

**STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION GROUP (SIG)  
PROPOSAL ON COMMUNICATIONS**

**Proposal**

1. That the Joint Secretariat should develop a communications strategy, in conjunction with others engaged in the work arising from HITF, to publicise the achievements and communicate the implementation plans to interested parties in the UK and overseas.

**Background**

2. Throughout the HITF process, the Joint Secretariat worked co-operatively with those actively involved in the Task Force on publicising developments through various means eg press releases, providing speakers, addressing seminars, attending events and exhibitions, production of articles, development of websites etc. The public launch of the HITF report in November 2004 also generated some good publicity, as did Ministerial visits to Medica, the USA and other events. For the most part, both Government and industry delivered the same key messages.
3. As we have now moved into the implementation phase, it is increasingly important to extend communication to a wider audience, particular those who will be impacted by the changes. The work of HITF and now SIG is largely centrally driven, but implementation of the outputs will involve new systems and procedures, different ways of working and changed behaviours. Staff in the private sector, wider government, ALBs, and the health and social services will all be affected. In addition, the industry is global and the European Commission have embarked on a study of the industry. The development of an EU-wide approach on how to support innovation and improve people's access to improved, innovative treatments is an option and an opportunity for the UK - industry and government - to promote the approach and solutions reached under HITF.
4. There is a strong case for scaling up current activity on communications. Factors to consider are :
  - Development of a strategy based on a joint approach (consistent messages, collaboration on sharing out the opportunities and shared platforms where possible, etc)
  - Identification of target audiences in the UK and overseas
  - Resource implications

**Action**

5. The views of members are sought on this proposal. If there is agreement to increase activity, the Joint Secretariat will co-ordinate the development of a strategy as outlined.

**Joint Secretariat  
June 05**

