Improving health equity through innovation

Communications Manager

(Full or part time – minimum 0.6 FTE)

SEPTEMBER 2021
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The opportunity

Job title: Communications Manager
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Overview

*Can you help us spread the word about how innovation can improve health equity? Are you a dynamic communications professional that has a ‘can-do’ attitude and a ‘what-if…’ creative flair? Are you digitally savvy and open to new approaches to online engagement? We are looking for a new Communications Manager to join our team.*

In 2013 a small group of founding member organisations established the South West Academic Health Science Network. They were motivated by a shared ambition to accelerate the adoption and spread of innovation across our region to improve population health and generate economic growth.

Step forward eight years and that ambition has become a reality. Working in collaboration with the AHSNs across England, our work transforms lives through innovation.

In the last year, our work as a network of AHSNs has benefited over 258,000 people and leveraged over £462m of investment into the health and life science sector. You can read more about the impact of our work nationally in our latest AHSN Network impact report and regional work in our annual review.

At the South West AHSN we focus our efforts on improving health equity – identifying and spreading innovative practice that helps close health equity gaps in access to care, quality of care, opportunity for a healthy life and agency in managing individual health.

Working with our members and partners, we share the ambition and opportunity to improve health equity through the adoption and spread of innovative practice. We do this by:

- Spreading innovative practice across the health and care system through collaboration, practical support and knowledge sharing.
- Building capability in our region to spread innovative practice and improve quality.
- Supporting evaluation and application of learning to improve the delivery of health and care services.
Overview (cont.)

As a Communications Manager you will report to our Communications Director and work collaboratively with colleagues to manage an exciting portfolio of communications activities, ensuring the South West AHSN continues to extend its reach and influence internally, regionally and nationally.

Working across an ambitious, forward-thinking organisation, you will develop impactful communications campaigns that inform, inspire and connect our staff, stakeholders and external audiences.

We are looking for someone who can use a variety of methods, including their extensive experience with digital communications to demonstrate the impact of our work and its role in improving health equity in the South West.
Role profile

You will ensure high quality and timely delivery of communications projects across the organisations programmes.

Working with communications colleagues, you will advise and support colleagues on all aspects of brand, content, design and media. You will have a particular focus on development and delivery of impactful digital communications.

You will work with other colleagues to make the most of their communications skills and ensure productive well-managed relationships with external consultants, agencies and suppliers to create strategic, content-led internal and external communications.

Key success factors

- Able to use a variety of methods and combine data with patient stories to clearly demonstrate the impact of our work and its outcomes for people receiving health and care.
- Able to see the bigger picture and demonstrate the benefits of the South West AHSN’s work with its many partners.
- Comfortable with change and uncertainty in a fast-paced setting.
- A proactive, solutions-focused completer finisher, with a can-do attitude.
- Enabling colleagues across the organisations to make the most of their communications skills and develop their capabilities.

Responsibilities

- Generate and co-ordinate effective communications aligned with the organisation’s health equity strategy, business plan, and communications strategy.
- Maximise the impact of a content-based approach to stakeholder communications, including thought leadership campaigns.
- Expand the organisation’s reach and profile as a leading voice in health equity using digital communications.
- Manage impact measuring and reporting from communications campaigns.
- Provide communications management for South West AHSN events such as conferences, seminars, workshops and exhibitions.
- Proactively generate campaigns, developing the organisations editorial plan to raise our profile and as a leading voice on improving health equity.
- Liaise with colleagues across the organisation and the South West AHSN Network, supporting national communications projects and working collaboratively to co-produce messaging and materials as appropriate.
- Provide project management and development support to our Digital Communications Assistant (Apprentice).
- Manage relationships with consultants and external suppliers.
Person specification

Experience we are looking for

• Experience of working in corporate and strategic communications settings, producing a portfolio of targeted marketing and communications assets to support organisational strategy.

• A strong digital communications background, with an excellent eye for detail and ability to create engaging content for different channels and audiences.

• Working knowledge of proactive relationship management, membership or stakeholder engagement.

• A track record in a busy environment, working to tight deadlines and having the resilience to cope with changing business demands.

• Experience of line management, and managing supplier and consultant relationships.

• A high level of computer skills, including demonstrable experience of creating impact through a range of online platforms, such as Twitter, LinkedIn, WordPress and maximising the use of CRM systems.

Experience and capabilities you will develop in the role

• Developing impactful communications to improve health and care and support cutting-edge innovative practice to flourish.

• Co-producing communications within diverse partnerships and across sectors including health and care, industry, and the voluntary sector.

• Influencing the voice of the organisation in a learning-based environment where creativity and new ideas are encouraged.

Abilities and attributes

• An instinct for a good story and how to highlight the human angle.

• Up to date on the latest communications practices and tools and how they can be applied in different situations.

• Effective communications skills – with the ability to earn and maintain the trust of internal and external stakeholders at all levels.

• Organised and able to effectively prioritise competing demands, using project management skills to stay on track.

• Adaptability – confident in the moment to appraise and re-prioritise tasks calmly.

• Collaborative in approach – open to challenge, co-production and change.

• Creative and curious – not afraid of complexity.

• Energetic and goal-focused – a commitment to delivering excellence in all circumstances.
Who we are

The South West Academic Health Science Network (South West AHSN) is one of 15 AHSNs across the country set up by NHS England to spread innovation at pace and scale across the country in 2013.

As the only bodies connecting NHS and academic organisations, local authorities, the third sector and industry, AHSNs are uniquely placed to identify and spread health innovation at pace and scale – driving the adoption and spread of innovative ideas and technologies across large populations.

Collectively, the AHSN Network plays a critical role in supporting the health and care sector. For example, in the last year we’ve supported 100% of Clinical Commissioning Groups in England to launch the national COVID Oximetry @home model as part of enabling remote care during the pandemic. We’ve also helped our partners to support 2,339 children receive objective ADHD assessments as a result of our national programme during 2020–2021. The work of the Network has supported 2,888 companies and created 700 jobs during this time.

Our work is funded by NHS England and NHS Improvement, nationally commissioned programmes, and contributions from our members, as well as income generated through other activities aligned to our core mission and purpose.

In 2018, NHS England and NHS Improvement relicensed AHSNs for a further five years, setting out a clear long-term vision to drive health innovation and stimulate economic growth, and meeting the goals of the NHS Long Term Plan and NHS Patient Safety Strategy. In early 2021, the network of AHSNs agreed a five year strategy for the AHSN Network (2021–2026), developed in collaboration with our commissioners and partners across the country.

The South West AHSN is an independent company limited by guarantee, governed by a board of directors made up of senior NHS and university leaders from across our region as well as independent non-executive directors. Based in our award-winning office on the outskirts of Exeter, we work across the counties of Somerset, Devon, and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
What we do

We identify and spread innovative practice across the health and care system, to improve population health and generate economic growth.

We do that by providing practical support to partners to adopt and spread innovation, building the capability of the health and care system to innovate and improve and supporting partners to evaluate and learn from improvements to health and care services.

Our new South West AHSN strategy brings greater focus on how to achieve our purpose. During the next five years we will harness our experience in spreading innovation to make improvements in one of the most significant issues for our region – health equity.

We will seek to improve health equity by identifying and spreading innovation that narrows health equity gaps in access to care, quality of care and individual opportunity and agency in achieving a healthy life.

Our new strategy will inform how we deliver national programmes as part of the AHSN Network and define the focus of our regional programmes. Through this work we will seek to generate a positive impact that is greater than the sum of its parts – improving health equity in our region and influencing improvement at a national level.

We will deliver our strategy through our five business functions:

- **Programmes** – responsible for the delivery of our portfolio of national and regional programmes to spread innovative practice.
- **Evaluation and Learning** – responsible for the evaluation of our programmes and our work supporting partners to evaluate and learn from improvements to health and care services.
- **Partnerships** – responsible for the delivery of our capability building work and developing new partnerships to grow our impact and diversify our income.
- **Communications** – responsible for building our profile, strengthening our ability to influence and supporting delivery through effective communications and engagement.
- **Corporate Operations** – responsible for our finance, HR and corporate services.

Background reading:
- South West AHSN Annual Review 2019/20
- AHSN Network Impact Report 2020–2021
Working here

Benefits
We provide a generous benefits package including employer pension contributions up to 10% and an employee assistance programme with Health Assured.

Wellbeing
Staff wellbeing is a priority for us. We are continuously working with colleagues to provide initiatives that will enhance our team’s health, happiness and general wellbeing.

We provide free fresh fruit in the office, showers and lockers, and there are a number of employee-led activities such as walking meetings and a running club.

Diversity and inclusion
We believe that an inclusive and diverse environment can help us achieve greater impact in our work. We are committed to the AHSN Network diversity pledges and are developing a progressive and ambitious five-year action plan led by our Diversity and Inclusion Working Group. Through this work, we are seeking to further develop a culture of inclusivity and increase diversity as part of our wider South West AHSN organisational strategy 2021–2026.

Work environment
The South West AHSN is based in Exeter, Devon, in an award-winning office – an ideal setting for collaborating, convening and growing our internal and external relationships.

We encourage inclusivity and value diversity, actively seeking to work with individuals, partners and organisations from a broad range of backgrounds. We support flexible working, part-time roles and job shares, and are open to applications from people with wide-ranging experiences.

Training and development
We are committed to supporting learning and development through generous individual development budgets, organisation-wide training, and peer-to-peer learning and coaching opportunities.
Our team

Board

Our board is led by an independent chair and composed of a mixture of both executive and non-executive directors, including representatives from our three Integrated Care Systems, our university partners and independent non-executive directors with expertise in commercial, clinical and digital sectors.

Executive team

Jon Siddall
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Jon joined the South West AHSN in April 2020, following three years as director of programmes at Guy’s and St Thomas’ Charity. Jon has experience across a range of health and social issues, working with funders, investors and government agencies in the UK, Ireland and New Zealand. Jon also spent four years at the South West AHSN, helping to launch the organisation in 2013.

Anita Randon
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMMES
Anita joined the team in autumn 2020. An experienced strategic consultant across multiple sectors including health and care, Anita has a track record in driving innovation and delivering sustainable change. Before joining the South West AHSN Anita was leading the design and delivery of new digitally-enabled models of outpatient care for Surrey Heartlands Health and Care Partnership.

Dan Lyus
DIRECTOR OF PARTNERSHIPS
Dan joined the South West AHSN in August 2019. An executive director with experience across commercial, not-for-profit and public sectors, Dan has business development and commissioning expertise as well as strong and broad networks across the health, care, support and housing sectors.

Clinical Director — Vacant post to be recruited in 2021.

Our executive team are also members of the board.

Richard Watson
DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
Richard joined the team in 2018. Previously, Richard was a finance director at Plymouth Marjon University and worked in college and research finance at the University of Exeter.
Communications Team

The team is responsible for developing and delivering impact led communications materials and co-ordinating distribution across our digital channels and through our stakeholder base. Working in collaboration across the organisation, the work of the team is focused on developing our external and internal relationships and providing clear signposting to engagement opportunities through our Programmes and Partnerships Teams.

Anna Lodge
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Anna joined the South West AHSN on staff in March 2021 having been an associate with the team since 2018. She has over 20 years’ experience working for multinationals, charities and community organisations specialising in strategic communications and senior management.

Thea Taylor
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Thea joined the South West AHSN in 2019 with ten years’ of experience in communications, marketing and multimedia production for health and science organisations across the UK and in Australia. She has a background in science, holding degrees in biochemistry and science communication.

Grace Harper
DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANT

Grace first joined the SW AHSN in 2018, becoming part of the Communications Team in 2020. She has a background in design and illustration and enjoys combining this creativity alongside her digital marketing skills in order to promote our work.

Dan Lyus is the executive lead for the Communications Team. A range of professional suppliers and associates complements the staff team above.
The South West AHSN is a membership organisation with partners drawn from a range of collaborating organisations across the South West.

- Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Devon Partnership NHS Trust
- Livewell Southwest
- NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group
- Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust
- NHS Kernow Clinical Commissioning Group
- Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust
- Royal Devon & Exeter NHS Foundation Trust
- NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group
- South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
- Somerset NHS Foundation Trust
- Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust
- University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust
- University of Exeter
- University of Plymouth
- Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
How to apply

Salary and Terms of Employment
Annual salary range £30,000–£40,000 (depending upon experience) plus pension and other benefits.

Applications
We are working hard to ensure we recruit great people and minimise unconscious bias in our selection process. To support us in doing so we use the Applied recruitment platform, which anonymises applicants.

To apply for the role, please click here.

We will only ask for CVs if successfully shortlisted for interview.

Closing date for applications is 9am, Wednesday 20 October 2021.

More information
If you’d like to know more about the role or to arrange an informal conversation with Anna Lodge (Communications Director), please contact Sam Horne, HR Advisor, by emailing: sam.horne@swahsn.com

To find out more about the South West AHSN, please visit www.swahsn.com

You’ll find many South West AHSN staff on Twitter, as well as regular updates on our main @sw_ahsn profile

We’re also on LinkedIn at: https://www.linkedin.com/company/south-west-academic-health-science-network

Interviews
Interviews will be held on Wednesday 3rd November, and Friday 5th November. Successful candidates will be contacted shortly after the closing date to be invited to an interview conducted by video conferencing.