East Cheshire NHS Trust
Style guide for staff

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Introduction

Our identity is important. It affects how people think and feel about East Cheshire NHS Trust. Our identity is largely shaped by what we do – treating illness and promoting health. But our communications also play an important part in defining who we are.

Across all media and materials, our communications need to express and support our NHS values and principles. At a time of change within the NHS, our communications are essential to helping the public and patients navigate a more diverse healthcare system. Through our communications, we also need to reassure people that NHS standards are being maintained.

This style guide is designed to help us use the NHS corporate identity correctly, reassure people that our services are part of the NHS family, and that these services are being delivered in line with our values to present a consistent, approachable and recognisable image of East Cheshire NHS Trust in all our communications. No matter what the message – positive or negative, straightforward or complex – all communications must carry a consistent feel for East Cheshire NHS Trust. This guide helps us create that by providing corporate style rules and by offering guidelines for writing effectively and with good punctuations, grammar and spelling.

The style guide is maintained by the Marketing and Communications department and forms part of our media policy. As the trust changes parts of this guide will also need to change, so we will be updating it accordingly. We also want this to be as useful for staff as possible, so please contact the Marketing and Communications Department on 01625 661184 if you have any suggestions for changes.

This guide has been prepared in accordance with the national NHS brand guidelines for care and acute trusts with reference to the Guardian, Observer and Economist style guide 2010 and the Plain Language Commission guidelines.
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Part one – The East Cheshire NHS Trust brand

East Cheshire NHS Trust colours

The East Cheshire NHS Trust corporate colour is NHS Blue (Pantone 300), this should be used as the primary colour when designing communications materials, it has high recognition and identifies that the communication is from the NHS. Wherever possible, you should use the East Cheshire NHS logo against a white background. The East Cheshire NHS Trust logo should not be made transparent or be used on a transparent background.

Example of transparent background
Our colour palette

Our print colour palette supports our business unit structure and offers a straightforward and clear style. The range of colours allows for creativity and diversity, while remaining true to the NHS look and feel.

Corporate - Blue
Pantone 287
CMYK - C100%, M69%, Y0%, K11.5%.
RGB - R0, G56, B147.

Medical - Red
Pantone 485.
CMYK - C0%, M100%, Y91%, K0%
RGB - R216, G30, B5

Outpatients and Clinical Support Services - Purple
Pantone 2685.
CMYK - C100%, M94%, Y0%, K0%.
RGB - R86, G0, B140.

Surgery - Green
Pantone 355.
CMYK - C100%, M0%, Y91%, K6%.
RGB - R0, G158, B73.

Community Services- Turquoise
Pantone 3272
CMYK - C100%, M0%, Y47%, K0%.
RGB - R0, G170, B158.

If you are printing in mono (black and white), you can reproduce the NHS logo in black and white. You can also do this for the business unit templates.

Example

Which logo should I use?

Working with the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo

It is important that you use the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo correctly and consistently across all applications.

The East Cheshire NHS Trust logo should never be used as a substitute for the letters 'NHS' in a sentence or phrase. It should only appear once on a single sheet. Duplication can dilute the strength and impact of our logo.
The East Cheshire NHS Trust logotype is made up of three components. These are:

- the NHS logo;
- the organisation’s name; and (eg East Cheshire)
- the organisation’s descriptor. (NHS Trust)

The organisation’s name is positioned to the left of the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo, while the organisation’s descriptor should appear below the local name. The logotype or the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo must not be altered or added to in any way. Never distort the logo or remove parts of it.

When the logo is used, it should always appear in its entirety and undistorted. You can resize it to suit your purposes, as long as it remains legible, but please don’t:

- move or delete the text;
- stretch it; or
- squash it.

**Example of incorrect use**

**Squashed**

![Squashed Logotype](image)

**Stretched**

![Stretched Logotype](image)

You should not apply any additional keylines to your logotype or place your logotype in a box or any other shape.

**Size of logo**

The recommended minimum size for the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo (blue wave) is:

- **Height**: 6.15 cm **Width**: 18.02 cm on A4 and A5
- The NHS logo should never be smaller than 3.68cm high.
Example of correctly sized logo to the minimum size

Example of logo smaller than 3.68cm high

Notice how the text becomes blurred when the logo becomes smaller than 3.68cm in height. If this occurs use the standard East Cheshire NHS logo without the blue wave.

How to resize the logo correctly

1. Insert the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo into your document double click on the logo and the format picture menu should appear.
2. Click the size tab and change the values in the height and width box to H: 6.15 cm and W: 18.02 cm.
3. Click OK and position the logo in the corner of the top right hand corner.

East Cheshire NHS Trust logo correct use
Dos and don’ts

Do:

- make sure you use the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo consistently and correctly;
- only use the original digital graphic files;
- use NHS Blue (Pantone 300) to reproduce the logo; and
- use the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo against a white background in colour and mono (black and white) printing.

Don’t:

- alter the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo in any way (e.g. squash it, distort it or stretch it);
- embed the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo in a line of text;
- use the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo more than once on a single sheet;
- make the logo transparent or use it on a transparent background;
- create shapes around the logo; and
- never redraw the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo.

Logo without the blue wave

The East Cheshire NHS Trust logo without the blue wave can only be used when the size of the blue wave logo becomes smaller than 3.68cm high on the piece of work you are doing. Please see the Marketing and Communications Department in this instance. The standard East Cheshire NHS Trust logo should be at a minimum size of height: 2.4cm and width: 7.66 cm.

Working in partnership

A larger logo is taken to mean relatively more responsibility and funding.

**Lead partner** - If East Cheshire NHS Trust is the lead partner in the relationship, the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo should be positioned in the top right hand corner of document and the partner logo in the bottom right.
**Supporting partner** - If the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo is a secondary or supporting partner, the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo should be positioned in the bottom right-hand corner and the partner logo in the top right hand corner.

The East Cheshire NHS logo should only appear once on a single sheet.

When two or more NHS organisations are working together, the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo should be used once on the page, in the top right. The names of the NHS organisations can either be listed elsewhere on the page in text, eg ‘Anyshire Primary Care Trust and Midshire Primary Care Trust’, or a description can be used eg ‘The NHS in Anyshire’

When working with multiple partners please follow the rules above and place partnership logo’s at the bottom of the page.

**Equal partner** - If the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo and a partner logo are adjacent to one another, this communicates equality. If the logos are equal in size this communicates an equal partnership.

The partner logo should be positioned on the top left hand corner and the East Cheshire NHS Trust logo should be positioned on the right hand corner of the document.
The logo exclusion zone

The exclusion zone is the clear area around your logotype in which nothing else should appear. To ensure that the logo remains clear and has impact, nothing should ever appear inside the exclusion zone. The clear space (x) is proportional and define as the height of the NHS logo.

Positioning your logo

When producing printed materials, you should position your logo in the top right – hand corner of a printed page. If this is not possible, use the bottom right – hand corner instead. If this option is taken the East Cheshire NHS logo without the blue wave must be used. Please refer to the Marketing and Communications Department before printing.

The East Cheshire NHS Trust typeface

Typefaces are an important part of the NHS identity. The consistent use of the NHS typefaces is essential to helping us establish a recognized and professional brand. It is vital that they are used correctly across all services, messages and materials.

Arial is a modern and flexible san serif typeface ideal for both headings and text. This is the recommended corporate font for East Cheshire NHS Trust and should be the only font used at a minimum font size of 11 point for body copy, 12 point bold for sub headings and 14 point bold for titles and main section headings. Maximum sizes for font is 12 point for body copy, 14 point for sub headings and 16 point for main titles and section headings.

Please do not use serif or script typefaces for print and web. Serif and script typefaces are more casual scripts which have finishing strokes or flourishes on the ends and edges of each symbol. Serif and script fonts are hard to read as the serif’s blur together on screen.
Serif

Garamond

Times New Roman

Georgia

Script

Comic Sans

Lucida

Bold and underlining can be used for headings and sub headings. Italics should be used when referring to text as a publication title not to emphasis a point. Do not underline or use italics online, it is hard to read, misleading and may be interpreted as a link.

Justification of text – Always left justify the text in your document. Never use full justification as this makes documents hard to read. It stretches the text, leaves large gaps and splits word up unnecessarily.

Images, illustrations and photography (including consent) - Photography and imagery are powerful, emotive and memorable tools that express our values just as strongly as colours and typefaces. The trust champions putting patients at the heart of our hospital services.

Do’s

• Use images, illustrations and photography showing people in a positive light and reflecting the values of the trust at all times.
• Images, illustrations and photographs must try and reflect the diverse nature of our trust, both in terms of people who work for us, who use our services or the wider population.
• Imagery should represent real people, services and situations and be sourced from our trust photo library wherever possible.
• Consent must be obtained for each new photograph taken of a patient, staff member or member of the public for use by the trust.
• Only images available on the trust website library (link) may be used as permission has been sought already.

Don’t:

• Images, illustrations and photographs must not be gimmicky and should avoid clichés, such as a person with their head in their hands to illustrate someone with a mental health problem.
• Clipart and word art must not be used, as they do not create a professional image and often use business or lifestyle clichés.
• ‘Funny’ images and illustrations should be avoided. Humour is very subjective and funny imagery runs the risk of being disrespectful. Please talk to the Marketing and Communications Department for further information.

Templates

A number of trust templates have been produced, with the branding pre-applied. These templates are available on the trust intranet – Your Infonet. They must not be modified or altered without prior consent from the Marketing and Communications Department. Business units must use templates in their service specific colour, or in the corporate colour ( see part one of the guidelines Using our colours). Templates must not be provided to anyone outside the trust without prior consent from the Marketing and Communications Department. The following templates are available:
Email signatures

An email signature is the block of text that appears at the bottom of an email providing the name, job title and contact details of the person who has sent the email. It is important to include an email signature on all emails sent internally and externally so that it is immediately clear to the recipient who you are, what your role is and where you can be contacted should they need to enter into further correspondence with you. At present, there is evidence of varying approaches among staff to these issues, with some email signatures and out of office notifications providing inappropriate or insufficient detail. It should be remembered that although email can seem to be an informal method of communication, an email is subject to the same legislation as other written communication and therefore the writing of emails should be approached with the same professionalism as writing a work related letter.

Format of email signatures

Name:
Title:
Department:
Organisation, address and building you are in: East Cheshire NHS Trust
Telephone number or bleep number:
Mobile: If applicable
Website: www.eastcheshire.nhs.uk

Green message (optional)

Please consider the environment before printing this email

Example

Samina Taj
Marketing and Communications Officer
Marketing and Communications
East Cheshire NHS Trust, Ingersley building, Trust headquarters, Blue zone, Victoria Road, Macclesfield, SK10 3BL
01625 611184
www.eastcheshire.nhs.uk

Please consider the environment before printing this email.

Instructions on how to set up your email signature on Groupwise

1. Go to tools, options and select environment.
2. Double click and select the signature tab.
3. Double click signature and click new.
4. It will prompt you for a new name. Enter East Cheshire NHS Trust
5. Click ok and then copy and paste the above details in the blank box.
6. You can copy and paste the green message too if you like.
7. Change the font to corporate font Arial point 10 as 11 is not available.
8. Please ensure the automatically add button and default button is selected.
9. Click ok and then close.
10. The signature will then be automatically added to your outgoing mail.

N.B. If you are on NHS net please refer to the help section or contact the Communications and Marketing Department for information on how to apply this.
Part two – Corporate in house style rules

Our in house style helps us to present effective written communications that are easy to read and consistent in style. Our in house style should be used for all written communications with variations for printed or online content.

Punctuation and grammar

**Full stops** – Use one space after a full stop, both online and for printed documents.

**Commas** – Use one space after a comma, except when writing out numbers.

**Quotation marks** – Only use double quotation marks when quoting speech. When writing several paragraphs of quoted speech, an open quotation mark should appear at the beginning of each paragraph. Only one closed quotation mark should appear, at the end of the quote after the full stop. Place full stops and commas inside the quotes for a complete sentence.

**Hyphens (-)** – Hyphens are used to link compound words, eg walk – in. Only use hyphens online when writing a short date range, eg 24-26.

**Brackets ( )** – Use brackets for acronyms or abbreviations after they have been mentioned for the first time, eg Department of Health (DH). Use brackets for cross reference, eg this topic is explored in more detail later in this report (see Chapter 3).

**Obliques (/)** – Avoid the oblique or forward slash in text. eg from/to should be written from and to, he/she should be written as he or she or they.

**Ampersands (&)** – Do not use ampersands in place of and (&) except in abbreviations where they are universally recognised, such as A & E or if it forms part of a company's trading name eg Marks & Spencer. Ampersands can be hard to read, especially for people with sight difficulties.

**Acronyms and abbreviations** - When using abbreviations the full name must be spelt out first before the acronym or abbreviation is used. Eg Department of Health (DH). Universally accepted acronyms and abbreviations, such as NHS and A&E, do not have to be written in full.

Do not put full stops in acronyms or abbreviations NHS not N.H.S

Common abbreviations such as, ie, eg should be written without full stops. Use them correctly – eg (for example), ie (that is).

When giving examples, put a comma before eg.

Do not use an apostrophe for pluralized acronyms or abbreviations, eg PCTs not PCT’s.

**Capital letters**

Keep capital letters to a minimum. The Disability Discrimination Act states that the overuse of capital letters makes text harder to read as the letters are harder to recognise and they interrupt the flow of text. Lower case is easier to read.

Main rules for the use of capital letters based on national guidelines for East Cheshire NHS Trust:

- **Initial capital letters** - These are used for all proper nouns like the names of organisations, people, places and trade names. Initial capitals should be used for organisations, but only when quoting the name in full, eg East Cheshire NHS Trust. If the full name is not used then refer to: the trust not The Trust.
• **Groups and departments** - The same applies to groups, committees and departments capital letters should be used when quoting the name of the group in full eg Trust Board but not to: The Board.


• **Headings** - Use them at the beginning of a sentence, page title, page heading or for the name of a place, person or organisation name. Generally cap only the first letter, so: Snappy heading like this, not Snappy Heading Like This.

• **Job titles** – Job titles should be capitalised if the person’s name is used eg. Kathy Cowell, Chair. Lower case for job titles should be used with no name eg. The chairman said …

• **Report titles and publication titles** – only capitalise the first letter of the first word and any proper noun eg Lord Darzi’s report High quality healthcare for all not Lord Darzi’s report High Quality Healthcare For All.

• **Conditions** – are lower case except where they start with a name – so cancer of the colon, multiple sclerosis, but Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s disease.

**Common used words and terms at the trust - the guidelines**

- Trust – use lower case to talk about trusts generally, and use capitals only in the full name of a specific organisation, such as East Cheshire NHS Trust not The Trust.
- Trust Board
- 18 Weeks
- Agenda for Change, National Patient Survey, Vital Signs, National Patient Standards – programme initiatives like department names and groups should be capitalised.
- boards – not Boards or the Board
- Choose and Book
- Department of Health (DH) – not the Department, DoH name in full and put acronym in brackets first before you reference DH in documents.
- Strategic Health Authority (SHA) – not The Authority or Strategic Authority name in full and put acronym in brackets before you reference SHA in documents.
- foundation trust – lower case unless it is part of a name eg Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust.
- Surgical Business Unit – departments and business unit names should be capitalised when mentioned in full not Business Unit, Department or Stroke Service.
- healthcare – not Healthcare industry.
- Macclesfield District General Hospital (MDGH) – name the hospital and put acronym in brackets first before you reference MDGH in documents.
- Acts of parliament – use initial capitals for acts eg. Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) but use lower case if you are just referring to freedom of information and not the act. All bills should be in lower case.
- primary care trust – lower case unless part of an organisations name Peterborough Primary Care Trust.

If in doubt please contact the Marketing and Communications Department on 01625 116184.

**Paragraphs** - insert one line space after paragraphs.

**Bullet points** – Use only standard round bullet points. There are two main types of bullet – point list:

- One with a complete introductory sentence and a list of separate points. For this type of list you should start each bullet point with upper case and end each point with a full stop.
Example of bulleted list with complete introductory sentence and a list of separate points

The possible advantages of new drugs are:

- There will be a significant reduction in the number of side effects, or in the severity of side effects that patients experience.
- More people will recover fully from the cancer.
- Patients will report an improved quality of life.

One with an incomplete lead – in statement which is completed by the points in the list.

For this type of list you should:
- put a colon at the end of the lead – in statement;
- start each bullet point with lower case;
- put semi – colons or commas at the end of each point;
- put ‘and’ or ‘or’ after the penultimate point; and
- end the final point with a full stop.

Example of a bulleted list with an incomplete lead in statement

The new treatment has been shown to:

- give longer disease-free survival;
- reduce side effects; and
- lead to better quality of life.

Dates and times

Dates must be presented in the same format: day followed by month followed by year. Use cardinal numbers (1, 2, 3) rather than ordinal numbers (1st, 2nd, 3rd) as these can be hard to read, especially for people with sight difficulties.

Example

- 24 April 2010
- Friday 3 November 2010
- For financial years, write 2010/11

Numbers

Numbers one to nine should be written in full. Numbers from 10 upwards should be written in numerals. Also, try to avoid starting a sentence with a number.

Example

- This story has appeared in six national newspapers.
- Since last year, 56 people have joined East Cheshire NHS Trust.

To make them easier to read, use commas in numbers with four or more digits. A comma should be placed after every third digit.

Example

- 64, 000
- 1, 432, 567

Numbers above 999, 999 should be written as figures with ‘million’ or ‘billion’ in full.
Example

- 10 million

Any number at the beginning of a sentence should be written out in full. Decades should be written in full, eg seventies, or in numerals followed by an ‘s’, eg 1970s.
Part three – Tips for writing effectively

Write for your audience
Think about who you are writing for and what they need to know and how you express that. Would someone who had never read about the subject before understand what you have written? Provide clear and useful information. A clinician is used to different language than a patient.

Telling the story
Who – is involved?
Make sure you explain the relationships, who is doing what and why. Tell the reader what to do rather than what not to do.

What – is happening?
Give a brief overview. Be succinct.

Why – is it happening?
Focus on the benefits as well as explaining the reasons.

Where – is it happening?
Make sure you use correct names and check them.

When – is it happening?
Think about what you are writing. If it is newsy, use a precise date. If it is likely to have a shelf life, use the month or year.

How – is it happening?
Again, be succinct and give a brief overview highlighting key points of interest – things that have been done for the first time, or differently to how they were done before.

Language
Use plain English. Less is more, so use short, sharp sentences and simple language to get your message across. Can you use simpler, more commonly used words? Avoid acronyms if possible, if not, write them in full the first time. Do not use clichés. Do not use jargon or buzzwords unless they are in common use by your audience.

Average sentence and paragraph lengths
For the web or intranet:
- Sentences – 15 – 20 words
- Paragraphs – 45 words

For paper – based documents:
- Sentences – 15 – 20 words
- Paragraphs – 60 words

Keep it uncluttered
Ensure your words flow, minimise visual clutter such as signs, symbols and unnecessary punctuation. Use bold for headings only, avoid underlying text and use italics sparingly, as they are hard to read.

Active not passive
Try to use the active voice rather than the passive voice when writing. Active writing is more direct and makes your writing briefer and more interesting.

Examples of the active are:
- The cat is killing the mouse.
- I will send the document.

Their passive equivalents are:

- The mouse is being killed by the cat.
- The document will be sent to me.

The passive version is generally longer and less direct, so we recommend you avoid it where possible. The active makes it clear who is doing the action. Where possible, try to convert the passive into the active. Note that 'passive' does not mean 'past'. A passive verb can be in the present, past or future tense.