

NORTHERN IRELAND GUARDIAN AD LITEM AGENCY

NIGALA COMMUNICATION PLAN

The Northern Ireland Guardian ad Litem Agency (hereafter NIGALA) is required to address the four questions below in relation to all its policies. This template sets out a proforma to document consideration of each question.

What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?
(minor/major/none)

Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?

To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?
(minor/major/none)

Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?



1. INFORMATION ABOUT THE POLICY OR DECISION

1.1 Title of the policy or decision

Northern Ireland Guardian ad Litem Agency (hereafter NIGALA)
Communication Plan.

1.2 Description of policy or decision

- What is it trying to achieve? (Aims and Objectives)
- How will this be achieved? (Key Elements)
- What are the key constraints? (For example, financial, legislative or other)

NIGALA's Communication Plan has been developed to support the delivery of NIGALA's Corporate and Business Plan 2017 – 2012, which sets out our strategic vision and values and identified the outcomes which the Agency strives to achieve over the course of the Corporate Plan period.

Part 1 of this document sets out the strategic overview of the Communication Plan, including:

- Purposes and aims;
- Communication commitment;
- Strategic context and the importance of good communication;
- NIGALA's service users and stakeholders;
- NIGALA's strategic map;
- Methods of communication;
- Objectives to be achieved in the Corporate and Business Plan.

Part 2 of this document will be a 'live' Communication Plan which sets out the communication projects associated with the objectives from the Corporate and Business Plan. This will be reviewed by NIGALA's Senior Management Team on a quarterly basis to set the priorities, update the actions and monitor progress. Such communication planning allows the Agency to be agile in its communication, responding appropriately to internal and external drivers, and thereby ensuring this Plan supports the Agency in achieving its objectives for 2017/18 and beyond.

This Plan aims to:

- Ensure there are appropriate mechanisms in place to support good internal and external communications with our service users and key stakeholders;
- Develop two-way communication channels recognising that key stakeholder groups can provide feedback which will enable NIGALA to improve services; and
- Continually improving the way we communicate with employees and Self-Employed Guardians, thus assisting in the co-production of ideas on how to take strategic and operational initiatives forward.

NIGALA is committed to following clear communication principles for employees, service users and other stakeholders. All communications activity should be:

- Be open and honest;
- Be relevant, accurate, sensitive and timely;
- Recognise the importance and value of engaging with service users, employees and stakeholders;
- Be accessible in line with NIGALA's Value: To Promote Diversity and Equality; and
- Reflect the principles of confidentiality, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and other relevant legislation.

NIGALA have employed a number of approaches to ensure effective internal and external communication, including:

External

Corporate publications and information to provide accurate and accessible information to stakeholders on our role, function and activities;

NIGALA seeks feedback from key stakeholders to evaluate our service;

NIGALA has set up a pilot Child and Young Persons Board in the North West in order to engage with our service users and facilitate two-way communication;

Regional Fora – various members of NIGALA's staff attend and actively

participate in a range of relevant regional and strategic networks, groups, committees, workshops and events;

NIGALA hosts a number of committees and events with key stakeholders participating, including the Joint Consultative Committee (attended by Trade Union representatives) and the NIGALA Solicitor Panel Reference Group (attended by Solicitor Panel Representatives).

Internal Communication

Staff induction were all employees receive corporate and local induction to ensure they are provided with relevant information on our various communication channels (for example intranet, digital signage, emails, social media, how to access policies/ procedures).

Staff meetings are held on a quarterly basis and provide an opportunity for sharing and updating on key issues and developments.

Email/ Intranet/ Shared Folders are used to communicate key messages to staff and inform them of various developments, initiatives and changes in practice.

Supervision meetings take place for appropriate staff.

The key constraints are:

- Financial and time constraints; and
- No Northern Ireland Assembly – lack of clarity on budgets and the draft Programme for Government

1.3 Main stakeholders affected (internal and external)

- For example: staff, actual or potential clients / service users, other public sector organisations, voluntary and community groups, trade unions or professional organisations or private sector organisations or other.

Current NIGALA employees

NIGALA's Senior Management Team

NIGALA's Board

Service users (children, young people, their families and carers)

Internal and external stakeholders (for example, Panel Solicitors, the

judiciary and courts, HSC Boards and Trusts, Bar Council NI and other legal representatives, trade union representatives, Department of Health, other experts/ professionals).

1.4 Other policies or decisions with a bearing on this policy or decision

- What are they?
- Who owns them?

NIGALA Corporate and Business Plan 2017 – 2021

2. CONSIDERATIONS OF EQUALITY AND GOOD RELATIONS ISSUES AND EVIDENCE USED

2.1 Data gathering.

- **What information did you use to inform this equality screening? For example, previous consultations, statistics, research, Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs), complaints.**
- **Provide details of how you involved stakeholders, views of colleagues, service users, clients, staff side or other stakeholders.**

NIGALA's Communication Plan has been reviewed by the Senior Management Team, NIGALA's Board and the Joint Consultation Committee which includes staff side representatives and has been to employees for consultation.

Data used to completed screening is as follows:

- NIGALA staff data (March 2017)
- Northern Ireland Census 2011
- NIGALA Service User Data in relation to First Language

2.2 Quantitative data.

- **Who is affected by the policy or decision? Please provide a statistical profile. Please note, if a policy or decision affects both staff and service users / clients, please provide profile information for both.**
- **For each category, you should consider:**
 - **What is the makeup of the affected group? (%)**
 - **Are there any issues or problems? For example, a lower update that needs to be addressed or greater involvement of a particular group?**

GENDER

As at 31 March 2017, NIGALA staff data indicates 86.76% of NIGALA's

workforce is female and 13.24% male.

Northern Ireland Census (2011) figures report 51% of the total population is female, with 49% male.

There is a higher level of disability among adult females (23%) compared to adult males (19%). Girls (4%) are less likely to be disabled than boys (8%).

According to the HSC Workforce Census (DHSSPS, 2013), 81% of employees are female and 19% are male.

Reed et al. 2009: 8/100000 (115) transgender people in NI.

McBride, Ruari-Santiago (2011): Healthcare Issues for Transgender People Living in Northern Ireland. Belfast:

- 140-160 individuals are affiliated with transgender groups;
- 120 individuals have presented with Gender Identity Dysphoria;
- There are more trans women than trans men living in Northern Ireland.

AGE

As at 31 March 2017, staff data indicates NIGALA's workforce composition in relation to age is as follows:

Age Range	% of Employees
16-24	0
25-29	2.94
30-34	4.41
35-39	10.29
40-44	13.24
45-49	16.18
50-54	22.06
55-59	25.00
60-64	5.88
>=65	0

Census 2011 figures are Northern Ireland are as follows:

Age Range	% Total Population
0 – 15	20.95
16 – 19	5.61
20 – 24	6.96
25 – 29	6.85
30 – 44	20.65
45 – 59	19.21
60 – 64	5.21
65 – 74	8.04
75 – 84	4.79
85 – 89	1.17
90 and over	0.56

The number of older people aged over 65 has increased by 16% since 1999.

RELIGION

Staff data at 31 March 2017, figures for NIGALA workforce indicates the following:

Religion	% of Employees
Neither	2.94
Perceived Neither	1.47
Not assigned	4.41
Perceived Protestant	4.41
Perceived Roman Catholic	5.88
Protestant	26.47
Roman Catholic	54.41

According to the 2011 Census, 45.1% of the population is from a Catholic background, 48.4% of the population is from a Protestant or other Christian background. 0.9% of population are from other religions. 5.6% of population have no religion or religion was not stated.

POLITICAL OPINION

Staff data at 31 March 2017, figures for NIGALA workforce indicates the following:

Political Opinion	% of Employees
Broadly Nationalist	2.94
Broadly Unionist	1.47
Other	1.47
Do not wish to answer	7.35
Not assigned	86.76

First preference votes per party in the Northern Ireland Assembly Elections in 2016:

DUP	202,567
Sinn Fein	166,785
UUP	87,320
SDLP	83,364
Alliance	48,447

(Source:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/election/2016/northern_ireland/results)

MARITAL STATUS

As at 31 March 2017, figures indicate 55.88% of NIGALA employees are married or in a civil partnership, 27.94% are single and 16.18% are unknown or other.

2011 Census figures report 48% of the resident population aged 16 and over are married, whilst 36% are single, 0.1% are registered in same-sex civil partnerships, 9.4% are divorced, separated or formerly in same-sex partnership and 6.8% are either widowed or a surviving partner.

DEPENDENT STATUS

As at 31 March 2017, workforce data for NIGALA is as follows:

Dependents	% of workforce
Yes	4.41
No	7.35
Not Assigned	88.24

2011 Census figures report 11.81% of the resident population provide unpaid care to family members, friends, neighbours, and 33.86% of households contain dependent children. 40.29% of households

contained at least one person with long-term health problems or a disability.

2011 Census figures report 11.81% of the resident population provide unpaid care to family members, friends, neighbours, and 33.86% of households contain dependent children. 40.29% of households contained at least one person with long-term health problems or a disability.

According to information from Carers Northern Ireland:

- 1 in every 8 adults is a carer;
- There are approximately 214,000 carers in Northern Ireland;
- Any one person has a 6.6% chance of becoming a carer in any year;
- One quarter of all carers (26%) provide over 50 hours of care per week;
- People providing high levels of care are twice as likely to be permanently sick or disabled than the average person;
- Approximately 30,000 people in Northern Ireland care for more than one person;
- 64% of carers are women, 36% are men.

(Source: <http://www.carersuk.org/northernireland/news-ni/facts-and-figures>)

DISABILITY

As at 31 March 2017, figures indicate 86.76% of NIGALA's workforce do not have a disability, 2.94% stated they have a disability and 10.29% did not indicate whether they do or do not have a disability.

2011 Census figures for NI report:

- 20.69% regard themselves as having a disability or long – term health problem, which has an impact on their day to day activities.
- 68.57% of residents did not have long – term health condition.

ETHNICITY

March 2017 staff data for the NIGALA indicates 14.71% of the workforce identify as White, with 85.29% unknown.

2011 Census figures report:

- White – 98.21%
- Chinese – 0.35%
- Irish Traveller – 0.07%
- Indian – 0.34%
- Pakistani – 0.06%
- Bangladeshi – 0.03%
- Other Asian – 0.28%
- Black Caribbean – 0.02%
- Black African – 0.13%
- Black Other – 0.05%
- Mixed – 0.33%
- Other – 0.13%

In total, 1.8% of the resident population belonged to minority ethnic groups.

The below table sets out the percentage of children/ young people who accessed NIGALA's service by 'First Language' during the period 1 April 2016 – 30 June 2017.

Language	% of Children/ Young People
Arabic	0.39
Ethiopian	0.15
English	96.98
Flemish	0.07
French	0.07
German	0.07
Hindu	0.15
Latvian	0.46
Lithunian	0.39
Polish	0.39
Portguese	0.39
Roma	0.07
Romanian	0.07
Russian	0.07
Slovene	0.15
Vietnamese	0.07

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

As at March 2017, the NIGALA workforce data is as follows:

Sexual Orientation	% of workforce
Opposite Sex	10.29
Both Sexes	0
Same Sex	0
Do not wish to answer	2.94
Not Assigned	86.76

There is disputed data relating to the estimated size of the LGBT population in Northern Ireland. For the purposes of costing the Civil Partnership Act the UK Government estimate between 5-7% LGBT people in the population. The Office of National Statistics estimates 1.5-2% of the adult population are LGBT, however this document is disputed by numerous LGBT organisations.

2.3 Qualitative Data

- **What are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the categories in relation to this policy or decision and what equality issues emerge from this? Please note, if policy or decisions affect both staff and service users / clients, please discuss issues for both.**

GENDER

According to the ONS (2013), 42% of females work part-time compared to 12% of men. Furthermore females are more likely to be the main carer of dependants than their male counterparts. This means females may have particular needs in terms of the scheduling of meetings relevant to the Communication Plan.

NIGALA has a predominantly female workforce; female are more likely to have caring responsibilities than their male counterparts – see Dependents section.

AGE

According to the Office of National Statistics, age is a factor in determining whether an adult has used the internet (<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2016>). Older people may be less likely to have access to a computer or the internet thereby access to social media platforms may be limited. Children will also be less likely to have access to social media platforms whereas younger people may have a preference for social media (Facebook, Twitter) as a means of communication. Younger children have a different level of understanding than older children, and therefore their communication needs will differ.

RELIGION

There are no known issues.

POLITICAL OPINION

There are no known issues.

MARITAL STATUS

Issues for those with dependents in terms of timing and location of meetings may be exacerbated for single parents.

DEPENDENT STATUS

Staff, stakeholders and service users who care for dependents may have particular needs in terms of the scheduling of meetings and/ or events.

DISABILITY

According to the Office of National Statistics, 25% of disabled adults in the UK never used the internet in 2016 That being said, in 2016 97.3% of disabled adults aged 16 to 24 years were recent [within 3 months] internet users

(<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2016>).

People with a disability may be less likely to have access to a computer or the internet and therefore social media, resulting in the need to consider other suitable methods of communication.

Moreover, people with disabilities, particularly sensory and learning disabilities will have particular communication needs.

ETHNICITY

Minority ethnic people for whom English is not a first language may require interpreting or translation in order to fully access verbal or written communication methods.

SEXUAL ORIENTATION

There are no known issues.

2.4 Multiple Identities

- **Are there any potential impacts on the policy or decision on people with multiple identities? For example, disabled minority ethnic people, disabled women, young Protestant men, and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people.**

n/a

2.5 Making Changes

- **Based on the equality issues you identified in 2.2 and 2.3, what changes did you make or do you intend to make in relation to the policy or decision in order to promote equality of opportunity?**

In developing the policy or decision, what did you do or change to address the equality issues you identified?

What do you intend to do in the future to address the equality issues you identified?

Age and Disability

NIGALA will consider using other suitable methods of communication to meet the needs of older people, children/ young people and people with disabilities.

We will provide age-appropriate information including the use of Plain English where appropriate.

Disability

Consideration will be given to access to buildings, including venues for meetings for those with physical disability. People with a learning disability or sensory

We will undertake a separate Equality Screening and/ or full Equality Impact Assessment of individual communication projects included in Part 2 of the Communication Plan as appropriate.

impairment may require some form of additional support when attending meetings or engagement events and consideration will be given to this.

Consideration will be given to those with a learning disability who may need communication to be tailored with their needs, including Plain English or written materials produced in other formats, for example large print or easy read.

Ethnicity and Disability

Consideration will be given to the provision of all documentation in other formats on request e.g. large print, audio format, other languages.

Ethnicity

As part of the HSCNI, NIGALA can access the regional contract for translation and interpreting.

Gender, Martial Status, Dependent Status

Consideration will be given to the needs of staff, service users and stakeholders who work part-time and/ or care for dependents in terms of the timing and frequency of meetings and events.

2.6 Good Relations

- **What changes to the policy or decision – if any - or what additional measures would you suggest to ensure that it promotes good relations? (Refer to guidance notes for guidance on impact)**

Group	Impact	Suggestions
Religion	None	None
Political Opinion	None	None
Ethnicity	None	None

3. SHOULD THE POLICY OR DECISION BE SUBJECTED TO A FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT?

A full equality impact assessment (EQIA) is usually confined to those policies or decision considered to have major implications for equality of opportunity.

How would you categorise the impacts on this decision or policy? (Refer to guidance notes for guidance on impact) Please tick:	
Major Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minor Impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No further impact	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you consider that this policy or decision needs to be subject to a full equality impact assessment? Please tick:	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please give reasons for your decisions
Any equality issues that have been identified through screening have been addressed by the mitigating actions as outlined in 2.5.

4. CONSIDERATION OF DISABILITY DUTIES

4.1 In what ways does the policy or decision encourage disabled people to participate in public life and what else could you do to do so?

How does the policy or decision currently encourage disabled people to participate in public life?	What else could you do to encourage disabled people to participate in public life?
n/a	n/a

4.2 In what ways does the policy or decision promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and what else could you do to do so?

How does the policy or decision currently promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?	What else could you do to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people?
-	-

5. CONSIDERATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

5.1 Does the policy or decision affect anyone's Human Rights? Please complete for each of the articles.		
Article		Yes/ No
Article 2:	Right to life	No
Article 3:	Right to freedom from torture, inhuman or degrading compulsory labour	No
Article 4:	Right to freedom from slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour	No
Article 5:	Right to liberty and security of person	No
Article 6:	Right to a fair and public trial within reasonable time	No
Article 7:	Right to freedom from retrospective criminal law and no punishment without law	No
Article 8:	Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondences	No
Article 9:	Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	No
Article 10:	Right to free of expression	No
Article 11:	Right to freedom of assembly and association	No
Article 12:	Right marry and found and family	No
Article 14:	Prohibition of discrimination in the enjoyment of the convention right	No
Article		Yes/ No
1 st Protocol Article 1: Right to a peaceful enjoyment of possessions and protection of property.		No
1 st Protocol Article 2: Right of access to education.		No

If you have answered no to all of the above please move on to **Question 6** on monitoring.

5.2 If you have answered yes to any of the Articles in 5.1, does the policy or decision interfere with any of these rights? If so, what is the interferences and who does it impact upon?			
List the Article Number	Interfered with? Yes/No	What is the interference and who does it impact upon?	Does this raise legal issues?* Yes/No
-			

5.3 Outline any actions which could be taken to promote or raise awareness of human rights or to ensure compliance with the legislation in relation to the policy or decision.

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6. MONITORING

6.1 What data will you collect in the future in order to monitor the effect of the policy or decision on any of the categories (for equality of opportunity and good relations, disability duties and human rights)?

Equality & Good Relations	Disability Duties	Human Rights
-	-	-

Approved Lead Officer	Declan McAllister
Position	Corporate Services Manager
Date	12 July 2017
Policy / Decision Screened by	Lesley Allen, Communication & HR Officer

If you require this document in an alternative format (such as large print, Braille, disk, audio file, audio cassette, Easy Read or in minority languages to meet the needs of those not fluent in English) please contact:

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