**Communications**

Communication including promotion and dissemination should address two main groups:

- **Health professionals** - communications aimed at this audience need to stress the health benefits, because protected areas are generally safe, accessible and free places for recreation, exercise and relaxation. Protected areas can provide opportunities for physical exercise, locations and activities that are beneficial to mental health, and a range of other well-being benefits linked to therapeutic activities.

- **Wider public** - communications aimed at this audience need to stress fun and enjoyment that can be derived from the environment.

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| **health professionals have greater awareness and understanding of the health and well-being benefits from contact with nature** | ➢ Identify local health partners / champions that will help to “spread the word” on how nature can benefit people’s health  
➢ Establish regular meetings between protected areas and health professionals to exchange information and experience  
➢ Invite health professionals to wider meetings (with protected area authority, local community, entrepreneurs, etc) to raise awareness about health issues and how to improve it. These wider protected area partners will communicate health benefits to their clients/visitors.  
➢ Provide opportunities for health professionals to engage in nature-based activities / health interventions so that they can see the impact themselves / in participants |
| **people spend more time in nature and they understand health benefits** | ➢ Increase the integration of health objectives into visitor programs offered by guides, nature centres, nature education specialists, rangers, etc  
➢ Organise promotional events/initiatives for target groups to encourage them to enjoy the environments while also learning that protected areas are an accessible resource that can contribute to their health and well-being. Events can be on a wide range of topics designed to motivate participation by under-represented groups  
➢ Attractive messages for different target groups. Main channels of communication are:  
  • Banners on protected areas website  
  • Posters on web, and at nature centres, schools, hospitals, etc  
  • Campaigns for children and youth to inspire and encourage them to engage with nature  
➢ Cooperate with interesting social media actors to motivate groups, and children and young people in particular, to engage in outdoor recreation  
➢ Health messages can be direct and indirect, recognising that some people will not respond to ‘take part because it’s good for you’ – the key is to have an enjoyable experience. |
| Health practitioners and the public have easy access to information about local nature places and opportunities to participate in health-promoting activities | Make sure protected areas are included in local information / directories, and that these are promoted to the health sector and target health groups |

Communications work links to **Outreach, Site management, and Staff training**