Media Policy

Originator: Aaron Bridgeforth
Marketing and Communications Manager

Review date: May 2015
Revision date: May 2017

Approved by: Fundraising and Marketing Committee
Date of meeting: 7 July 2015
Name of Chairman: Brigid Martineau

Approved by: Board of Trustees
Date of meeting: 24 September 2015
Name of Chairman: Adrian Williams
## Contents

1. **Policy Statement**  
2. **Introduction**  
   2.1 Definitions  
3. **Responsibilities and Accountability**  
   3.1 Chief Executive Officer (CEO)  
   3.2 Directors  
   3.3 Marketing and Communications Manager  
   3.4 Managers  
   3.5 Employees  
4. **Procedures and Implementation**  
   4.1 Approaches to media organisations  
   4.2 Responses to the media (except digital media)  
   4.3 Exceptions  
   4.4 Inappropriate disclosure  
   4.5 Consent  
   4.6 Use of digital media  
   4.7 Producing visual media (e.g. leaflets, brochures or posters)  
5. **Related Policies / Guidelines**  
6. **Monitoring and Review**  
7. **Statutory Compliance and evidence referenced**  
8. **Appendices**
1. **Policy Statement**

St Nicholas Hospice Care is an independent charity delivering specialist palliative care to patients and their families within the communities of West Suffolk and Thetford. Care is delivered by a specially trained multidisciplinary team supported by a large team of volunteers to patients within our Sylvan Ward, Community Hospice Team, Orchard and Burton Centres. The organisation also includes an Education Department that delivers palliative care education to the local community, a Fundraising Department that manages a range of fundraising activities and a Retail Section with a donation centre and several shops in the local community staffed by paid staff and volunteers.

St Nicholas Hospice Care (SNHC) recognises the need to establish and maintain positive relations with media organisations. It recognises the value of press, broadcast and digital media and of the impact of visual media in promoting a positive image of the Hospice, in informing the community about the services the Hospice offers and in its need for support.

SNHC recognises its responsibility to ensure that all interactions with media organisations are managed appropriately to safeguard the reputation of the Hospice and patients, families, staff and volunteers.

2. **Introduction**

This policy was developed in order to clarify responsibility and usual levels of involvement in dealing with media organisations – particularly where there are occasions affecting the Hospice’s profile and reputation. It also clarifies responsibility and processes for communicating via digital media and visual media.

This document is intended for both staff and volunteers and the purpose is both to protect the reputation of the organisation and, more proactively, to promote a positive public image of the organisation.

2.1 **Definitions**

**Media** in relation to this policy encompasses all of the below:

- **Press** – media channels that use words and images to communicate mostly in a printed format, such as newspapers but also includes periodicals, newsletters, magazines and journals. For the purposes of this policy, it also includes online professional and community magazine sites (e.g. eHospice).

- **Broadcast media** – Broadcasting is the distribution of audio and video content to an audience via radio, television, or other such as webcasting. Receiving parties may include the general public or a smaller select group.

- **Digital media** – Digital media is primarily the internet and mobile-based tools for sharing and discussing information. The term most often refers to activities that integrate technology, telecommunications and social interaction, and the construction of words, pictures, videos and audio. Digital media includes blogs, forums, image sites, Facebook, SMS messaging, Twitter, YouTube and many others.
- **Visual Media** – Visual media is primarily printed material such as leaflets, brochures, postcards, posters and billboards, but can also be designed digital images such as infographics.

**Significant events may include** – local or national media stories relevant to hospice care, breaches of health and safety regulations, crime, serious complaints, serious incidents and unexpected death.

### 3. Responsibilities and Accountability

#### 3.1 Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has overall responsibility for the strategic and operational management of St Nicholas Hospice Care, including ensuring that this policy complies with all legal, statutory and good practice guidance requirements. The CEO will monitor any impact of adverse media via the risk management policy.

The Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for implementation of this policy. The CEO will ensure that this policy is approved by the Board of Trustees.

#### 3.2 Directors

The Director of Fundraising and Marketing is responsible for delivering best practice in relations with the media, to ensure all communications from the Hospice adhere to brand guidelines and values by deploying appropriate levels of expertise and resource in the department. Directors are responsible for informing the Marketing and Communications Manager of any significant events that may need a media response.

#### 3.3 Head of Marketing and Communications

The Marketing and Communications Manager will oversee reactive and proactive media contact and is responsible on a day-to-day basis of ensuring all Hospice interactions with all disciplines of the media adhere to this policy.

#### 3.4 Managers

All senior managers are required to ensure that staff and volunteers within their departments are familiar with this policy, its procedures and implications.

#### 3.5 Employees

Staff and volunteers who are approached by the media are instructed to refer immediately to the Press and PR Officer or in their absence the Marketing and Communications Manager.
4. Procedures and Implementation

4.1 Approaches to media organisations
Routine approaches to the media are made by the Press and PR Officer, overseen by the Marketing and Communications Manager.

Where the query relates to a significant event, this will be undertaken by Marketing and Communications Manager in consultation with the Director of Fundraising and Marketing and the Chief Executive as appropriate.

Staff in other departments should not approach press or broadcast media directly but are encouraged to submit stories and media requests via the media request form.

4.2 Responses to the media (except digital media)
Routine responses to queries are made by the Press and PR Officer who will consult with the Marketing and Communications Manager as appropriate.

Where the query relates to a significant event, this will be managed by the Marketing and Communications Manager in consultation with the Director of Fundraising and Marketing and the Chief Executive as appropriate.

Urgent press enquiries made out-of-hours should be referred to the On-Call Manager.

4.3 Exceptions
There will be opportunities where in the greater interests of the Hospice it will be judged appropriate for the media to speak directly to an individual staff member, volunteer, patient, relative, friend or supporter. When this is the case a member of the Marketing and Communications Department will facilitate the interview so all parties are aware of what is required.

4.4 Inappropriate disclosure
Staff and volunteers (including Trustees) must not give interviews to the media without the express permission of the Marketing and Communications Manager, Director of Fundraising and Marketing or the Chief Executive.

Any disclosure of information that damages the reputation of the Hospice either deliberately or recklessly to the media by any member of staff or volunteer will be treated with the utmost seriousness by the Hospice and may be subject to disciplinary action (see Raising Concerns Policy and Disciplinary Policy).

Inappropriate disclosure includes confidential information relating to patients and families and any negative reference to the Hospice, its staff or volunteers via all media channels.

4.5 Consent
No information regarding a patient or family member must be supplied to the media or used in publicity without written permission. See the Consent and Data Management Policy. In exceptional circumstances an urgent response is required, the Press and PR Officer or the Marketing and Communications Manager may supply contact information to a nominated media representative after having received verbal consent from the person involved.
4.6 Use of digital media

Social networking and digital media are important tools in marketing and communicating with wider audiences.

Under the supervision of the Marketing and Communications Manager, the Digital Communications Officer has been given responsibility for the day-to-day management of all Hospice social media content.

If a staff member believes social media could be vital to their job and wish to post messages online under the Hospice’s name they should seek permission from the Marketing and Communications Manager. The Digital Communications Officer will actively consult and manage members of staff and volunteers who have been permitted to post on social media on behalf of the organisation.

Where a response requires more delicate handling, e.g. one that could have reputational consequences or has wider ramifications such as debates on assisted suicide; this will be managed by the Marketing and Communications Manager in collaboration with the Digital Media Officer and clinical staff where appropriate.

The Hospice will not tolerate the organisation being brought into disrepute by staff or volunteers who post negative or critical material onto social media spaces, either on Hospice sites or via personal platforms. See Disciplinary Policy.

4.7 Producing visual media (e.g. leaflets, brochures or posters)

Visual media is vitally important in promoting the Hospice and can give a strong and lasting impression about the organisation in just a few seconds.

All visual media should comply with the brand guidelines. Staff and volunteers should use the empty belly templates for internal and lower profile events. These can be shared with local fundraising groups with the approval of the Community Fundraising Manager.

All Hospice leaflets, postcards and brochures about services should be produced by the Marketing and Communications Department in partnership with the relevant department. These may be designed in-house or outsourced to a trusted agency or designer.

For fundraising, education or awareness-raising events organised by external groups or by the Special Events Committee, the organiser has responsibility for producing promotional materials. Use of the Hospice logo must, however, comply with our brand guidelines.

Where a department produces printed media for a restricted group, the Marketing and Communications Department should have sight of the documents before they are released and ensure that they comply with brand guidelines and our visual identity.
5. **Related Policies / Guidelines**
   Data Management Policy
   Raising Concerns Policy
   Disciplinary Policy
   Consent Policy
   Brand Guidelines
   Style Guide
   Social Media Guidelines

6. **Monitoring and Review**
   The Director of Fundraising and Marketing will be responsible for the bi-annual review of this document.

7. **Statutory Compliance and Evidence referenced**
   St Nicholas Hospice Care is committed to compliance with all data and other information legislation in respect of all staff, volunteers, patients, supporters and all those in any other way connected with the Hospice.
   
   Data Protection Act
   Child Protection Act

8. **Appendices**
   None