

Health Research Institute (HRI) Communications Process

PURPOSE

The purpose of this process is to ensure that there is effective, succinct and clear communication both within the Health Research Institute and with all internal and external stakeholders.

RESPONSIBILITY

Overall responsibility for this process lies with the Operations Manager; however, all staff are responsible for maintaining good communications with all stakeholders.

PROCEDURE

The Operations Manager is committed to ensuring that all staff are given the opportunity to understand and contribute to the activities of the unit. The communications process forms an integral part of this commitment.

Communication within the Health Research Institute

There are several strategies in place to ensure effective communication within the Health Research Institute.

- **Unit-Level Meetings:** Unit-level meetings include:
 - Individual meetings between direct line managers and team members. Weekly or every fortnight.
 - Operations Meeting
 - Monthly with Operations Manager and the core Administration Team
 - Quarterly with the entire Operations Team
 - CRSU Team meeting- every two weeks.
 - HRI Executive Committee Meeting- three monthly.
 - Management Team Meeting- monthly.
 - Events co-ordination Meeting- every two weeks.

- **SharePoint:** SharePoint is used as a central repository of information for all unit-level documents. All staff members have access to SharePoint.

- **Open-door Policy:** Informal communication is ensured by the unit's open-door policy. Staff members are free to drop into any office at any time. When working remotely, staff members can organise a video call easily with each other or with their line manager.

Communication with Internal Stakeholders

- **Website:** The website is used to ensure ongoing awareness of all key stakeholders, of the activities undertaken by the Health Research Unit. The website clearly outlines the main research focal areas of the Institute, the team composition and the various activities being undertaken at any given time including Fundamentals of Health Research Series, Members Lunches and Standalone events such as Statistics, Data Research management and Project Management
- **Members:** HRI Members are communicated with via:
 - **E-Mail.** HRI has specific e-mail accounts for such correspondence.
 - **SharePoint.** A specific SharePoint site for Members which is constantly updated.
 - **Newsletter.** A monthly update to the Membership.
 - **Funding Newsletter.** A monthly newsletter focussing specifically on funding opportunities.
 - **The Postgrad/ Postdoc Hub Committee** which meets monthly. Hub events occur quarterly.
 - **Monthly activities for membership** which span networking, training and skills development.

Communication with External Stakeholders

As outlined above, the website is used as a key communication tool for both internal and external stakeholders. Key external stakeholders of HRI include, but are not limited to, the following:

- UL colleagues.
- Partner organisations- mainly University of Limerick Hospital Group and Mid-West Community Healthcare Organisation.
- Research Participants.
- Funding Bodies.
 - Communication with all the above is typically direct and via e-mail.

Feedback is gathered periodically, both formally and informally from both internal and external stakeholders, through customer/stakeholder surveys and by other means (e.g. focus groups, informal consultation, informal feedback etc.) as appropriate. Feedback is used to enhance service provision.

Closing the Feedback Loop

For communication to be effective, it must be a cyclical and reflective process. HRI team members are advocates of closing the feedback loop. This is done in several ways:

- Annual Report compilation and dissemination.
- Summary report of any feedback gathered for Executive Committee/ Management Team consideration.
- Reports, as appropriate, to the contributing stakeholders
- Continual improvement based on feedback, with communication of changes introduced to the team and the relevant stakeholders.

COMPLAINTS

Complaints regarding the activities of the HRI are dealt with through the university's complaint process and procedures.

RECORDS

HRI ensures that webpage content is current and up to date. SharePoint is used as a central repository for all unit-level documentation. Individual PCs are backed up to an ITD managed server. HRI is governed by UL's [Records Management Policy](#). Any personal data that is used as part of this process is processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) / Data Protection Acts 1988-2018 and the University of Limerick [Data Protection Policy](#)

PROCESS VERIFICATION

Evaluation of the Communications Process effectiveness is carried out using internal dialogue and QMS audits can be used. Changes to the process are put in place as required and as appropriate.

REVISION HISTORY

Revision No.	Date	Approved by:	Details of Change	Process Owner
1	Sept. 2021		<i>Initial Release</i>	
2	Jan. 2024	Goretti Brady	<p>Pg 1 Procedure- Unit level Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Added CRSU Team Meetings- every 2 weeks.Updated HRI Exec Comm meeting to three MonthlyAdded Management Team Meeting- Monthly <p>Pg 2 Closing the Feedback Loop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Pt2 Add Management team.Pt3 Report changed to reports.Website- Added Specific activities publicised on the HRI website. <p>Records</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Updated Links to Records Management and Data Protection Policy. <p>Whole Document</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Format updated. <p>All Pages Footer updated to Rev 2</p>	Luan Lyons

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