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Marketing and Campaigning Policy and Procedure

Background

Marketing aims to attract people and to communicate the organisation’s activities to both internal and external audiences in a coherent and effective way, supporting the organisation’s mission.

Healthwatch will act as the consumer champion for publicly funded health and social care services and hence must safeguard its reputation and uphold the integrity of its members.

The Government has put in place regulations which impose legal requirements on local Healthwatch.

The aim of this document is to help local Healthwatch think about what these requirements, or regulations, mean for them in relation to their policy and campaigning work.

Legal Framework

Healthwatch shall act in accordance with the following legislation:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- The Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations
- Local Healthwatch Regulations, formally known as the “Statutory Instruments 2012 No, 3094.
- The NHS Bodies and Local Authorities (Partnership Arrangements, Care Trusts, Public Health and Local Healthwatch) Regulations 2012. Part 6 Local Healthwatch.”

All marketing and advertising must be:

- an accurate description of the product or service
- legal
- decent
- truthful
- honest
- socially responsible (not encouraging illegal, unsafe or anti-social behaviour)

There are regulations that restrict what advertisers can and can’t do.

As well as the regulations, there are 2 Government produced advertising codes of practice that can be used to ensure Healthwatch advertise legally.

You must describe your product or service accurately.

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Policy

Healthwatch will develop a sustainable marketing communications strategy which will include local key objectives and messages; implementation – the what (tools/collateral), how (media), when (timelines), where; budget allocation and also methods of monitoring and control

Healthwatch will commit to Government regulations that allow Healthwatch to speak out and to campaign (including for policy or legislative change) provided it is in support of the core purpose of being a consumer champion.

Healthwatch must not set up as a political body or make political activities its main activity, but this does not mean that Healthwatch cannot contribute to the political process.

Campaigning is a legitimate and valuable activity for Healthwatch to undertake. However, campaigning must only be undertaken in the context of supporting the delivery of the core purpose.

These activities include obtaining the views of local people about their needs and experiences of health and social care and making these views known to those that plan, run and regulate these services.

Healthwatch will campaign to ensure that existing laws are observed. Adherence to this policy is essential in order to ensure that Healthwatch remains a trustworthy and credible organisation able to fulfill its purpose.

Procedure

1. Marketing

Promoting the brand, establishing it in the public consciousness and ensuring that it presents a positive image.

Healthwatch will ensure that local people know who we are, what we do and how to contact us, as well as having a positive view of the work we do.

1.1 Aims:

- To establish & promote a positive image of Healthwatch and use this to recruit new Supporters, Volunteers and Members
- To establish & promote Healthwatch as the people to go to for raising concerns about health & social care services
- To establish & promote positive relationships with partners and stakeholders

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1.2 Target Audiences

- Healthwatch’s most important audience is The General Public – the main purpose of Healthwatch is to ensure that the “public voice” is heard.
- Specific demographic groups who may have particular concerns or perspectives. Some of these groups may be termed as “hard to reach” and can include ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, newly arrived communities, young people and older people. It can also include particular geographical areas.
- Healthwatch must continuously examine data to identify other groups which may have specific needs or concerns and adapt the work programme as required
- Supporters – people who have signed up to become involved in Healthwatch but have not committed to any specific time or to any specific activity. They may volunteer on particular projects or simply receive emails or bulletins.
- Members – Active members who have committed time to work that drives forward Healthwatch
- Community & voluntary sector groups and organisations that work with communities and individuals who may use health & social care services
- Elected representatives – MPs, MEPs and Councilors who represent the public and hold public services to account on their behalf
- Commissioners – those public sector bodies that commission health & social care services
- Providers – those public, private and voluntary sector bodies that provide health & social care services

2. Methods

1.1 The website - provides a means whereby the majority of the population can, if they choose to, contact us and access Healthwatch resources.

The Website is the main resource for the public and other stakeholders to access Healthwatch. The website will be used to:

- Provide ongoing information about Healthwatch events, activities and resources
- Offer direct access to publications, research and minutes of meetings published by Healthwatch and links to other websites publishing similar

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documents of interest

- Enable visitors to take part in surveys and give feedback on current hot topics

1.2 Face to face interaction - enables Healthwatch to target specific groups and areas and have direct contact with members of the public.

Face to face contact/outreach facilities – permanent, semi-permanent or temporary information or engagement facilities at locations around the area. These will include:

- Town centre offices, open Monday-Friday 9am-5pm
- Drop in surgeries held at various times and locations
- Leaflet stands in partner organisations offices or receptions
- Healthwatch Events – events run and promoted by Healthwatch – e.g. consultation events
- Partner Events – events run by partners at which Healthwatch has a presence – e.g. a stall at an Open Day
- Other resources, such as interactive touchscreens and surveys deployed in accordance with priorities identified in the work programme

1.3 These two main methods will be supplemented by:

- Social Media – Twitter and Facebook to be used in conjunction with the website to gather views and to publicise activities
- Bulletins - monthly bulletins sent to all stakeholders, summarising recent local Healthwatch activities
- Targeted emails - sent to people and organisations that have identified as having specific interests and expertise

3. Independence and political balance

In the political arena, a local Healthwatch must stress its independence and ensure that any involvement it has with political parties is balanced.

Whenever work is carried out with elected representatives Healthwatch should give representatives of all political parties an equal opportunity to comment on, or participate in, activities. It is legitimate to raise issues of relevance to consumers of health and social care services and for elected members to look to take these forward in their own work.

It is perfectly legitimate to hold public meetings to discuss issues that are relevant to consumers of health and care services. However, Healthwatch should ensure it invites a good representation of political parties. This is especially important during an election period. During an election period, there is specific legislation affecting campaigning that imposes restrictions on election literature and the use of public premises. Healthwatch must comply with these restrictions.

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4. Political Activities that should be avoided

- Healthwatch must not give support or funding to a political party, nor to a candidate or politician.
- Healthwatch must not be used as a vehicle for the expression of political views.
- Healthwatch must not endorse or comment upon any party or candidate but instead concentrate on the issue that they are raising as it relates to consumers.

During an election period, Healthwatch should be careful not to produce material that could be regarded as “election material”, e.g. anything that explicitly advocates a particular political party or party candidate or advises on voting for or against a particular party or candidate.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

Healthwatch must regularly review its Marketing and Campaigning strategy and monitor it against specific targets. This will enable Healthwatch to measure success in reaching the key target audiences and to evaluate the different methods that are being used. The Strategy should be reviewed annually and the Action Plan reviewed on a rolling basis.

*Parkwood Disclaimer

This policy applies to all staff when acting under the cover of ‘Healthwatch’ and whilst carrying out ‘Healthwatch’ specific activities. All Healthwatch staff are Parkwood employees and it is such that this policy is underpinned by Parkwood’s policy and procedural framework. Parkwood reserves the right to implement its own policies in relation to Parkwood employees at any time.

References

Related Policies and Procedures

<u>Healthwatch</u>	<u>Parkwood</u>
Social Media	Social Media
Databases	Media Relations
Freedom of Information	Confidentiality
Data Protection	Data Protection
Information Governance	Anti Bribery