

## NORTH BAY REGIONAL HEALTH CENTRE (NBRHC)

<b>Policy and Procedure</b>		<b>Policy Number</b>	ADM-BO-006	
<b>Title</b> Communications Protocol		<b>Policy category</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> Departmental <input type="checkbox"/> Organization Wide <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Board
		<b>Manual</b>		Board
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor	<input type="checkbox"/> Major
<b>Origination Date</b>		<b>Developer</b>		
<b>Effective Date</b> (date this version came into effect)	Reviewed by Governance Committee June 11, 2015 Approved by Board October 16, 2015	Governance Committee		
<b>Cross References (NBRHC or legacy organization policies)</b> Not applicable		<b>Comparable Policy from service provider within NBRHC Facility</b> Not applicable		

**NOTE:** This is a **CONTROLLED** document for internal use only, any document appearing in a paper form should **ALWAYS** be checked against the online version prior to use.

### 1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Protocol is to ensure effective communication among North Bay Regional Health Centre, its Directors, stakeholders and the public.

Further, this Protocol:

- Provides a clear, consistent protocol for all Directors to prevent any damage to stakeholders' confidence and inaccurate or misleading information being released to the public.
- Provides the Board with a system to ensure that it speaks publicly with one voice.

### 2.0 Policy

The Board shall give authority to the Chair and to the Chief Executive Officer, and may give authority from time to time to one or more other Directors, officers or employees of the organization to make statements to the news media or public about matters brought before the Board.

In the absence of such authority, Directors shall refrain from communicating publicly, with the media or staff about any matters regarding the organization and shall refer all such enquiries to the designated spokesperson(s).

### 3.0 Minor Revision History

Not applicable

### 4.0 Definitions

Not applicable

## 5.0 Materials required

Not applicable

## 6.0 Procedure

### 6.1. Formal Communications

- The President and CEO communicates on behalf of, and represents the organization.
- The Chair communicates on behalf of, and represents the Board of Directors of the organization.
- Individual Directors refer all enquiries to the designated spokesperson, typically the President and CEO or his/her designate; when in doubt, enquiries are referred to the Chair for Board matters, and to the President and CEO for all others. This applies to event invitations, media, public, management, staff and other stakeholder requests and communications.

### 6.2. Informal Communications

- Individual Directors will inevitably and legitimately have informal communications with stakeholders, including staff members, of the organization.
- In all these instances it is incumbent upon Directors to be explicitly clear that they are communicating in a personal capacity.

### 6.3. Attendance at Events

The organization may host events including those of a social, representational and commercial nature. At such events Directors are expected to exercise vigilance and tact, referring any sensitive matters to the designated spokesperson(s).

There may be instances when Directors are requested to participate in other events by virtue of their association with the organization, for example a speaking engagement to a community or professional organization. In these instances:

- The Director should advise the President and CEO of the request;
- The request will be considered and vetted jointly by the Chair of the Board and the President and CEO;
- The Director may be provided with generic speaking notes for the occasion.
- The Director will make it clear that he/she is not speaking on behalf of the organization, rather in a personal capacity; and,
- The Director will provide the President and CEO or the Chair of the Board a verbal debrief of the event.

## **6.4. Media Relations**

The primary media spokesperson is the President and CEO. In certain circumstances the Chair may also speak.

In the interest of keeping Directors abreast of issues involving the organization, the President and CEO will ensure that they receive relevant media and other information on the organization's activities and business.

In instances where the issues are high profile or contentious, the President and CEO will ensure that Directors receive appropriate questions and answers which provide the corporate position and key messages on an issue.

Directors will refer any requests for media interviews to the President and CEO or designated media spokesperson. In referring a media enquiry, Directors should be mindful that:

- Media requests for information usually require a speedy response and should be handled on a priority basis;
- By referring the call to the President and CEO or designated spokesperson, Directors provide a signal as to the limit of their authority; and,
- They should not to talk "off the record".

## **6.5. Requests from the Public**

Occasions may arise from whereby a Director is approached by an individual or organization requesting assistance in resolving an issue with the organization.

Under these circumstances the request should be directed to the President and CEO.

## **6.6. Other Communications Protocols**

Other communications protocols relevant to Directors include:

- In addition to being encouraged to attend public meetings of the Board [see separate Policy on these], there are other forums for stakeholders to express concerns and offer suggestions, criticism and praise.
- The Board is provided in advance with information relating to issues to be discussed at meetings. Such Board materials shall be tailored to the Board and shall include Committee reports and summaries as opposed to Committee minutes. All material provided to the Board shall be, where possible, trended, action-oriented and summarized.

- Between Board meetings, directors will be provided with relevant press releases, CEO speeches and announcements and other information about which they should be made aware to fulfill their responsibilities.
- Directors should be familiar with the provisions in the *Personal Health Information Protection Act* affecting the collection, use or disclosure of personal information and personal health information as they apply to Board materials.
- Directors should be aware of the documents that the *Corporations Act* requires be made available to Corporation members.
- The annual report which details the vision, values, and significant developments. The annual report shall identify Directors and senior management, and advise stakeholders how they may communicate with the organization.
- Regular hospital newsletters for staff and other stakeholders are published.

Failure to meet these requirements has serious implications for the organization as well as its Directors and Officers.

### 6.7. Policy Oversight

It is the responsibility of each Director to be aware of policies and to raise points of order within meetings with regard to questions of policy adherence. The Governance Committee is responsible for periodically reviewing and monitoring this policy.

### 7.0 Appendices/Educational Materials

Not applicable

### 8.0 References

Bylaws, section 16 (2).

### 9.0 Content Experts/Stakeholders

Content Expert/Stakeholder	Date Sent
Governance Committee	June 2015
Board of Directors	October 2015

### 10.0 Signing Authority Approval

Position	Date Signed
Chair, Board of Directors	October 16, 2015