

Coping with the Crisis – Checklist 1

Communicating with beneficiaries

Knowing what and when to say to your beneficiaries during the current crisis, is complex and depends on the message you want to get over. You may need to tell them how your services will be delivered virtually and the effects on them. You may not be able to provide services anymore due to social distancing or even running out of money. A few key points to consider when communicating with your beneficiaries:

Key things to know	Have you...
<p>If you have a database of your beneficiaries, you will be able to tell them via email, text or letter what is happening now and, as lockdown rules are relaxed, you will need to keep them up to date with what you can or cannot offer. If you don't have a database, think about how you can reach them e.g. Facebook? Twitter? Posters?</p>	<p>Explained clearly (and regularly) to your beneficiaries what is happening at your charity?</p> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Your services may have continued throughout lockdown, maybe you deliver hot meals or personal care. Providing clear, easy to follow safety instructions is a must, e.g. wear a facemask/covering; open your front door then move away 2metres/6 foot so that your hot meal can be delivered to your kitchen/table etc.</p>	<p>Explained how you will be working with them now and what the safety requirements are?</p> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Perhaps you work with people with mental health issues or a specific physical illness – make sure you are providing information to both reassure them you are still there for them and to give information about services on offer.</p>	<p>Provided your beneficiaries with relevant help checklists?</p> <input type="checkbox"/>

Many of us will be relying on finding help via online services. Do keep your website and Facebook up to date. Lockdown/social distancing rules are changing all the time – update as often as you can and always put the date of update.

Updated your website, Facebook etc.

Not everyone can read text, particularly if it is superimposed on an image. Many charities are using graphics and text which is a quick way of sharing information but make sure readers can access the same information as text only.

Considered accessibility of your messages?

You may think it is too late but now is the time to get this done. We have no way of knowing what will happen in the future and in any case, this will help you focus and check if you have missed anything e.g. are you able to use video, mass email, mass texting etc. to reach your beneficiaries or do you need to think differently about your comms approach.

Thought about developing a Crisis Communications Plan if it isn't already in your Business Continuity Plan?

Sources of further support

Marketing and communications for small charities

<https://www.dsc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Marketing-and-communications-for-small-charities-Presentation.pdf>

Charity comms advice

<https://charitydigital.org.uk/topics/topics/coronavirus-comms-for-charities-7135>

Charity Governance Code

<https://www.charitygovernancecode.org/en/7-openness-and-accountability>

Crisis comms guide

https://charitycomms.secure.force.com/resource/1431526068000/Crisis_comms_guide

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Communicating your message

<https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/studyzone/communicating-your-charitys-message-get-the-basics-right>

This Coping with the Crisis checklist is part of a series, visit www.dsc.org.uk/crisischecklists for more

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