff Forum on X  Training delivered by X  Staff e-News news story on X |
| Cost involved – what time and money will it cost? | $x to purchase images for presentation and Staff e-News story. X hours to draft and send.  $x to design and draft invites to roundtable. X hours to draft and send. X hours to coordinate.  $x catering for roundtable |