

**Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council
for Nursing and Midwifery**

**Communication and Engagement
Summary Report**

1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of the range of communication and engagement activities NIPEC has undertaken in 2021-2022 in order to meet its business objective:

"In collaboration with key stakeholders continue:

- *With the existing methods of engagement and during 2021-2022 consider the most effective way of communicating with stakeholders.*
- *To monitor the communication statistics of engagement in relation to NIPEC websites, social media forums, workshops and awareness sessions."*

2.0 COMMUNICATION THROUGH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

NIPEC's work continued to be impacted on during 2021-22 as a result of the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic. The continuation of the government guidelines which necessitated social distancing and restrictions on the gathering of people within large groups, resulted in NIPEC offices remaining closed and virtual communication became the norm during the extensive periods of "lockdown". Although some of the objectives within NIPEC's Business Plan were paused, NIPEC continued to work virtually to progress essential work streams. The Professional Team also played a significant role in working in the mass vaccination centres and supporting the roll out of the regional vaccination programme in Northern Ireland (NI).

NIPEC's main website <https://www.nipec.hscni.net> continued as a resource and central base for sharing important information with registrants and stakeholders including through the CNO Covid-19 Digital Communication Platform and the Covid-19 Surge Capacity microsite.

3.0 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

3.1 NIPEC Roadshows

For the second year NIPEC's usual face-to-face approach to stakeholder engagement, as a means to provide updates on NIPEC's resources, was ceased and there wasn't an NIPEC Conference nor were there roadshows in HSC Trust locations due to the restrictions on gatherings of people. NIPEC's engagement activity remained limited during 2021-2022 mainly due to the mass vaccination programme rollout:

- During 2020-2021, NIPEC facilitated 29 virtual events with approximately 800 in attendance
- During 2021-2022, NIPEC facilitated 14 virtual events, including 2 surveys, engaging with over 500 registrants; 143 responded to the surveys.

3.2 Communication and Engagement – Virtually

During 2021-2022 NIPEC continued with virtual engagement activities for its stakeholders to promote high standards of practice, education and professional development and provide advice and guidance on matters relating to nursing and midwifery. Some examples of these were:

- CNO Covid-19 Digital Communication Platform developed to share information, news, stories and good practice.
- COVID-19 Surge Capacity website developed to offer advice and resources to HSC Trusts and other organisations to support the nursing and midwifery workforce through periods of high service demand.
- Twitter and Facebook posts promoting NIPEC work and resources.
- NIPEC information sessions via videoconferencing for final year nursing students in the Open University and final year midwifery students in Queen’s University, Belfast.
- Future Nurse Future Midwife (FNFM)
 - Communiques – bimonthly emailed to over 400 Northern Ireland NMC registrants and for onward wider circulation and tailored to highlight HSC Trust initiatives promoting implementation of Future Midwife.
 - Countdown clock on NIPEC website promoting launch of Future Midwife.
 - mailshot to non HSC organisations - providing information and links to FNFM Resources in collaboration with RQIA.
 - Collaboration with CNO and Midwifery Officer, DoH to produce a video launching Future Midwife.
- NI Supervision Framework – HSC focus groups to test the efficacy of the supervision process.
- Two online surveys testing the Reflective Supervision Framework.
- Zoom meetings enabled NIPEC to facilitate virtual “face-to-face” meetings with key stakeholders and progress the projects that were part of the rebuilding services agenda. Zoom also enabled NIPEC to engage, inform and share its resources and projects with a range of key stakeholders, see Table 1.

Table 1. Numbers of Nurses and Midwives attending NIPEC Zoom Engagement Events in 2021-2022

Zoom Events	Number of Events	Numbers Attended
Delegation Awareness session	1	13
Duty of Candour seeking views from registrants	1	3
Endoscopy Professional Lead Nurse Forum	1	6
Enabling Professionalism	2	6
FNFM Project Echo Session for Non HSC organisations	1	36
Recording Keeping Practice	1	5
RCN Community Nursing Forum	1	13
RCN Newly Registered Nurse Forum	1	43
RCN/NIPEC Learning Disabilities Nursing Professional Forum	1	159
NI Supervision Framework HSC Testing	2	18
University Nursing & Midwifery Students (OU&QUB)	2	86
Ulster University – Specialist Practice Qualification for Perioperative Nursing Students (post-registration)	1	47
Total	15	435

3.4 Regional Consultations

NIPEC also responded to consultations on a range of emerging strategies and policies including the:

- DoH – Launch of Public Consultation on Duty of Candour and Being Open
- DoH – Targeted Consultation on the Future Planning Model - Integrated Care System NI - Draft Framework Document
- DoH – Substance Use Strategy for Northern Ireland
- DoH – Advance care planning policy for adults
- DoH – Development of Second Action Plan (2021-2023) for the Health and Social Care Workforce Strategy 2026
- NHSCT – Draft Framework Policy on the Management of Violence and Aggression (Formerly Zero Tolerance)
- NMC – Review of Post Registration Standards
NIPEC hosted two stakeholder events (via Zoom) promoting this review and giving NMC registrants the opportunity to give their views
 - 44 participants attended a Specialist Community Public Health Nursing (SCPHN) standards event on the 18 June 2021
 - 65 participants attended a Specialist Practice Qualifications (SPQ) standards event on the 5 of July 2021.

3.5 NIPEC Websites and Social Media Activity

NIPEC’s main vehicle of communication [NIPEC | NIPEC \(hscni.net\)](https://www.nipec.hscni.net) remained crucial for sharing information during 2021-22 with nurses, midwives, support staff and students across NI which included the CNO digital Platform and COVID-19 Surge Capacity platforms. There was reduction in hits on its website during 2021-22 from the previous year, similar to that reported by other professional organisations. NIPEC’s total “unique visit” numbers for 2021-22 fell to 28,549 which was just over half of 2020-21. However, this is still higher than the “unique visit” numbers before the pandemic 26,260 (2018-2019). The Future Nurse Future Midwife programme of work, now completed, was mainly responsible for the high website activity during 2019-20 and 2020-21 and the weekly and fortnightly updates of the CNO Covid-19 Digital Platform also contributed to the website activity in 2020-21 Table 2.

Table 2. Statistics for NIPEC website <https://www.nipec.hscni.net> during 2021-2022 compared to 2020 – 2021.

Month	Number of Hits 2021/22	Number of Hits 2020/21	Number of Visits 2021/22	Number of Visits 2020/21	Average Length of Visit 2021/22 (Mins)	Average Length of Visit 2020/21 (Mins)
April	8,165	10,422	2,369	4,153	02:21	02:03
May	7,721	11,914	2,581	4,077	02:10	02:18
June	6,673	13,810	2,641	4,328	01:56	02:42
July	4,136	13,666	1,924	4,475	01:45	02:26
August	5,082	9,270	2,292	3,527	01:42	02:03
September	5,121	12,856	2,183	4,051	02:02	02:41
October	6,159	11,454	2,411	4,826	01:49	01:50
November	6,887	10,825	2,845	4,647	01:48	01:57
December	6,654	7,506	2,495	3,633	01:35	01:43
January	7,921	10,324	2,909	4,919	01:56	01:44
February	6,641	13,784	2,554	4,412	01:37	02:06
March	4,134	13,017	1,345	3,221	02:19	02:53
Total	75,294	138,848	28,549	50,269		

The CNO digital Platform and COVID-19 Surge Capacity website were useful to registrants in the first year of the pandemic providing easy access to information necessary to support nursing and midwifery workforces in their practice. During 2021-2022 updates were mostly provided on an adhoc basis to the CNO digital platform and none were required for the Surge Capacity microsite. NIPEC has therefore submitted a proposal to the Chief Nursing Officer to review the activity on these platforms and repurpose them for effective engagement with nurses, midwives, support staff and students.

- *NIPEC's nursing and midwifery careers website*

The NIPEC's nursing and midwifery careers website saw a significant decrease in the number visiting the site, from September 2021 to March 2022, Table 3. This may have been due to redeployment of staff to support the mass vaccination rollout. In addition in 2020-2021 there was a perioperative recruitment campaign which promoted the nursing and midwifery careers website.

Table 3. Statistics for NIPEC website <https://www.nipec.hscni.net> during 2021-2022 compared to 2020 – 2021.

Month	Number of Hits 2021/22	Number of Hits 2020/21	Number of Visits 2021/22	Number of Visits 2020/21	Average Length of Visit 2021/22 (Mins)	Average Length of Visit 2020/21 (Mins)
April	4,182	1,682	1,911	677	01:04	01:23
May	3,956	2,404	2,138	1,056	01:11	01:28
June	3,116	2,523	1,988	1,240	00:51	01:03
July	2,843	2,424	1,801	1,222	00:45	01:07
August	1,695	2,527	960	1,200	01:00	01:09
September	779	2,775	177	1,580	03:24	00:52
October	905	2,124	191	1,204	03:25	01:01
November	633	2,254*	164	1,237*	02:22	01.03*
December	379	2,384	127	1,270	01:59	01:05
January	701	3,550	235	1,874	02:07	00:57
February	741	3,388	225	1,780	02:45	01:07
March	680	5,852	189	1,901	02:47	01:36
Total	20,610	33,887	10,106	16,241		

*In November 2020 a technical update was applied by the web company to the nursing and midwifery career pathway website and coding to collect statistics from the website was not reapplied until 1 December. An average of the data from October 2020 and December 2020 is taken to provide an estimate for November statistics.

- *Facebook and Twitter Posts*

NIPEC continues to use Facebook and Twitter effectively to promote its various work activities and although the activity can go up and down each month in comparison to the previous year, there has been little difference in the total numbers "reached" Tables 4 & 5.

Table 4: NIPEC Facebook Activity in 2021-2022 compared with 2020-2021

Month	Number of Posts 2021-22 (2020-21)	Number of people 'reached' from NIPEC posts 2021-22 (2020-21)	Number of new followers 2021-22 (2020-21)	Total Number of followers 2021-22 (2020-21)
April	4 (2)	811 (908)	1 (11)	554 (463)
May	5 (12)	322 (1,184)	3 (6)	557 (469)
June	8 (3)	1250 (267)	-11 (10)	554 (479)
July	1 (0)	56 (0)	0 (2)	557 (481)
August	1(5)	139 (130)	20 (-8)	566 (473)
September	1 (2)	112 (84)	7 (5)	573 (478)
October	4 (8)	519 (30)	-6 (5)	567 (483)
November	4(12)	870 (41)	21 (17)	588 (500)
December	7 (3)	1,934 (177)	-14 (-13)	574 (487)
January	3 (4)	498 (502)	3 (29)	577 (516)
February	2(4)	297(810)	-1(10)	576 (526)
March	3(1)	476(122)	30(27)	606(553)
Totals to Date	43(56)	7,284 (4,255)	53 (101)	

Table 5: NIPEC Twitter Activity in 2021-2022 compared with 2020-2021

Month	Number of Tweets 2021-22 (2020-21)	Number of people 'Reached/ Impressions' 2021-22 (2020-21)	Number of new followers 2021-22 (2020-21)	Total Number of followers 2021-22 (2020-21)
April	3 (7)	7,042 (10,800)	19 (32)	2409 (2111)
May	10 (12)	14,700 (19,200)	18 (30)	2427 (2141)
June	10 (7)	12,300 (8,421)	34(22)	2465 (2163)
July	2 (6)	4,400 (7,720)	12 (24)	2477 (2187)
August	2 (3)	3,431 (8,149)	4 (9)	2481 (2196)
September	5 (3)	5232 (6,061)	19(28)	2465 (2224)
October	8 (8)	9571 (12,400)	18 (18)	2477 (2242)
November	5(12)	7,330 (19,800)	20 (38)	2538 (2280)
December	12(7)	46,900 (25,300)	14 (23)	2552 (2303)
January	6(7)	24,300 (18,800)	24 (30)	2576 (2333)
February	3(7)	11,500 (14,800)	10 (23)	2586 (2356)
March	5(3)	7,911(7,595)	212(29)	2602(2385)
Totals to Date	72 (79)	157,017 (151,451)	212(277)	

4.0 CONCLUSION

Moving forward during 2022-23, NIPEC will review with NIPEC Council members and the Senior Team its methods of engagement with its stakeholders as services rebuild following the Covid-19 pandemic. NIPEC will continue its commitment through 2022-23 to developing, producing and disseminating evidence-based and accessible information, publications and resources through its main website <https://www.nipec.hscni.net> and promoting them through its social media platforms; twitter [@nipec_online](#) and Facebook www.facebook.com/nipec



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