



Rising Voices Wessex Community Choir

Communications and Marketing Plan January 2024

1. Background

The increase in prevalence of the cancer and the success of treatments means that there will need to be a transformation in the way that the NHS cares for people affected by the disease, moving away from the emphasis on acute and episodic care towards a holistic personalised approach that is well co-ordinated and integrated. The aim is to transform care by offering people the opportunity for individualised support to enable supported self-management.

There are established associations between music and health, physical and spiritual. Involvement with music making is recognized as having benefits for specific conditions, especially neurological disorders including forms of dementia. Participation in music making has been shown to improve wellbeing and music has power to communicate with individuals at times of difficulty. This formed the background to the establishment of our survivors' choir, *Rising Voices Wessex*.

Underpinning formation of the choir was the intention of using participation in singing as a choir to aid recovery following cancer treatment, to encourage confidence and social interaction, and also promote wellbeing. The focus of the choir is to support people affected by cancer and their carers to regain their confidence and directly stems from the key principles defined through the National Cancer Survivorship Initiative.

2. Where we are now?

To date we have relied on word of mouth, social media, posters and leaflets for communications about the choir and events.

3. Where do we need to be?

Communications have a key role to play in building a consistent voice across the community and local NHS. This can be achieved through the delivery of joined-up, consistent and coordinated messages that support and aid the marketing of the choir. We need to identify ambassadors for the choir, who will offer support to promote the choir, performances and events.

4. Objectives

- Staff across the local health services (primary, secondary and private) have a common understanding of the Rising Voices Community Choirs and will promote it in their clinics and working environment.
- Members of the choir understand the need to promote the choir and have the necessary resources to do so.

- Local community and faith leaders are aware of the choir and are interested in supporting or promoting the activities.
- Local Physical Activity programme leads are aware of the choir and are interested in supporting or promoting the activities.
- Local employers and corporate organisations are aware of the choir and are interested in supporting, sponsoring or promoting the activities.
- Local libraries and entertainment venues have posters and leaflets.
- Local media, newspapers, TV and Radio understand and support the choir

5. What success will look like?

By December 2025 we want all local NHS Staff working with people affected by cancer to be able to articulate our ‘top three’ things you should know about Rising Voices, who to contact, where the group meets and what fun they have. We want be confident that the same can be said across all the stakeholders Identified above.

6. Approach

We intend to use a core script and storytelling to explain the benefits of the choir and engage people in its delivery. All communications regarding Rising Voices Wessex will be delivered under the strapline ‘Community Choirs for people affected by cancer’ using the standard logo as shown above.

Using a storytelling approach will ensure that we keep messages and communications focused. It’s a communications technique often used to explain abstract or complicated strategies. It will bring the choir to life by rooting it in the individual experiences that people can relate to. This will bring people into the project, making it easier for them to understand and act as ambassadors for the choir. One of the ways we could achieve this is through story telling on the website/facebook and by using an animated cartoon storyboard which will provide people with an on-going narrative, and the key headlines, about the choir.

7. Key messages

Detailed key messages for each audience will be developed. However, the broad-brush messages for each main audience group are currently identified as follows:

External stakeholders	<p>Rising Voices Wessex is a community choir for local people living with and beyond cancer in Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire.</p> <p>Taking part in the choir:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is about enjoying music and singing for fun • helps with breathing, combats fatigue and restores confidence • helps people to rehabilitate after their treatment for cancer • enables peer to peer support in a social environment • it changes the way we meet the needs of those affected by cancer • helps people to recover from their treatment
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- helps with the loneliness that some people experience
 - gives people a sense of achievement

Members**The Rising Voices Choir is about improving people's lives**

- We all have a role to play to support and promote the choir
 - We are all ambassadors for the choir.
 - Friends of the choir are welcome and can be involved in providing the structure and resources to support it, marketing and fundraising.
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8. Communications channels and products

The Choir needs to develop a robust process for communication and make use of these, together with a range of other bespoke communications. The key activities include:

External:

- **Poster and leaflet campaign**
- **Photo Gallery**
- **Video clips, music videos**
- **Story telling of real experiences**
- **CD and MP3 tracks**
- **FAQs.**

External briefing material

Will explain the purpose of the choir, the facilities, venue for rehearsals and details needed to invite people to join. Access to the choir should be easy, welcoming and fun.

Core message script

We will develop a core messaging script to inform all interested parties about the choir. To include the 'top three things' people should know about Rising Voices Choir.

Feature articles

Feature articles will be scheduled into Mac Voice, Pulse, Local press and other publications and newsletters. These will draw on content from our central story bank as well as providing people with regular updates.

Cartoon/animation storyboarding

This will start by giving an overview of the story so far, and then provide engaging details to attract people to the subject and the choir for support, information and sponsorship.

Refresh the Website pages

We will refresh and develop the existing website to give people a real sense of what we do and how they too can help, to make it more vibrant and informative. This will also include some or all of the following:

- Cartoon/animation storyboard
- Stories and profiles taken from the story bank
- Updated FAQs for interested people
- Briefing materials/presentations
- Video or MP3

Briefing pack/resources

- Rising voices core message script/FAQs
- Posters and Leaflets
- Tee Shirts and Sweet Shirts with Rising Voices Logo
- Rising Voices pull up banners
- Rising Voices A Frame boards
- Rising voices pin badges
- Rising Voices Video
- Rising Voices CD

9. Evaluation

Where possible evaluation will be built into the activities of the choir; An annual survey will be undertaken plus regular reviews of the repertoire. A small-scale phone or paper survey could also be undertaken to see whether messages are reaching staff in the NHS and if they are understanding and engaging with the story.

Further research could be considered related to the benefits of singing to choir members.

10. Risks

There are a range of risks that need to be considered in this plan.

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of buy in/support from stakeholders to promote and support the choir	Make sure we include the right people to 'make it happen'.
Dependency on choir members to communicate and market the choir	Make sure we contact external stakeholders and champions to ensure support and growth of the choir
Dependency on Musical Directors (MD) and accompanying musicians	Ensure plans are in place to support the MD's and accompanist and succession plan.
Dependency on volunteers – Trustees and Steering Group	Ensure plans are in place to recruit and support the Volunteers and there is a succession plan.
The website, social media and admin site are not maintained.	Delegated volunteers to maintain website, social media and admin site according to the Code of Conduct.