

SPF Communication Survey

Report of findings

June 2016



Contents

1. Executive summary
2. Introduction
3. Purpose
4. Our method
5. Respondent demographics and representation
6. Key findings
7. Areas for improvement

1. Executive Summary

The aim of the online survey was to gather information from SPF website users about the effectiveness of SPF communications, the suitability of communication channels, and to capture feedback on the content and usability of the SPF website, and to establish how informative and usable the various audiences find it.

The survey has shown that overall SPF communications are effective, and the majority of users find the website content good and navigation easy. The survey has identified some key themes and areas for improvement in website content, usability and communication channels. The recommendations in this report form the basis of an action plan going forward and will inform a review of the communications strategy.

The key themes that were identified from the survey.

- Overall content of the website is considered good, very good or excellent by users.
- Navigation and the search tool is an issue for some.
- The majority of respondents find the content on the website relevant or very relevant.
- Respondents visited the site most often to get updates on the work of the SPF national, regional and local, for latest news and developments, for information to use in briefings etc and to discover new and best practice via the case studies.
- Most popular areas are latest updates and SPF bulletins.
- Users have suggested partner websites could link to the SPF website, and new content such as legal updates could become a feature.
- The audience would like to see much more use of social media channels
- On a general note, inclusion of private sector providers of NHS services and views from arm length bodies/outsourced groups is requested.

2. Introduction

This report provides a summary of the results of an online survey undertaken by the Social Partnership Forum (SPF) between October 2015 and January 2016.

In this report you will find information on:

- the purpose of the survey
- our method
- respondent demographics
- key findings, recommendations and action plan
- summary.

3. Purpose

The aim of the survey was to:

- gather information from SPF website users about the effectiveness of SPF communications
- measure the suitability of SPF communication channels
- capture feedback on the content and usability of the SPF website
- establish how informative and usable the various audiences find the SPF website.

The results of the survey will be used to inform a review of the current SPF communications strategy, and to inform future updates of the website to make sure the content matches audience needs.

4. Our method

The survey comprised of 11 questions embedded on to the SPF website with introductory text. The survey took around 10 minutes to complete, and was publicised through the SPF bulletin, an SPF email alert and shared through NHS Employers' communications channels.

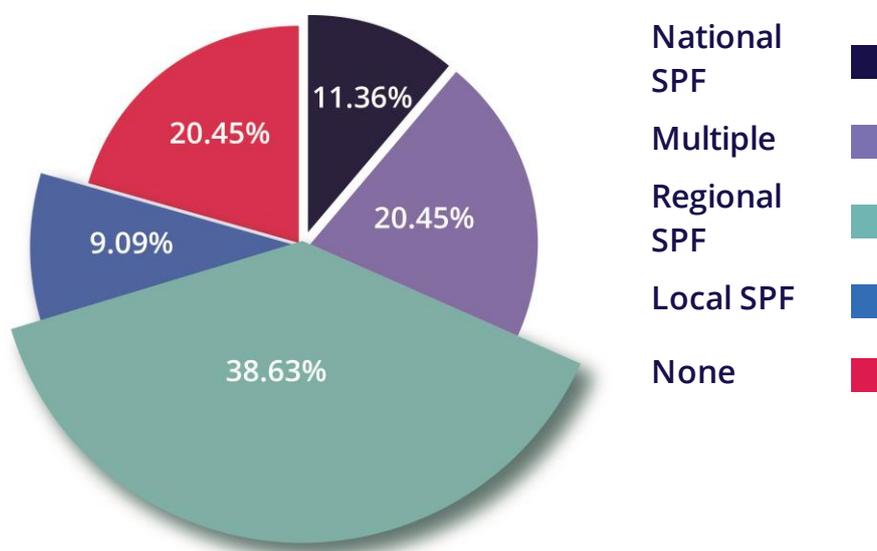
The survey was open from October 2015 to January 2016.

5. Respondent demographics and representation

The survey received a total of 53 responses, of which 44 responses were suitable to use. The unused responses were discarded due to incomplete information. We have therefore based the findings in this report on 44 completed surveys. The response rate is around 6 per cent of the average number of visitors each month to the SPF website.

Question 1 asked respondents for their contact details.

Q2. Are you a member of the following?



Current target audience

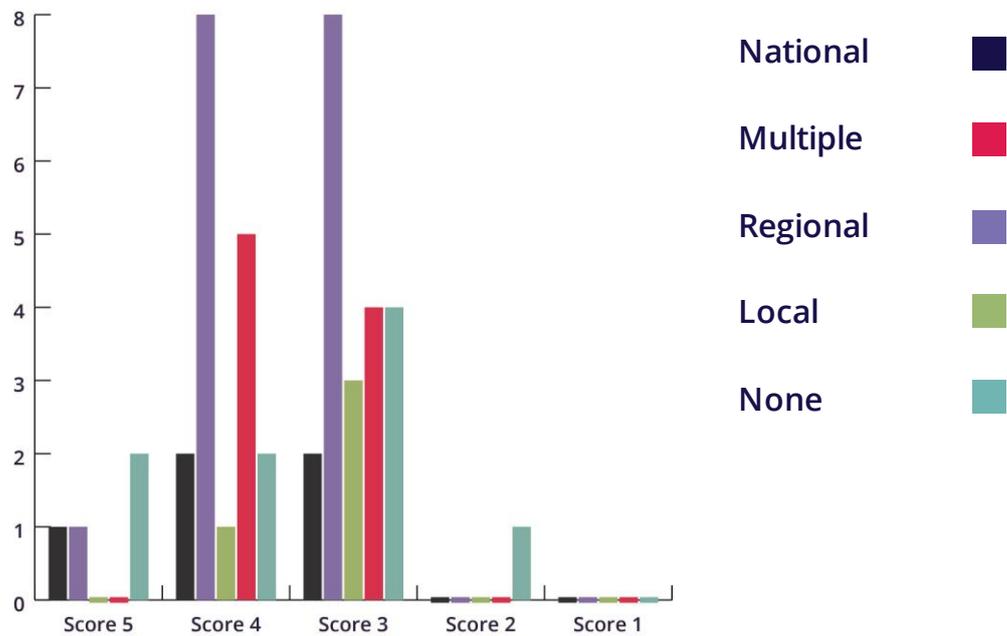
The current target audience for SPF communications is:

- national SPF and sub group members
- regional SPF members
- local SPF members
- staff side officers and members
- HR managers
- workforce leads within NHS, Department of Health (DH) and arms-length bodies.

There was representation from across the current target audience among the 44 respondents: five were members of the national SPF, 17 were members of the regional SPF, nine had multiple membership, four were members of the local SPF and nine were none of the above. Those respondents who were in the *none of the above* categories were a mixture of trusts and trade union representatives.

6. Key findings

Q3. How would you rate the overall content of the SPF website on a scale of 1 - 5? (1 poor – 5 excellent)



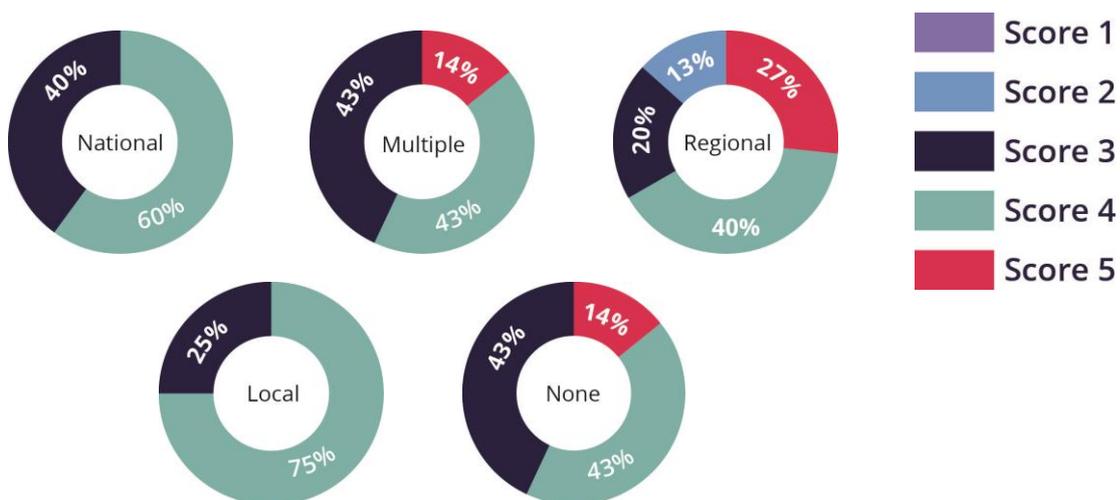
The above results indicate that the majority of respondents across all groups rate the overall content of the website good, very good or excellent.

Recommendation

The SPF should aim to build on the good foundations and consolidate the good practice already in place, by:

- providing a dynamic and engaging website aimed at the current target audience that shares authoritative and practical information on partnership working
- contributing to the business case for partnership working and articulate the benefits of partnership working
- communicating the values of partnership working for patient experience
- sharing current and good practice and highlight achievements/examples of successful partnership working
- communicating the work of the national and regional SPF
- being a central resource for materials and tools for partnership working in the NHS and key work areas.

Q4. How easy is it to find content on the SPF website on a scale of 1-5? (1 difficult - 5 Easy)



The above results indicate the majority of respondents find it fairly easy to navigate around the SPF website, with a small number finding it quite difficult. This indicates overall navigation of the website is good, however it is worth considering ways to make it better.

Recommendation

The SPF could improve the navigation of the website by adopting the following recommendations.

Authors to make sure meta data is complete

1. To make sure the content published on the website is search engine friendly.

The search function on the SPF website and on Google uses a combination of the words that are on a web page and web page metadata to produce listings.

For web pages to be found by people searching for content, authors need to include the terms in web page content and in web page metadata that people will search for.

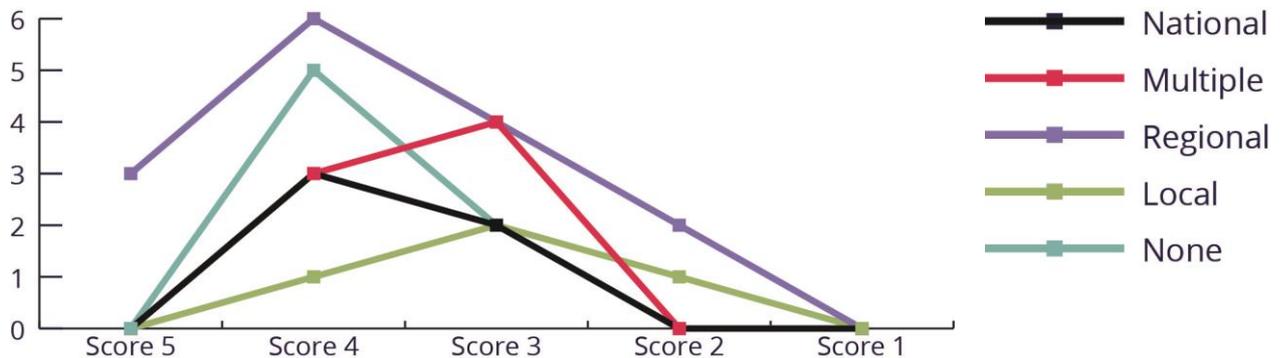
2. To help users of the website find what they are looking for.

When people are using the site they need to be able to find what they are looking for. If they aren't regular users, navigating menus can be tricky, most users will attempt to use the search function but if they can't find what they are looking for they will leave the site and look somewhere else.

Authors to use accurate titles

Users should have a good idea of what they will find on a page even before clicking any navigational link. This is true whether it's a main navigation link or an internal text link. Use accurate text to describe the linked page so users know what they're going to get.

Q5. How relevant and current do you find the content on the SPF website on a scale of 1 – 5 (1 not very relevant - 5 very relevant)



The above results indicate the majority of respondents find the content on the website relevant or very relevant, with a small number finding it less relevant. This indicates overall that the content of the website is good, however keeping content current and updated is critical to keeping the audience engaged.

Recommendation

To ensure a steady flow of web traffic, with visitors staying on the site for longer, the SPF should aim to keep the SPF website current by:

- adding new content/new features such as a blog - let the content be driven by what users want to see more of or the reasons they visit the website
- regularly reviewing the website - check the user experience, is content outdated, when the home page was last updated
- regularly surveying the audience - understand what your audience wants, hold a short annual survey, based around the same questions so improvement or otherwise can be measured.

7. Areas for improvement

Open questions

Q6. Why do you visit the SPF website? (free text box for respondents answers)

National:

- "Two reasons: To find supporting information that I can use to promote/market SPF via briefings etc. And to keep an eye on appropriateness, relevance and quality of content"
- "To catch up on what is happening away from the national SPF"
- "Up to date information on campaigns and work streams"

Multiple:

- "When prompted by email bulletins, for information"
- "To access up to date information"
- "Case studies information"
- "Information latest updates, best practice"

Regional:

- "To see if there is any news I am unaware of and what initiatives are being taken forward e.g. bullying/stress etc"
- "Planning and updates"
- "To keep up to date with the national and regional updates"
- "Updates and guidance on current topics, both national and regional"
- "To keep updated and disseminate information to local workplace reps"
- "To keep up to date with SPF developments regionally and nationally"

Local:

- "To see if there is anything of interest"
- "For update on SPF Activity, Staff passport info"

None:

- "To keep up to date and look for new developments"
- "To find out information on the regional SPFs; to direct & signpost people to specific information such as the Learning for Life toolkit"
- "Mostly I have used the website to look at the case studies when researching ways in which to develop new working practices within the Trust"
- "For information that encompasses all the relevant NHS issues"

The above responses (which are a representative selection of those received) indicate respondents visit the website for updates on the work of the SPF national, regional and local, for latest news and developments, for information to use in briefings etc and to discover new and best practice via the case studies.

Recommendation

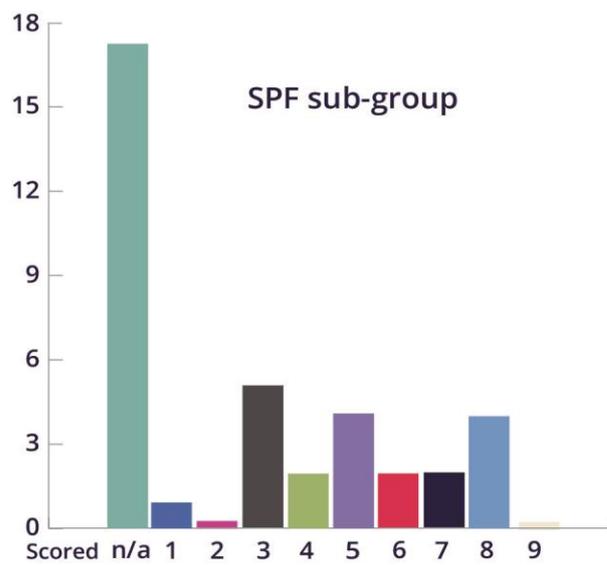
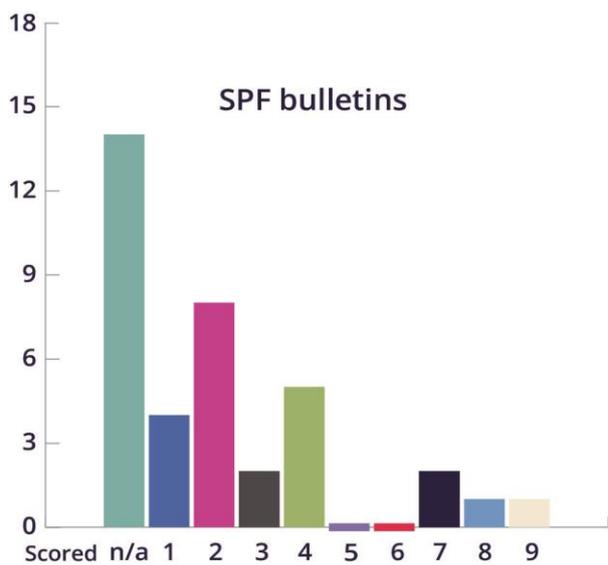
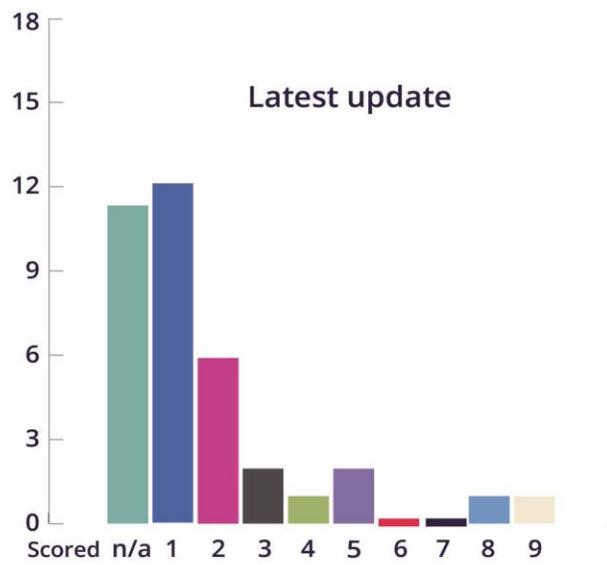
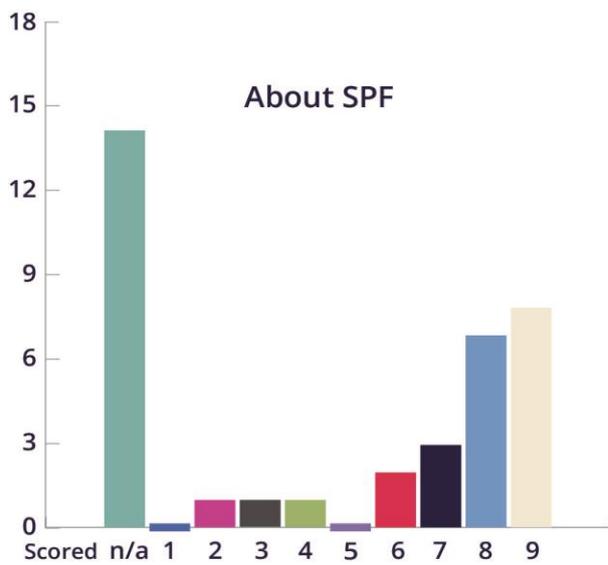
As with the recommendation at question 5, keeping the website and the SPF's priorities current, reviewing content, reporting news and latest developments will ensure that users have a more positive experience.

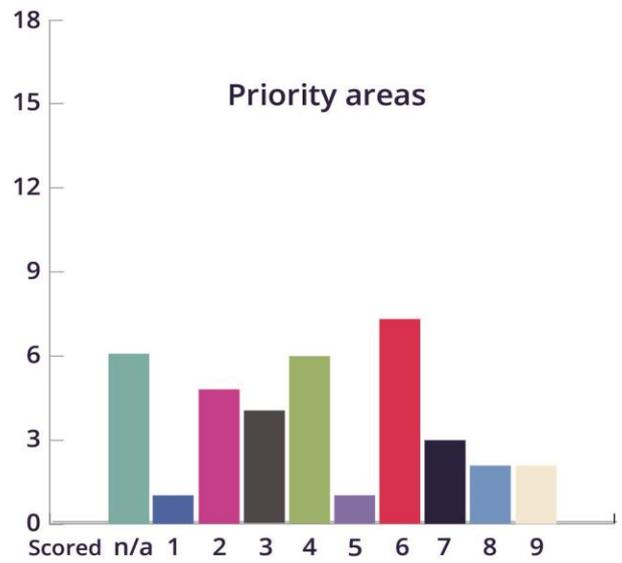
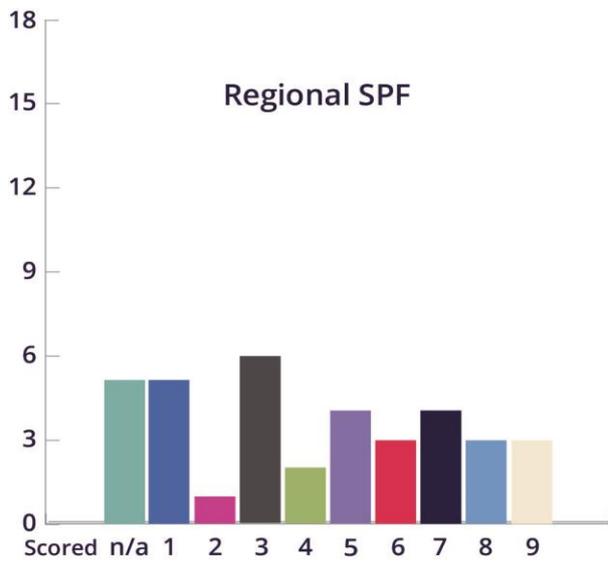
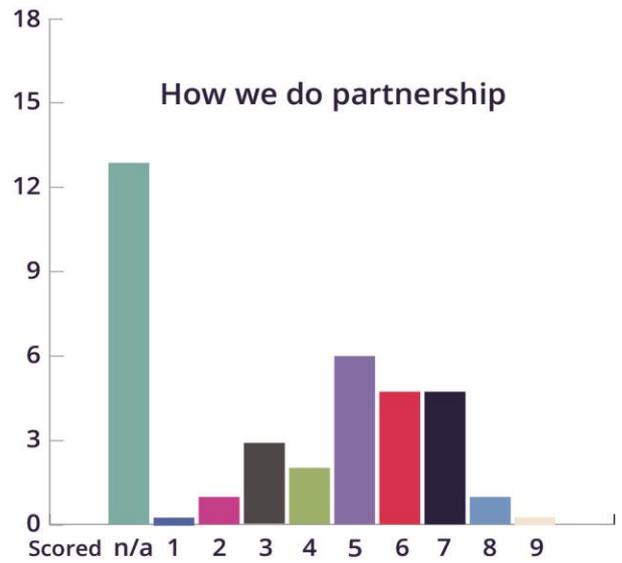
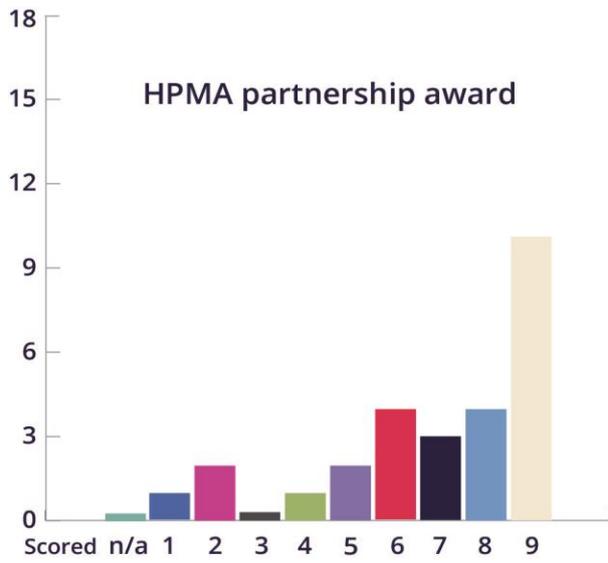
Use plain English, language that everyone understands.

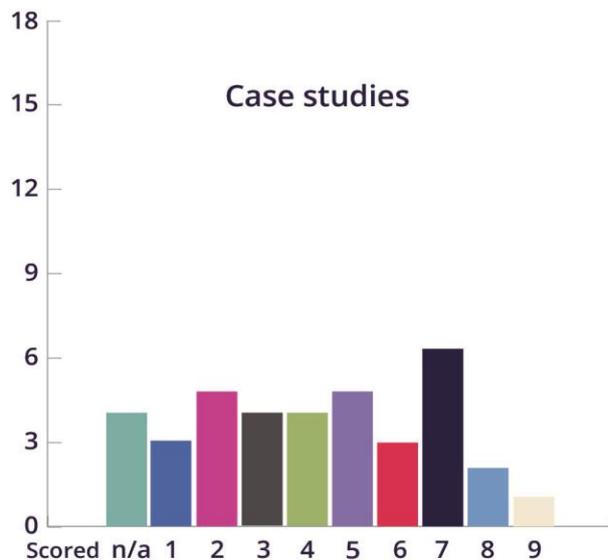
Regional and local SPFs to apply same disciplines to their web pages and to aim over time to have some consistency between regions in terms of content on the web pages.

Case studies are an important product of the SPF, they are used by partners to take learning and best practice from. There needs to be more focus on case studies being an exemplar for others to follow, with real evidence of partnership working.

Q7. What content, tools and resources do you find most useful on the SPF website? Please rank from 1 – 9 (1 - being the most useful, 9 - the least useful)







Please note: the above represent overall scores across all member groups. The highest scoring single product is the latest update, followed by SPF bulletins and regional SPFs. The HPMA partnership award has been chosen as the least useful product, although this may be because the HPMA awards are an annual event so the content of the web page has a shelf life. The case studies and podcast which are outputs from the HPMA finalists are the more relevant products for users of the website.

The responses are entirely consistent with the answers given to question 6, why do you visit the SPF website. They are also consistent with monthly website stats in terms of the top three pages most regularly viewed.

Recommendation

To ensure that the website's content is seen as useful and relevant to the audience, the SPF is recommended to focus on regularly refreshing latest updates and the supporting images on the home page.

To develop the SPF bulletin as a key communication channel for the SPF, to review the structure and content and make sure the product is relevant for the audience.

Wherever possible to link from each article to a corresponding section of the website.

Focus on case studies being an exemplar for others to follow (rather than people doing the day job), with real evidence of partnership working being an absolute necessity.

Review the areas of the website that don't score as well and look for ways to improve them, or remove them.

Q8. What content, tools and resources would you like to see added to the SPF website?

National

- “Coding of search could possibly be improved, as sometimes cannot find basic information, but may be an IT issue”

Multiple

- “How we can work in partnership across the Health Economy eg CCGs”

Regional

- “Not sure it’s clear how it all links up nationally”
- “The basic problem with SPF is not its IT or website but the lack of commitment of many employers to the concept of partnership working. London seems to do it well, others not so well”

Local

- “Legal updates”

None

- “More consistent information from regional SPF activity”
- “Views from arm length bodies/outsourced groups”

Recommendation

The above responses (which are a representative selection of all those received) can be addressed by adding new content, by improving metadata, introducing consistency particularly on the regional SPF web pages and better signposting to the SPF infographic for a visual explanation of the structure of the SPF.

Q9. Which other websites do you use to find information on partnership working or other related subjects?

National

- IPA
- Professional body, NHS Employers
- Kings Fund iro engagement, Michael West
- UNITE, UNISON

Multiple

- TUC, local employers & Unions

- NHS Employers
- Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), NHS Employers

Regional

- NHS Employers, Kings Fund
- ACAS, NHS employers, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy and other unions, NHS England
- DH, British Medical Association, Royal College of Nursing,
- ACAS

Local

- None

None

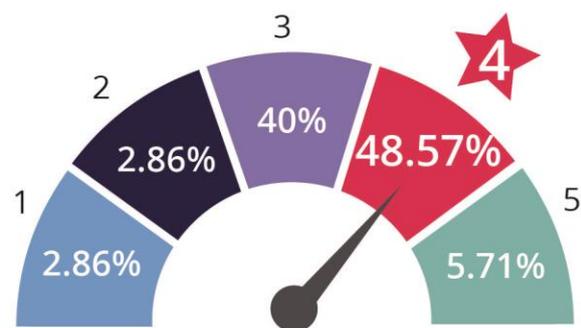
- NHS Employers; UNISON; Health Education England Talent for Care
- ACAS/Unites
- CIPD and NHS Employers

Recommendation

When looking to improve website content and visuals it is worth while looking at other websites visited by your audience. Future research can establish why they use other websites, ie is it about service or content?

Q10. How would you rate the content of the SPF bulletin on a scale of 1 -5? (1 poor - 5 excellent)

The majority of respondents rate the content of the SPF bulletin as good or very good. This is consistent with the bulletin being one of the most popular communications from the SPF, and the requirement of the audience for up to date news, developments and best practice.



Q11. What other communications channels would you like both national and regional SPFs to use? Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, posters or visuals, news alerts/must read comms etc.

National

- I would like to see SPF members using social media to flag important information and updates and then link to the SPF website.

- It would be good to get links to our main partner's websites, specifically HEE and NHS England - basically anyone who could be used to push the SPF and its work.
- News alerts.

Multiple

- Twitter, news alerts.
- LinkedIn.

Regional

- News alerts and must read items.
- Twitter, LinkedIn.
- All of the above
- I would like to see multiple platforms of social media used as a standard in order to be accessible to a larger number of individuals.
- Twitter, Infographic or other simple messaging.
- Facebook and news alerts by e-m please.

Local

- News alerts.
- Twitter would be current précised comms that are quick to read and have the vital points clearly set out - what you need to know.
- I tend to use my staff side chair for information so anything else is purely supplementary or to check out facts.

None

- Twitter; weekly news update.
- Posters as there is so much social media information that it's possible to miss key messages.
- Twitter, Emailed news alerts/hot topic updates.

Recommendation

It is evident from the responses that there is a clear need for the SPF to develop and implement a social media strategy. Respondents have indicated they would like to see the SPF using various social media channels to report latest news or newly launched tools and resources including links to the website. Not only is this a good way to communicate with a wider audience, and potentially a new audience, using website links brings users to the website, including twitter images which have also been shown to increase engagement by around 300 per cent.

Issue news alerts by email with clear marking to indicate a must read or high priority communication are also requested. Partners to consider developing a must read or high priority email alert, or a system to indicate the priority of the content of existing SPF email alerts.

Q12. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about SPF communications?

National

- “We need all partners/members to “spread the message” to and through their networks”
- “The calendar is missing a lot of the key meeting dates. Given its prominence on the front page it would be good to have this up-to-date”
- “Think it should be streamlined, kept factual/simple”

Multiple

- No response.

Regional

- “No. The SPF has a really valuable role to play in ensuring we achieve the best possible levels of partnership working across the NHS. Keep doing what you are doing!”
- “Central (National SPF) comms appear way ahead of regional SPF comms and web pages are very poor and should be improved to portray a more professional approach and improve regional communication”
- “It’s not clear when they appear as a heading in the crowded inbox whether they are routine or important, could you differentiate please so the really important ones get prioritised”

Local

- “It would be nice to feature some local SPF's”

None

- “Whilst you are fairly inclusive, you are not totally inclusive as vast areas of the NHS are now in private hands (myself included) and we have no voice so an invitation to these groups would surely bring this about”

Recommendation

Learning points from responses to question 12 include:

- Partners to take responsibility for promoting the work of the SPF
- Website calendar to be updated regularly
- Use plain English, language that everyone understands.
- Regional SPFs to introduce consistency on the regional web pages, and to apply the same disciplines to their web pages as to the other main pages, ie keeping the website current, review content, report news and latest developments.
- Regional SPFs to work with local SPFs and include some features about local SPFs on their web pages.
- The SPF to consider inclusion of content for private sector providers of NHS services and views from arm length bodies/outsourced groups.