



NORTH WEST



MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Celebrating good practice by Local Involvement Networks in the North West

LINKs working with the Care Quality Commission VOICES INTO ACTION

Local Involvement Networks in the North West have started to work closely with the Care Quality Commission.

LINKs are getting to know the CQC's area managers and inspectors and are already setting up forums for service users as part of inspection visits in social care.

The key issue for LINKs and the regulator is ensuring that direct patient, service user and carer experiences are not only heard - but acted upon.

From 1st December, LINKs have been able to input views and comments they receive direct to CQC and North West LINKs are taking up this opportunity.

The new system allows LINKs to pass on views and comments they receive - from meetings with groups, from contact with individuals or from surveys in a way that uses peoples' own words.

In response to criticism that previous inspections have been 'tick box exercises' this new approach shows a shared commitment to making peoples' views heard at the time they want to say something - rather than waiting a year to feed in to an 'annual check'.

The next task is to ensure that, having heard what people said, it is acted on.

To 'make it happen' the Care Quality Commission and the North West Joint Improvement Partnership are planning an event for early 2010 to bring LINK participants, LINK 'host' staff, and CQC staff from across the region together.

This is just one of a series of events planned across the region and in areas within the region over the next few months where we can share best practice and plan ahead.

For more details contact the North West Joint Improvement Partnership - see back page



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ISSUE No 1 December 2009



LINK in Salford Fun-packed but serious

In March this year over 400 people from across Salford attended a fun-packed event to hear their views. There was a really positive atmosphere of people coming together to influence service developments in Salford.

The top three priorities local people identified:

Promote **access** to health and social care services by ensuring people know what services are available and how to access them. The project is now focusing on adults with learning disabilities in Salford in supporting solutions for the personalisation agenda

Promote **healthy lifestyles** through information, services and projects that will help people eat healthily and exercise - to support the Obesity Strategy in Salford

Promote **access to acute healthcare services** that offer quick, effective diagnosis and treatment and improve the patient experience. The project is now focusing on identifying the barriers for people from BME communities to help cut 'did not attend' rates at hospital and community appointments.

Three third sector organisations in Salford have been commissioned by the LINK to carry out further research and produce recommendations for change.

The Knowsley Network

With a strong emphasis being placed on LINKs developing robust networks locally, partnership working has become a key focus for Knowsley LINK.

Early on within the development of Knowsley LINK a close working relationship with the disAbility Partnership in Knowsley was formed. Partnership working has developed effectively and the benefits have been noticeable. Knowsley LINK has helped support the ongoing development of the disAbility Partnership in practical ways such as supporting the group in the writing of terms of reference and supporting the administration of the group. The benefits for LINK have also been significant as the interaction with the disAbility Partnership in the development of the Knowsley LINK work streams has helped provide an effective platform for the views of people with disabilities in the Knowsley area to influence service provision.

Evidence of developing partnership working was demonstrated through road-shows held in Knowsley to give community members a chance to respond to the Big Care Debate – Shaping the Future of Care Together.

Led jointly by Knowsley LINK, Knowsley Older People's Voice forum and local health forums (facilitated through Knowsley PCT), a series of road-shows were held around the borough and attended by 146 people.

A report detailing all the comments has been submitted on behalf of Knowsley residents.

positive Action Awards NORTHWEST



A core group member of the Warrington Local Involvement Network, Eileen McDonald, received the North West Positive Action Award in October. The award – for making a positive difference in the region - was given for her inspirational voluntary work in health and social care.

Eileen became involved in Patient Forums seven years ago and has gone on to be extremely active as a trainer on the Expert Patient Programme and work with many NHS bodies. She was nominated by the Warrington LINK on which she is a Long-term Conditions Champion, because of the enormous effort and enthusiasm she puts in despite her own health conditions affecting her mobility.

The award was sponsored by the North West Regional Development Agency and presented by Evelyn Asante-Mensah, Head of Equality and Diversity at the Agency.

Mystery shopping In Manchester

The Manchester LINK Support Organisation has been speaking to people at different groups and organisations working with homelessness. They have spoken with workers and service users / clients to find out what they think about health services and social care services in Manchester.

Some people said that they have had problems when they go to register with a doctor. If they say that they have 'no fixed abode' or live in a certain hostel, some GP surgeries have said they will not treat them.

A suggestion has been made to carry out a 'Mystery Shopper' activity. This means going into a doctor's surgery and seeing what happens if you tell the receptionist that you have 'no fixed abode' or live in a hostel nearby.

On 17th and 24th November, two half day training sessions were carried out with service users and an external trainer. This was to:

- Train them in what it means to be a mystery shopper,
- Plan what would be said on the visits to GP surgeries,
- Design a log to record what happens during the visits

A meeting was set up with the Manchester Local Medical Committee (LMC) to make sure that the visits are carried out ethically and follow protocols. It is very important that the LINK adhere to this, or else all evidence gathered could be discredited.

Once the LMC has given their approval, dates for the visits will be arranged with the service users. It is expected that these will be going on during the whole of December and possibly into January 2010.

For more details of the training contact Lydia; 0161 214 3909

lydia@blackhealthagency.org.uk

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Lancashire LINK Away Day

We recently held an 'away day' for board members, staff, representatives of Lancashire PCTs and our local authority. With a newly elected board, we thought it would be helpful to get everyone together and build good working relationships. We used it for training and held workshops on some of the issues on our work plan.

After a short board meeting, one of our Community Engagement Officers gave a presentation entitled 'How are health and social care structured and delivered? How does the LINK fit into this?' This outlined all the organisations responsible for commissioning and delivering health and social care in the region and gave details of how local priorities for health and wellbeing are set using the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and Local Area Agreements. It also spoke about the responsibilities of bodies such as local authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees and the Care Quality Commission and our relationship to them. Clarifying a complicated subject so everyone 'knows the ropes'

Contact: linda@blackhealthagency.org.uk for a copy

We also held brief project planning workshops taking one project from the work plan. Bearing in mind the overall aim of the project, delegates were asked to think of objectives that would achieve this aim and then split the objectives down into tasks.

Our 'away day' was a success and we would recommend holding one to anyone in a similar situation to ours who wants to do some team-building and 'kick-start' their next work plan. We have detailed plans on access to counselling services, working with Gypsy and Roma families, prison health and a lot more besides!



Bury Market stalls

We have set up events to promote the Bury Link aiming to advertise the service to the wider community and recruit new members. We have booked 3 stalls at Bury Markets during January, March and May of next year and are working with our partners in NHS Bury to promote healthy living. We are also setting up an event in January aimed primarily at the homeless and travelling communities of Bury as we feel it would be useful to get their feedback on their health and social care experiences.

250 at Trafford launch

Almost 250 people attended a public event at Lancashire County Cricket Club to mark the launch of Trafford LINK.

Members of the public, community groups and health and social care organisations came together for the celebrations, which included afternoon tea, information displays and pledges of support from Health and Social Care Directors.

Ann Day, Chair of the LINK Committee, said: "Residents of Trafford, this is your Local Involvement Network. It's your chance to make a difference and the success of Trafford LINK is all our responsibilities.

"We must grasp hold of this opportunity with both hands. I urge each of you to do your bit to promote Trafford LINK to your friends, neighbours, relatives and colleagues."

At the event, attendees were asked what they thought Trafford LINK should look into first. Trafford LINK used these comments to shape its work plan. Priorities identified included mental health, services for older people, transport and communication.

Sefton LINK:

Getting younger people involved

Sefton LINK undertook a research pilot between March and June 2009 with the aim of finding out why younger people (16-21 years) have traditionally not been involved in having their say on Health and Social Care services.

A simple questionnaire was designed and young people in South Sefton were targeted. An in depth interview with a youth representative from Sefton LINK's steering group was also undertaken to find out how the LINK was progressing from a younger person's perspective.

The perceptions and insight from the young people who took part in the research were invaluable and a resource will not be ignored by Sefton LINK and stakeholders who engage with the LINK. One of the biggest issues emerging from the feedback was the apparent gap between adults and young people. Two of the themes emerging from the qualitative feedback was "they don't listen" and "we don't get taken seriously", suggesting a 'them and us' situation. Other findings included:

- The use of interactive communication methods including: emails, text messages, websites and online social messaging were preferred to fit into the busy lives of young people;
- Free training and support would encourage younger people to get involved;
- Promoting the LINK in schools, colleges as a positive volunteering experience which can be used on a curriculum vitae when applying for university;
- Creating a young persons peer group to work on issues and feed-back to the LINK steering group.

For a copy of the full report, please contact the Sefton LINK Support Office on (0151) 920 0726 (extension 203) or sls@seftoncvcs.org.uk

Blackburn w Darwen LINK's first birthday!

Blackburn with Darwen LINK held its first birthday celebration on October 30th, having elected its Steering Group and left Transitional status in October 2008. The LINK produced its first task group report on safeguarding adults in February 2009 and this was used to inform the Council's Annual Performance Review by the CQC. The LINK has developed very good relations with all NHS Trusts and Commissioners in the area has a working relationship with the CQC.

In May 2009 the LINK adopted its work-plan and has initiated 5 further task groups

Coordinating Care Task Group: produced an enter and view Report on Emergency and Urgent Care at Blackburn Royal that resulted in the Trust developing an action plan to deal with LINK recommendations. As a result of a request by the Health Overview Scrutiny Committee and issues raised from engagement activity feedback, we commenced a programme of enter and view visits to the hospital. .

The Home and Personalised Care Task Group: correlates the ways in which services are provided across the diverse range of clients and services with how well integration and service management processes are progressing with personalisation. The Task Group has 'enter and viewed' two social care homes as a basis for developing a wider survey approach in care establishments across the patch.

It is currently planning a review on progress in developing information access for older people.

The Mental Health Task Group: as part of its review of mental health services has commissioned MIND to carry out a piece of survey work on social and recreational activities available for service users. It is working with Making Space to commission a survey on user experience of care pathways.

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The Transport Task Group: is looking at transport to health and social care services including transport via ambulance (extended service) and transport for people with disabilities.

The Engagement Task Group: is conducting a pilot in small area engagement looking at how to support the JSNA, avoiding duplication of effort. The pilots will also look at access to services as a result of findings from two service questionnaires.

All information and reports on our website:
www.blackburnwithdarwinlink.org.uk

Halton LINK Swine Flu update

The Halton LINK held its first Information Event in October. Entitled 'Fact or Fiction', the event centred around two issues, Dentistry services in Halton, and the winter plans for Swine Flu.

Over 40 local people, including local councillors and both local MPs, Derek Twigg and Mike Hall attended.

Lesley McKay from Warrington & Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, and Seamus McGirr, Flu Director at NHS Halton and St Helens, gave the audience updates on their plans for swine flu. Seamus McGirr said: "We are predicting a rise in the number of swine flu cases over the forthcoming weeks and have robust plans in place to deal with increased demand for medication and treatment.

The audience took the opportunity to ask questions of the speakers, details of the questions and answers are available at www.haltonlink.org.uk.

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Wirral:

Protocols and coffee

Wirral LINK has been inundated with requests for representation for various strategic meetings from local Wirral NHS Trusts and the Department of Adult Social Services, and other organisations.

In order to streamline the process and ensure the LINK's credibility and meaningful input and output, the LINK created a representation request protocol, which must be completed by the organisation requesting representation. This protocol clearly states the remit of the LINK representative and the requirement to provide feedback to the LINK, and asks for information regarding times, dates, terms of reference of the group that requires LINK representation.

This has been successfully implemented and used widely by all the Trusts and Department of Adult Social Services. Representation is monitored closely for appropriateness to the Wirral LINK workplan and ensures that Wirral LINK sets its own priorities and is not just a tick box exercise.

We have also developed a robust feedback mechanism for its LINK representation and people of Wirral. All LINK representatives are required to complete a meeting feedback template, highlighting key issues for action for LINK.

Regular Wirral LINK coffee mornings have been successful in not only highlighting the work of the LINK but receiving feedback and questions from attendees. There is a regular "feedback" slot in the bi-monthly LINK newsletter, which provides the answers to questions asked at the previous coffee morning. This demonstrates the importance of effective two-way communication and has been well received by LINK and other stakeholders.



**Manchester City Council
Health and Well-being
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

Substantial Variation to services workshop

At its July meeting, Manchester City Council's Health and Well-being Overview and Scrutiny Committee made a recommendation to ask the NHS Trusts, Manchester Local Involvement Network and the Committee to work together to produce a local protocol to set out how substantial variation in service are managed.

NHS bodies are required to consult this Committee on any proposals for "substantial" variations or developments of health services. The aim of this protocol is to suggest a framework for discussion with local NHS bodies and the Local Involvement Network (LINK) to assist in reaching agreement on what constitutes "substantial" in the local context and how such consultation should be carried out.

We believe that it is important that there is an agreed method between all of the NHS Trusts in Manchester, for evaluating the need for consultation on significant variations to services, in order to avoid uncoordinated and ineffective scrutiny and the potential for overload. This agreement could assist NHS managers who are dealing with the Health and Well-being Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the first time and would also assure us that patients and service users are being appropriately consulted on important changes that affect them.

We have worked with NHS Manchester and the Manchester LINK to produce an early draft of this protocol. We have invited representatives of NHS Trusts to attend a workshop to agree the finer detail of the protocol. We will consider the final version of the Substantial Variation Protocol at our meeting in January 2010.

Councillor Sue Cooley,

Chair of the Health & Well-being Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Ensuring the Link's diversity

Liverpool LINK was formally established in December 2008 when the first Core Group was elected. In the early days it was recognised that it would be crucial to ensure diversity in the development of the network structure and governance. This would boost LINK credibility in terms of any recommendations and reports it produced based on engagement with a membership that was representative of Liverpool's diverse communities and its engagement with wider communities of interest beyond the LINK membership itself.

The Core Group structure was set up to consist of 15 members – 8 individuals and 7 organisational representatives. Of the 15 Core Group members, 6 act as champions for thematic areas covered by equalities legislation, as follows:

- Gender/Transgender
- Age equality
- Disability
- Faith/Religious Belief
- Sexual Orientation
- Race Equality

In terms of engagement with stakeholders it was necessary for the LINK to develop its structure in line with existing ones rather than trying to 'reinvent the wheel'. From April 2009, Liverpool LINK started to develop neighbourhood structures, mirroring partners' geographical areas – specifically the 5 Neighbourhood Management Areas (City and North, Alt Valley, South, South Central, East and Alt Valley) through which the City Council delivers local services and which are also covered by Liverpool PCT Public Health Neighbourhood Managers and other PCT Community Engagement officers.

To establish and develop neighbourhood 'hubs', Liverpool LINK had to raise awareness and recruit more members, so between April – July 2009 a high profile marketing campaign was put into action, resulting in a massive increase in membership. Buses, trains, radio stations, press and street sign-up campaigns made this a huge success.

There are now 2,620 individuals and voluntary/community/faith organisations in membership of Liverpool LINK (2,534 individuals and 86 organisations).

All members are encouraged to complete diversity monitoring forms and current statistics show that where diversity monitoring information has been provided there are 624 males and 1,772 females in membership, 189 members declare ethnicity other than White British (7%) and 309 (12%) class themselves as having a disability. 129 members preferred not to complete the diversity form and 9 provided their name and email contact only.

Work is ongoing to improve diversity monitoring and to target under represented groups.

To further improve neighbourhood development the 587 (23%) members who indicated on their membership forms that they would like to be more active within the LINK have been targeted to develop the structure at local level. Neighbourhood, Ward and Communication Champions have been recruited and are in the process of training and induction into an effective two-way reporting structure between communities and the Core Group.

This development has been very useful in working on neighbourhood priorities within local partnerships through Neighbourhood Partnership Working Groups and other structures within the city.

Is your LINK involving everyone?

Let us know what your LINK is doing; send us your article for the January newsletter by Friday 8th January 2010, to:

carole.piddington@northwestjip.nhs.uk

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The Oldham Standing Conference

The Oldham Standing Conference has been developed by Oldham LINK in partnership with Tameside, Oldham and Glossop MIND, to provide the space for users, carers and members of the public to look at issues of mental health service performance and development in the borough.

Its intention is to capture the perspectives of service users, carers and the public to ensure change is influenced by real lives, experience and knowledge.

The conference is hosted by the Oldham Local Involvement Network (LINK) and supported by Tameside Oldham and Glossop MIND. The LINK's impartiality as an engagement body places it in a good position to be able to gather information and communicate it to commissioners.

The Standing Conference is closely linked to the Local Implementation Team (LIT) and will elect user, carer and public representatives to the LIT to inform its work and direction. The LIT is a strategic body which implements mental health priorities and involves a range of stakeholders, including: service users, carers and public as well as senior officers from statutory bodies

Most importantly, the LIT is able to influence commissioning decisions, This is therefore a very useful and comprehensive way for the LINK to communicate service user, carer and public issues to mental health commissioners.

The Standing Conference is also a means to provide information and policy updates to users, carers and the public so that, as an informed community, Oldham can have its voice heard and set its own agenda.

The Conference will be held quarterly. The first of the Standing Conferences held in November 2009 was attended by over 30 people, who were able to shape the way future events would be run and to set the agenda and future themes of the conferences.

Further details can be obtained from the Oldham LINK Support Team on 0161 622 5700, or info@oldhamlink.org.uk

Warrington LINK:

Building relationships

The Warrington LINK realised early on that it needed strong relationships with its local health and social care services. Not only so that issues and concerns raised by the LINK can be actioned but also so joint working can be promoted.

Robust systems have now been set up with each Health Trust. Monthly meetings have been set up with the Partnership Leads at the PCT, to share issues and comments, these are then actioned and feedback given to the LINK. A reporting form has been designed with the Warrington and Halton Hospital NHS Foundation Trust so that issues and concerns can be fed back to the Governance Lead at the Trust. LINK members and staff attend bi-monthly PPI meetings at 5 Boroughs Partnerships to discuss LINK work and issues. These have all proved very successful and real outcomes have been achieved.

The LINK has been involved in many different examples of joint working with health trusts and social care services. A few recent ones include LINK members working with NHS Warrington to refresh their Strategic Commissioning Plan and to reset their priorities.

Another example is working with an organisation which has been commissioned by Warrington Borough Council to look at people's experiences of residential and nursing Homes in Warrington. LINK members have been trained in interviewing techniques and are asking older people for their views of living in residential homes.

Voices 4 Wellbeing: Recording and sharing information

When we started seriously promoting Rochdale LINK in 2008 we decided that nothing we were told on health and social care issues would go to waste!

Every comment we received was recorded by making notes at meetings and at engagement events with the general public. In June 2009 we also started using comment cards, which have been really useful – members of the public can record their views directly, and have their own words used in reports.

The LINK's Interim Governance Group members and other LINK participants played their part - recording information using our *Meeting and Event Report* sheets. This meant we didn't just have a record of meetings attended – we had valuable feedback from already established networks. All the information fed-back was collated in a quarterly Community Work Report and uploaded to Rochdale Link's website www.voices4wellbeing.co.uk

In June this year, one of our members who attends PCT Board meetings on behalf of the LINK suggested it would be useful to share our reports with the PCT Board and the Senior Commissioning Team. The PCT were impressed with the work that the LINK had carried out so far and now regularly review the reports.

As we finished our first year's work plan, it was clear that an even more robust way of recording issues was needed. It was agreed that monthly community reports (rather than quarterly), would provide *real time* issues and concerns and that these might be structured around the current work strands, targets and themes local statutory bodies are working on. Reports relevant to each can be produced and shared accordingly.

We are now working with Heywood Middleton and Rochdale PCT to design regular reports that will help them, and help us put forward people's views.

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St Helens: Making information better

Clearer access to health and social care information is one of the three priorities in St Helens LINK's workplan, chosen by people in the borough. Even before a task group was developed to take this work forward, LINK has been working to provide people with better quality information about health and social care issues and services. Our Communication Worker is a Lay Reader Panel member at both NHS Halton and St Helens and Knowsley and St Helens Teaching Hospital's Trust.

These panels help to ensure the accessibility of patient information. The use of jargon, complicated vocabulary and lack of contact details could all prevent or deter a patient from finding out more about their condition or even using a service. Both Trusts recognise that the feedback given by these Lay Reader Panels has directly improved the quality of patient information.

LINK has also been working with St Helens Library Service on improving public access to information. As well as displays and publicity distribution through its branch libraries, the Home Delivery Service will be providing verbal and written information on LINK to 800 vulnerable people in their own homes.

LINK and the Library Service are also planning to increase access to health information and reduce the 'digital divide' through providing IT and health taster sessions for people with little or no IT skills. There is real scope for future partnership working which will ensure that people not only have better access to the information they need, but also be given a greater say in their own health and social care.

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Blackpool LINK

Surveying patients' views

Blackpool LINK were contacted by Medicines Management at NHS Blackpool and asked if they would carry out a survey to help understand people's views about services which are currently provided at their local pharmacy, and what services they would like to access. The information gathered will help to decide what services could be provided at three new health centres in Blackpool.

To ensure that as many people as possible were given the opportunity to comment, Blackpool LINK went into a number of the pharmacies and spoke to members of the public, especially in the areas where membership to the LINK was low. The response rate to the questionnaire was quite high. A report on the findings is being compiled and will be submitted to NHS Blackpool along with recommendations that will help improve the pharmacy services for all Blackpool residents.

Blackpool LINK received comments from residents saying that they have sometimes had difficulty in getting an appointment at their GP's surgery within the NHS guideline times. A small-scale piece of work was carried out, but as the response rate was low, it was felt that it did not give a fair representation of residents in Blackpool.

In order to do this work on a wide scale, representatives will be going into all Blackpool surgeries throughout January 2010, inviting patients to take part in either discussion groups or to complete a questionnaire. This is being done alongside NHS Blackpool who are meeting GP's regarding Patient Surveys.

Tameside LINK: Deciding our Priorities



In Tameside we decided that the LINK had to find an active way of involving our members in deciding the priority areas for our work. We used a range of different engagement techniques over a six month period to do this.

We started off by sending out a paper survey to everyone who had been involved in the old PPI forums, social care user involvement activities, local community groups and to the local Foundation Trust's members. Our Community Networker visited local groups to encourage them to join the LINK and to help people fill in the questionnaire (particularly important in groups where people are unable to communicate easily through written English). She also involved our host organisation's Faith, Health & Social Care, Older People's and Lesbian Gay Bisexual Trans network. This survey asked people to rate the quality of care they had received from services and also asked what they felt our priorities should be for the coming year.

A couple of months after we started the survey, we held a public launch event. This gave people an opportunity to tell us what was working well and what they thought needed to be improved. We combined the survey results with the comments from the public meeting, feedback from PALS about issues they had been tackling over the year and reports from local community engagement activities to draw up our four main priorities for the year.

We took the priorities to our Annual General Meeting (attended by over 100 people), where we asked them if they agreed with these priorities and to help us decide what order to tackle them in. As a result, we are currently working on: Personalisation in Adult Social Care; Community Mental Health Services (with a focus on services for people recently discharged from hospital mental health wards); Access to GP Services (working jointly with our local Overview & Scrutiny Committee); and Access to NHS Dental Services

Working with the Third Sector in Cumbria

Cumbria LINK and the Third Sector Network have developed a draft Memorandum of Understanding that will ensure good communication between the two networks, identify opportunities for joint working and strengthen both the voice of the Sector and Cumbria LINK. The Memorandum of Understanding has been developed as a result of past partnership working on issues such as personalisation, carers' issues and shared bi-monthly news bulletins.

Through this approach the Cumbria LINK can connect with a wide range of specialist networks and their many service users throughout the county on issues of concern to them. The Third Sector Network includes the following areas: Health and Wellbeing; Housing; Environment; Equality and Diversity; Training; Information and Advice; Rurality; Faith; Transport; Children and Young People; Sports & Recreation

Street Safe Campaign

Cumbria LINK has joined forces with the emergency services in the south of the county to provide information to local residents to their doors. The information pack includes information about Cumbria LINK. A short survey forms part of the campaign and Cumbria LINK has two standing questions about health and care services in their area.

We hope to extend this partnership across Cumbria so that we can reach as many residents as possible.

Engagement through film

Cumbria LINK is currently encouraging people in West Cumbria to contribute their views on the development of a new acute hospital in the area. There are a range of ways people can get involved which including on-line surveys, attending public events, being part of a task group or viewing a short film on line where they can leave their views. We are hoping to engage more with the younger members of the community through this medium. Click on the link to view the film.

<http://tv3cumbria.weebly.com/>

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Health and Care Together: Wigan Consensus Workshop

Wigan Borough LINK was rebranded as 'Health and Care Together' by the LINK Steering Group in September. Members felt the LINK was being too readily confused with other similarly named organisations within the Borough.

In March, this year we organised a Consensus Workshop to identify priorities for the Health and Care Together Workplan. This worked extremely well and backed up the results of an earlier consultation in February. It is a method that has been used before in the Borough, so the format was familiar.

We made a sticky wall with some locally purchased material and spray glue, and each table was supplied with post-it notes and card. Participants defined their own priorities, shared these with one other person, together they prioritized their priorities; the whole table then shared the findings and chose which issues they wanted to put forward.

It only works if there is a restriction of 5-7 words on the card and the more specific the better. The audience categorised the priorities as they were brought to us at the front.

The members of Health and Care Together are now working on the priorities that emerged: care in the home for older people after discharge, access to Primary Care Services, health care for people with Learning Difficulties.

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MAKE IT HAPPEN!



The North West Joint Improvement Partnership (NWJIP) is an alliance of agencies in the North West that work together to provide regional leadership to facilitate

- The co-production of and implementation of policy in relation to Adult Social Care, Health and well Being
- The improvement and best value of Care Services
- The alignment of systems and activity

Development opportunities for Local Involvement Networks across the region forms a key part of our programme for increased choice and control over services by the public.

Over the next few months we will be

- Supporting and facilitating 'sub-regional' LINK networks which bring LINKs in an area together to discuss joint work and share best practice
- Involving NW LINKs in discussions organised by the Department of Health's Patient and Public Engagement policy team on identifying the impacts & benefits of LINKs.
- Involving LINKs in wider discussions on engagement hosted by NHS North West
- Working with the Care Quality Commission to ensure that the work of CQC and LINKs is complementary.

For more details on the work that NWJIP is supporting contact:

Paul Greenwood
Regional LINKs Lead
paul.greenwood@northwest.nhs.uk
Tel: 07795 963509

Or Nik Barstow
Regional LINKs Co-ordinator
nik@blackhealthagency.org.uk
Tel: 07976 025174

Cheshire East Launch

Our launch at Crewe Alexandra Stadium last week was opened Crewe Town's Mayor. Speakers emphasised the vital role that LINKs can play in scrutinising health and social care services in Cheshire East.

More than 100 people from a range of backgrounds attended and found out what the LINK is doing to involve local people in their health and social care services.

Cheshire West and Chester Oyez! Oyez!

Announced by the Town Crier, the LINK's launch on 18 November at Chester Guildhall, provided an great chance for people to meet voluntary sector and health organisations, with stalls filling the Hall.

The event was opened by Nora Dolphin, Chair of the LINK. Other speakers at the Guildhall included Cheshire West and Chester Councillor Mike Jones, who commented on the importance of LINKs as the "People's voice on scrutiny," and John Church, Chair NHS Western Cheshire PCT, who reinforced the value of the feedback from the LINK.

MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Future issues of this bulletin will be produced towards the start of each month.

Contributions are welcomed from Local Involvement Networks and partner agencies.

Please send articles for the January bulletin to:

nik@blackhealthagency.org.uk

By Friday 8th January 2010