

	External Communications Policy & Procedure	Policy Number CHC-PG-0020	Version Nos: 4
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1. Policy Statement

The West Coast District Health Board (WCDHB) will develop and maintain an open, participative management style and culture for which open communication is a prerequisite and produce quality outputs for all stakeholders which necessitates clear and unambiguous communications from the organisation.

2. Purpose

This Policy & Procedure establishes the requirements for all external communications from WCDHB to external stakeholders, agencies and individuals.

3. Application

This Policy & Procedure applies to all WCDHB Board members and staff members.

4. Responsibilities

For the purpose of this Policy & Procedure, the:

Chief Executive Officer is required to

- oversee all aspects of this Policy and Procedure;
- monitor the performance of all staff members in relation to this Policy and Procedure;

Board and Staff Members are required to:

- ensure they abide by the requirements of this Policy and Procedure;

5. Definitions

There are no definitions associated with this Policy and Procedure

6. Process

- 1.00 The public image of the WCDHB will consistently focus on the availability, delivery and improvement of quality health and disability support services.
- 1.01 The WCDHB will receive and respond promptly to communications received with cultural sensitivity, sincerity and courtesy and will facilitate referral to other agencies, as appropriate.
- 1.02 Information released to external stakeholders, agencies and individuals will reinforce the professional and business like image of the WCDHB.
- 1.03 The WCDHB will present a professional and efficient image through all forms of external communication. This will be achieved through the use of a consistent, professional and accurate standard in all external organisational publications, correspondence and advertising.

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- 1.04 The WCDHB will release, to appropriate audiences, information that is accurate, timely, consistent with the organisational Policy and Procedures, and complies with statutory and contractual requirements including the Privacy Act/Health Information Privacy Code, Public Finance Act, New Zealand Health and Disability Services Act, the Official Information Act, Health Act and Code of Health and Disability Consumers' Rights.
- 1.05 The WCDHB will ensure that it maintains a political impartiality and be seen to be fair and equitable in all its external communications.
- 1.06 The WCDHB will maintain an effectively dialogue with external stakeholders, agencies and individuals and other interested groups in the community concerning the co-ordinated delivery of health care and disability support services on the West Coast. This will include the fostering of positive communications with General Practitioners.
- 1.07 The WCDHB will maintain an effectively dialogue with local Maori groups concerning the special needs of Maori and the delivery of appropriate health care and disability support services to them.
- 1.08 All media contact will be directed through the Chief Executive Officer, who may delegate this responsibility.
- 1.09 All WCDHB generated news releases must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer (or designate) before being released to the media.
- 1.11 All contact with external agencies, including the Ministry of Health, will be directed through the Chief Executive Officer who may delegate this responsibility (See *WCDHB Letterhead Use Procedure*)
- 1.12 All matters requiring a response from the Board of the WCDHB will be referred to the Chairperson by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 1.13 Information about the organisation and issues affecting the organisation will, where practicable, be advised to staff members before being released externally to the media.
- 1.12 Letters to the editors or others statements of opinion written by staff members are not to be sent on WCDHB letterhead (unless with the prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer). Staff members are also to make it absolutely clear that the views they are expressing are not the official views of the WCDHB (unless they have the prior approval of the Chief Executive Officer).

7. Related Procedures

WCDHB Delegations Procedure

WCDHB Letterhead Use Procedure

8. Related Documents

There are no other documents associated with this Policy and Procedure.

9. References

There are no references associated with this Policy and Procedure.

Revision History	Version:	4
	Developed By:	Corporate Office
	Authorised By:	Chief Executive Officer
	Date Authorised:	November 1996
	Date Last Reviewed:	January 2007
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