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NICE APPOINTS COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has appointed Louise Fish to lead its communications programme. The Communications Programme Director will be responsible for ensuring that those with an interest in the work of NICE – including the media, healthcare professionals, patients and the public – have an understanding of the Institute's purpose, processes, products and contribution to healthcare.

Louise has spent nine years working in the field of communications, and for the past five years she has specialised in the healthcare sector. Prior to her appointment as Communications Programme Director, Louise combined the positions of Acting Head of Communications and Senior Communications Manager at NICE. Louise joined NICE in 2001, and was initially employed as the Institute's Corporate Communications Manager. Louise previously worked as a communications consultant at Fishburn Hedges, a top-20 consultancy, with a range of clients including Nuffield Hospitals and the Royal College of Nursing. She has also worked for a patient organisation, Action for ME, combining the roles of Press & Campaigns Manager and Acting Chief Executive, and she worked for the Liberal Democrats national communications team before, during and after the 1997 General Election campaign.

Andrew Dillon, NICE Chief Executive said: "With a strong track record in healthcare communications, Louise brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the role of Communications Programme Director. I am delighted that she has been appointed to this new post."

Ends

Notes for editors

About NICE

1. NICE is part of the NHS. It is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on treatments and care for those using the NHS in England and Wales. Its guidance is for healthcare professionals and patients and their carers to help them make decisions about treatment and healthcare. For further information about NICE you can visit www.nice.org.uk.
2. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:
 - the use of new and existing medicines and treatments within the NHS in England and Wales – technology appraisals
 - the appropriate treatment and care of patients with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS in England and Wales – clinical guidelines
 - whether interventional procedures used for diagnosis or treatment are safe enough and work well enough for routine use – interventional procedures.
3. NICE also funds three enquiries that undertake research into the way patients are treated to identify ways of improving the quality of care (the investigations are known as confidential enquiries).
4. NICE guidance and recommendations are prepared by independent groups that include professionals working in the NHS and people who are familiar with the issues affecting patients and carers.