**a better u – Communications Strategy**

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19. **Introduction**

The purpose of this strategy is to develop a planned and effective approach to marketing a better u (abu). This includes communications with staff, partners, members, media, and residents within South Tyneside.

This strategy sets out:

* What we aim to achieve through our communications
* The way we plan to develop communications in South Tyneside
* Our target audience
* How we will engage with residents

**2. Marketing vision**

The marketing team will work with partners to provide a campaign webpage that will signpost residents to health and wellbeing information and support in South Tyneside. Providing residents with everything they need to: -

* Feel happier and healthier
* Look after their physical and mental wellbeing
* Take the best care of themselves and others

**3. Our Approach**

South Tyneside Council and partners will engage with residents by communicating effectively with them. We will listen to their views, concerns, ideas and provide clear, up to date information from trusted sources. Which links to Our Council Values and Behaviours Framework approach.

Communications will be aimed at all residents and also broken down into these targeted audiences: -

* Communities (Green)
* Health/Clinical (Blue)
* Children and Young People (Orange)
* Adults (Purple)
* Older Adults (Pink)
* Families (Yellow)

This strategy includes a variety of communications activity aimed at large external audiences, as well as internal communications with staff and Council members.

The aim of a better u is to be personalized, pro-active and fair. Working with external partners we are building easy ways to help all our residents maintain their independence and wellbeing using their strengths and community resources. This will help to reduce health inequalities and help people to live longer, healthier, happier lives.

This strategy will be regularly reviewed.

1. **Partners**

Key partners:

* Community health providers
* The NHS Foundation Trust
* Joint Commissioning (South Tyneside Council and Integrated Care Board)
* South Tyneside Council
  + #LoveSouthTyneside
  + Best Start Alliance
  + Living Better Lives
* South Tyneside Pledge
* Mental Health Providers
* Voluntary Sector Organisations

1. **Branding**

The branding is a simple logo using an overarching brand colour (teal) and also individual colours for the audiences listed above.

The logo can be used alongside all partner logos.

A better u is the overarching branding for health and wellbeing in South Tyneside. The brand will be shared across the system relevant so all partner and council communications will link to a better u.

1. **Aims over the next two years**

* Increase understanding and awareness of what a better u is
* Increase partnership working across the system
* Build recognition of a better u as a trusted self-care brand
* Identify target audiences and appropriate channels of communication
* Support people to lead healthy and fulfilling lives in their own communities
* Encourage positive behaviour change for health and wellbeing
* Help to reduce health inequalities in the borough
* Improve communication with residents
* Link abu messages Council’s vision for health
* Provide accurate, up to date and trusted information
* Promote available services
* Embrace the principles of health literacy

1. **Communication approach**

* a better u campaign page that will signpost residents to health and wellbeing information and support in South Tyneside.
* a better u Facebook and twitter page and link with partners
* Communications will follow the principles of health literacy to ensure messages are understood by as many residents as possible (the average reading age in South Tyneside is 9-11years)
* Messages will be consistent
* Evidence based – case studies, statistics and storytelling will be used to illustrate messages wherever possible and made relatable to the audiences.
* Demonstrate the success of our work by promoting achievements.

1. **key issues**

a better u was launched in conjunction with Self-Care Week in November 2022, following the completion of the website.

The website needs to be updated regularly to ensure information is accurate and telephone numbers/web links checked to ensure that services are up to date, relevant and still available.

**10. Communicating key messages**

* Promote health messages to encourage positive behaviour change
* Promote becoming a better u champion
* Promote Key contacts for relevant services/groups
* Promote www.southtyneside.gov.uk/abetteru

**10.1. Campaigns**

Promote health and wellbeing campaigns and messages on all aspects of health, wellbeing and self-care. This will include

* Sharing national health campaign messages to residents, telling people what local services are available and where to find them
* Social isolation, mental health information and suicide awareness and preventions
* Managing long term conditions
* All community health and wellbeing activities available to improve health
* All Alliance health and support groups
* Ageing Well
* Help at home
* End of life care
* Support for additional needs
* Mental health
* Pathways from education to employment

A large part of the communications will take place at local community venues. It will also include promotion of the abu Champions and how people/groups can sign up and get involved. These venues will be used for consultation work related to health and wellbeing topics, for example local surveys.

The national campaign calendar will be used to inform the timing of some of the communications. These promotional materials will be used alongside more localised messaging using the abu branding.

**11. Target audience – internal**

* Staff
* Members

**11.1 Target audience – external**

* MPs – Emma Lewell Buck and Kate Osborne
* All residents – whole life course approach
* Media (print and broadcast) – Local and Regional
* Alliance partners
* Contractors/providers of health and social care
* Health and Wellbeing services
* Voluntary and Community organisations
* Businesses – Encourage engagement with abu champions, Better Health at Work Award and The Pledge
* Carers and Carer groups
* Education
* Faith Organisations
* Youth Services
* Sport and Leisure Facilities

1. **Digital marketing**

The amount of time people spend on their electronic devices increases every day. In order to make residents aware our key messages will be promoted heavily online.

This includes:

* Social media
* Viva Engage (South Tyneside Council and Homes Staff)

**Social media**   
Follow trends, hashtags, engage in conversation and pay attention to what people are talking about on social media. Monitor shares and likes, RT etc. Answer any queries, direct people to website pages and listen to what resident is saying.

This will link to content marketing. The content can live anywhere online including Tweets, YouTube video, blogs etc. Content Marketing works because it melds together exceptional content with other types of digital marketing like SEO and Social Media Marketing. Content marketing is an ongoing practice. It’s about engaging and educating your consumer to build brand recognition, trust, and equity.

**Influencer marketing**

Influencer marketing uses people with an enormous online reach considered experts by our target market to drive traffic and sales. Influencer marketing is popular on social media channels like Instagram and Snapchat.

**Case studies**

Case studies are the best form of communication for awareness. They can make your project or campaign stand out and provide a level of trust. They are a credible way of showing the difference you can make, using examples the people can relate to and understand.

Case studies can be used online, website, social media, blogs, success stories and as evidence. They underpin the brand by illustrating what it stands for. Research shows that emotions play a major part in delivering engagement and influencing choices.

Case studies provide a message, a call to action or an emotive response. Case studies with real people and a link or information for more information, advice or support has proven to be more effective than other forms of marketing.

1. **Action Plan**

The following action plan has been developed to support the communications strategy.   
Background: Don’t assume that your audience are familiar with all the ins and outs of the topic. Create content that is relevant to the audience and break down each step. This will help the audience understand the issues being discussed.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number** | **Action** | **Owner** | **Timescale** |
| 1. | Set up website with links to partner websites and pages.  Identify national campaigns and link from web page | Public health  Web team  Marketing | 2019  Campaign Page complete November 2022 – links to Health and Wellbeing pages. |
| 2 | Create a toolkit which clearly sets out what the logo can be used for, when it can be linked to adult and children services etc. How businesses can use it etc. | Public Health  Marketing  Design | 2019  Brand guidelines complete October 2022 |
| 3 | Internal communication with staff. This will be ongoing and will include all staff emails, Intranet, posters etc. These will focus on a better u, how staff can get involved – encourage staff to tell their stories of stopping smoking, losing weight, managing diabetes, parents with strokes etc. | Public Health  Marketing | 2019  Started November 2022 |
| 4 | Communication with members  Members comms, emails and leaflets | Public Health- Tom Hall? | TBC |
| 5 | Identify key ambassadors linked to health, teams within the Council and Public Health as well as external community groups and businesses linked to health across all ages e.g., Harriers | Public Health  Marketing | 2019   * Started in 2022 – Promotion of Public Health (inc. abu) at Staff inductions. * Promotion by abu champion’s network * Began recruitment of community champions * Links with The Pledge |
| 6 | Promote health and wellbeing in South Tyneside using the website as one point of information | ASC  Marketing  Public Health | 2019  Started November 2022 |
| 7 | Communication with partners, residents, carers and wider community through various channels of marketing including social media, resident newsletter, e-newsletter, website, hard copy leaflets etc. (see comms plan) | Public Health  Marketing  Press  Web | 2019  Started November 2022 - Ongoing |
| 8 | Ongoing communications linked to campaigns both nationally, regionally and locally | Public Health  Marketing | 2019  Started November 2022 – Ongoing  Use of national and localised messages to support campaigns |

1. **Forward plan**

National campaigns will be supported when they have relevance to South Tyneside. For example, Dry January, Stoptober, Better Health, Every Mind Matters and Seasonal Health. Information of South Tyneside groups/services/stories etc. will be used to localise the campaign messages.

Additional campaigns will be supported on an ad hoc basis if they’re relevant to the health and wellbeing concerns of the borough and could help to reduce health inequalities. Examples could include prevention messages such as screening promotion or campaigns relevant to poor outcomes in the borough such as smoking in pregnancy.

1. **Budget**

The below schedule is based on a no/low-cost basis.

Targeted paid for advertising is a potential for 2023/24 if funds can be allocated before the end of the financial year due to remaining funds in the Covid Champions budget code.

This could be used for: -

* Transport Ads (Bus Stops, metro stations, plasma screens, bus backs/sides, metro panels)
* Cinema Advertising
* TV/Radio Advertising
* Social Media Advertising
* Newspaper Advertising
* Dedicated website

This budget is time limited and finite.

1. **Communications Plan**

Communications should be agreed as soon as possible.   
This plan is based on communications starting late in 2022.

**General awareness (internal)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Activity** | **Target audience** | **Cost** | **Responsible** | **Notes** |
| **Intranet** | | | | | |
|  | A section on the staff Intranet with a link to the new website set up alongside the toolkit (corporate guidelines) of when the logo can be used. Examples will be provided. | **staff** | **FOC** | Web team  Public Health | **Brand Guidelines complete and shared with design team – Nov 2022**  **Campaign Website completed November 2022**  **Intranet section – Early 2023** |
| **Electronic** | | | | | |
|  | All staff email to staff – announcing brand, principles and link to Intranet and external website   \*These will be ongoing and will engage staff by asking them to become champions and tell their story – stop smoking, losing weight etc. Positive findings and outcomes will be communicated | **Staff** | **FOC** | Public health | **Inclusion in Staff Briefing Email – November 2022**  **Viva Engage Posts – November 2022 and ongoing**  **Sway emails – early 2023 and ongoing** |
|  | Plasma screens – brand with link to the website   \*These will be updated on a regular basis asking for staff stories, changing key messages, supporting national campaigns, promoting local groups etc. | **Staff and members** | **FOC** | Public Health Design | **Sent to comms and ICB contact November 2022**  **Ongoing** |
|  | XA3 Posters Posters for back of toilets and in key areas across Council and Homes including leisure and libraries | **Staff** |  | Public Health Design | **Posters Printed November 2022**  **Distribution to council Buildings – early 2023** |
|  | XA5 Leaflets  Leaflets promoting the new website as a one place for everyone to find health info and groups | **Staff Members  Residents** |  | Public Health   Design | **To do**  **Champions Flyers printed 2022** |
|  | Staff drop-in workshop in Town Hall or canteen for staff to find out what A better U is and how they can get involved, where health info can be found etc. | **Staff** | **FOC** | Public Health | **To do**  **Incorporation to PH staff induction materials** |
|  | Case studies – videos of staff talking about their story, their job, working together through the alliance etc. These will be uploaded on YouTube and shared on website | **Staff** | **FOC** | Public Health  Marketing | **To do** |
|  | Staff briefing – key campaigns, stories, and campaigns etc. | **Staff** | **FOC** | Public Health | **November 2022**  **Ongoing** |
|  | Payslip – promote key messages  \*These are not guaranteed | **Staff** | **FOC** | Public Health  HR | **To do – Jan 2023** |
|  | **Members comms** | | | | |
| An email to members will be sent so any members who cannot make the members comms session will be aware of what is happening and how they can support the campaign. | Members | FOC | Public Health – Tom Hall | Lead member briefings ongoing  Early 2023? |
| **Ambassadors** | | | | | |
|  | Staff asked to be a better u health and wellbeing champions and help to promote health messages in the Borough. Champions will receive fortnightly email update bulletins and meet monthly to discuss stories and share information. Each service should volunteer a champion. | Staff | FOC | Whole Council and Homes | To do  Link to BHAWA and Health Advocates |

**General Awareness (external)**

Background: Not many residents are aware of what a better u is. The aim is to build awareness of, and trust in, the brand as the ‘go to’ place for health, wellbeing and self-care information and support in South Tyneside.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Activity** | **Target audience** | **Cost** | **Responsible** | **Notes** |
| **Website** | | | | | | |
|  | Web team to set up a campaign website page for a better u – this will stand alone from the council website. Links to the Council website and vice versa will still exist but this will be the main point of call for health. A campaign can be updated, support group info changed and key campaigns can be linked to easily including local, regional and national.  Strong links to ICB, NHS information and regional/national health and wellbeing campaigns.  Positive stories/Case Studies on specific campaigns.  Real people including staff and residents telling their stories.   Promote self-care messages. Link with community groups.   These will be linked to seasonal and national campaigns. | **ALL** | **FOC** | Web team  Public Health | **Campaign Website completed – November 2022** |
| Comms start early 2023 | **Editorial** | | | | | |
| **Two pages in the June resident newsletter.** Double page promoting a better u with a link to self-care. Focus on recruiting health and wellbeing champions. This will be part of the 4 health pages. | All | FOC | Tori Hunt | Dates Needed |
| **BECG – Spread the Word. This is South Tyneside.** We are investing in innovative ways to improve the health and wellbeing of residents.   Health & Wellbeing stories will be sent to Nat Johnson for BECG consideration to gain national coverage, articles in specialist publications All of the case studies around a better u will be sent across for consideration. | Trade press  National press  Central Government  Conferences | TBC | Public Health Partners Press  Marketing | Ongoing. All potential stories and case studies with stats to be sent across. Stories and case studies used when appropriate and fit into other articles to make them stronger. |
| **Press** | | | | | |
| **Ongoing press releases** – sent to local and regional media Health, wellbeing and self-care press releases will be linked to a better u. Stories as/when needed. Campaigns and health statistics to be part of wider comms. | All residents, visitors, members and staff | N/A | Katrina Wilkinson  Diane Walker  Tori Hunt | Press team to lead and support and provide statements and opportunities where possible |
| **Filming** |  |  |  |
| **Ongoing films** Film all positive case studies, interview staff, stories of difference, promote key achievements of partners and link into national campaigns. Real stories and real people are key to positive links with residents’ behaviour change | FOC | Public health Marketing | **Animation video being produced by Wriggle – for completion December 2022**  **Introduction video from Tom – December 2022** |
| **Electronic** |  |  |  |
| **Email to key partners and community groups** Promote a better u with link to website, toolkit | FOC | Web team to set up a campaign email | **Information shared with a better u Champions Network (formerly Change4Life)**  **Weekly email update to a better u champions network**  **Fortnightly email update to a better u health and wellbeing champions** |
| **E-newsletter to 25,000+ subscribers**  Two articles to 25,000+ subscribers. Promote a better u – including recruitment of champions, case studies | Web team  Diane Walker  Tori Hunt | Ongoing – Upcoming Dates needed |
| **Summer Festival screen** – promote a better u at the summer concerts – estimate 10,000 people with link to new website | Tori Hunt  Marketing |  |
| **A194 and king street digital screens** A forward plan of messages in place to promote a better u and key messages. King Street can display moving videos and can have text as it’s the view people will see rather than driving past. | May be slight charge for moving display | Public Health | **Artwork sent to comms December 2022**  **Ongoing – change every 3 months – next due March 2023** |
| **Plasma Screens** – a better u plasma to promote what a better u is and link to website. These will be updated every few months with key messages, case studies, statistics, support groups etc.  \*These will be displayed throughout South Tyneside | FOC | Tori Hunt | In council buildings, leisure, libraries, Community centres, GPs, hospital and schools where possible.  **Artwork sent to comms/ICB – December 2022** |
| **Drive-in movie screen**  A better u screen at all drive-in movie events- promote two different screens. One for children with best start focus and one dedicated for adults with living better lives focus. Both will be a better u linked with specific health messages. | £100 | TBC |  |
| **Email to all schools** with an electronic version of leaflet/pack explaining how they can be part of a better u, overall aim of improving children’s health and to promote the website to parents | FOC | Education/ School Governors | Speak to members who are on school governors and ask them to promote the website and encourage school involvement. |
| **Healthier Times** – electronic newsletter to subscribers promoting health. Ongoing messages linked to a forward plan agreed by project group | FOC | Diane Walker / Tori Hunt | **Article in December 2022 edition**  **Ongoing promotion in future editions** |
| **Social media:** Create a new Facebook, twitter, Instagram, and snap chat page.  Facebook/Twitter- awareness on Council and Homes to promote and share stories  Forward plan of messages. Partners will be encouraged to like/share/comment on posts.  Promote national campaigns but tailor them to make them South Tyneside specific – local stats with information for where they can go for advice and support  Case studies – videos, interviews and even simple ‘Meet the team’, who we are and what we do.  Promote self-care and prevention messages to promote positive behaviour change.  Share blogs from trusted sources about health and wellbeing. | All |  | Public Health | **Facebook and Twitter accounts changed from Change4Life – November 2022** |
|  | **Events and drop –in events** shared on Council’s What’s On Guide on website as well as promoted on social media and through plasma screens.  Key groups identified and will be sent a leaflet with key dates (A5, double sided)  Press releases  Mayor/members endorsement | FOC | To update info on what’s on | Ensure maximum coverage  **a better u champions network launch on 14th November (Self-Care Week)**  **Christmas drop in on 19th December**  Bi monthly health and wellbeing drop ins |
|  | **Printed materials** |  |  |  |
|  | **An information pack** the pack will be provided in a branded paper carrier bag and will include a poster, a better u information leaflets, promotional items (e.g., pens etc) current health campaign information and support groups available, local groups in South Tyneside and how to sign up as a champion to get involved with the campaign, upcoming events etc.  Inclusion of promotional materials such as pens/pencils etc | Attendees of events/drop-ins | Public Health  Action Advertising | **Ongoing – available in early 2023** |
|  | **Printed materials:** A3 Posters x 250A4 Posters x 500  A5 leaflet x5000 – Info on becoming a better u champion and sign-up form  Pop-up Banners x 6 – For abu Drop-ins, Cleadon Park Library, Town Hall reception and Simonside climbing Wall | Various audiences including family | 5000 A5 double sided flyer £120  6 pop-ups £540  500 A4 posters £65  250 A3 posters £53  1000 Christmas Booklets £399 | Print and Design  Tori Hunt | **A3 & A4 Posters, A5 Flyers and 6x Pop Up banners printed November 2022**  **Christmas booklet (rebranded from C4L) printed December 2022**  **Ongoing** |
| **Letter** A letter to all school Head teachers about a better u and how they can support health for young people in South Tyneside | Schools | FOC | Public Health  Education |  |
| **Banner** on foreshore during summer – heavy footfall during the summer months. Key placement opposite fair railings, park gates or Bents Park railing to promote the website promoting a better u website | All | £75 each.  1mx3m standard | Public Health | one to go along the seafront/ near the promenade. |
|  | **Selfie frames** x2 different selfie frames to be used at events, in public, at drop-in, in schools and all shared through social media, e-newsletter and magazines etc. Team promotion required | All | £100 - TBC | Print and design  Tori Hunt |  |
|  | **Summer Festival Programme** Part of the Summer programme an advert form within the A5 leaflet with key dates on (part of the 20,000 distributed)  Leaflet: Own leaflet with promotion ready to distribute on day with key health information. Possible competition to engage children.  Possible free promotional materials | Residents/ Children/ Families | Costs TBC | Events Marketing  Public Health Print and design |  |
|  | **Great North Run – Central Motorway** A good luck runners with a better u logo and weblink | Regional | Est: £500 |  |  |
|  | **Banners:**  X1 in prominent position to promote ‘a better u’ – seasonal message.  immunisations, lose weight, diabetes etc. | Residents/  Visitors | £75 each  1mx3m standard |  |  |
|  | **Fireworks promotional leaflet:** A small advert promoting a better u in the fireworks leaflet |  | £100 | The Dunes and Ocean Beach Pleasure Park Marketing |  |
| **MISC** | | | | | | |
|  | **Photographer – take promo pics**  **Attend events throughout borough throughout the year – promo activity** | Different audiences | £85 per hr | Public Health | **Photography produced as part of contract with Wriggle (Oct 2022)**  **Photography completed by Craig Leng (Sept/Oct/Nov 2022)**  Ongoing – Engage with local community groups – emphasis on real people, places and services. |
| **Adverts** | | | | | | |
|  | **Half page - Primary Times Newcastle, Durham, Sunderland, Gateshead** | Families | £1,375 | Marketing | 115,000 copies to parents/children in local and regional area |
|  | **X20 bus sideliners**- Newcastle, Sunderland, Durham, Shields and North Tyneside | All | \*EST: £4,000 | Marketing | TBC Artwork to be briefed. |
|  | * Transport Ads (Bus Stops, metro stations, plasma screens, bus backs/sides, metro panels) * Cinema Advertising * TV/Radio Advertising * Social Media Advertising * Newspaper Advertising * Dedicated website |  |  |  |  |
| **Events** | | | | | | |
|  | **Summer Festival Events**  **Banners/Pop-ups/Leaflets/Give aways** |  |  |  | Could a member of staff be at the event promoting a better u and health and self-care? Where to go to find out info? |
|  | **Fun Days**  A number of fun days take place across the summer and while these are not part of the summer festival the majority of these are supported by Council or Homes.  **Banners/Pop-ups/Leaflets/Give aways** |  |  |  | Could a member of staff be at the event promoting a better u and health and self-care? Where to go to find out info? |
|  | **Great North Run Finish Line**  **Banners/Pop-ups/Leaflets/Give aways** |  |  |  | Could a member of staff be at the event promoting a better u and health and self-care? Where to go to find out info?? |
|  | **Christmas Fair at Haven Point**  **Banners/Pop-ups/Leaflets/Give aways**  Speak to Groundwork to find out if there is an opportunity to be at the Christmas fair promoting seasonal messages such as immunisations, use Pharmacy, when to call 999 and go to hospital etc. Info on local community groups in the Borough | Residents and visitors |  |  | Could a member of staff be at the event promoting a better u and health and self-care? Where to go to find out info? |

A detailed communications plan will be produced each year depending on budget available, national campaigns, regional inequalities and event schedules.

1. **Key dates**

Elder Abuse Day

Carers Week

Great North Run and Junior Great North Run

World Mental Health Day

Oral Health Day

Aids awareness

Breast Cancer

Young Carers (Jan 30)

No Smoking Day

Stoptober

International Day of Women’s Health

Child Abuse Prevention

Autism Day

Alcohol awareness week

Dry January

National Stress Day

National Volunteer Week

Asthma – May

Better sleep month – May

Foster fortnight

Adoption week

Men’s Health Month

Dementia Action week

Domestic Violence day (white ribbon day)

International Older Persons’ Day – October

World Mental Health Day

World Aids Day

Blue Monday

Mental Health Awareness Week

Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week

Maternal Mental Health Awareness Week.

Breastfeeding Awareness Month

Winter Health

Summer Health

**18. Evaluation**Evaluation is an essential part of this communications plan and should be carried out throughout the campaign so we can continue with successful methods. These include monitoring web page hits and responses from residents.

* Evaluation which we can monitor:  
  - using google analytics to monitor web page hits, find out if people stayed on a page or bounced  
  - cookies to find out where they went next or where they came from.   
  - Facebook and twitter followers   
  - YouTube video hits  
  - Event attendance  
  - competition entries