

Coventry LINK Steering Group Member Role Description

If you interested in playing a part in making a change to local NHS and Social Care Services this could be a role for you.

What is the Role?

One important volunteering role within Coventry LINK is on the Steering Group. Each person on the group plays a part in ensuring that Coventry LINK is: effective; inclusive; accountable to local people; and makes an impact on local NHS and social care service delivery.

The Steering Group has:

- 9 elected individual members;
- 6 co-opted representatives from the Coventry voluntary and community groups
- 1 representative from the Voluntary Action Coventry Board of trustees;

The purpose of the Steering Group is to be a management group. It oversees the work and effectiveness of Coventry LINK by:

1. Making decisions about the Coventry LINK work programme.
2. Prioritising work and deciding how best to use LINK resources and deal with conflicting demands
3. Making decisions about what services are subject to an 'enter and view'
4. Making sure that plans are put into action
5. Working to ensure that Coventry LINK is able to have an influence on how services are delivered
6. Making sure Coventry LINK reaches out to different people and priority groups and is inclusive in its engagement with local people
7. Making sure that the policies and procedures of LINK are followed and legal requirements are met.
8. Ensuring the LINK is accountable to local people and transparent
9. Overseeing LINK expenditure
10. Carrying out problem solving and ensuring that LINK procedures are not breached

Process for joining the group

Individual people

The 9 Individual volunteers on the Steering Group are elected from and by the LINK membership. The next elections will be held in 2011.

Representatives from voluntary and community groups

Voluntary and Community groups operating in Coventry can apply for one of the 6 co-opted every two years. Members of the Steering Group will look at the applications and decide which groups will bring the most to the LINK.

The Steering Group can go out for members at different times to fill gaps in membership.

Are there any restrictions about who can be on the Steering group?

As the LINK Steering Group is a non political body membership of the Steering Group it is not open to local councillors or MPs.

Managers of health and social care services and those involved in the commissioning of services cannot stand for election to the LINK Steering Group.

Anyone with a significant financial interest in health or social care services cannot stand for election to the Steering Group.

Representatives from voluntary/community organisations cannot be mandated by their organisations/groups to such an extent that they cannot act for the benefit of the LINK as a whole.

Activities and time commitment

It is estimated that the role will take between 5 – 15 hours per month depending on the types of things you get involved in.

The core activity is attending Steering Group meetings and reading papers in preparation for these meetings.

Then there is work that spins off from Steering Group meetings, which members can choose if they want to do. For example having meetings with NHS or Social care service managers to build relationships; taking on a representative role on another body; or attending or helping with LINK events.

What you could get from the role?

Coventry LINK is all about making things better and including people. This role offers a unique opportunity to help make Coventry LINK effective.

You will be working with others to make sure the LINK carries out its important role of enabling local people to influence how NHS and social care services are delivered. Sometimes a small change can make a big difference to peoples' experiences.

You will be supporting the LINK to be a critical friend to NHS and social care services and to become a strong independent voice for Coventry.

Expenses and Training

Travel and out of pocket expenses you make related to the role can be claimed back.

Induction training for the role will be given.

Is it for You?

Members of the Group will need to be willing to:

1. Be committed to the purpose, and values of Coventry LINK
2. Work co-operatively and constructively for the benefit of all those concerned with health and social care across Coventry.
3. Listen to others and be inclusive.
4. Commit the necessary time to the role
5. Follow the Coventry LINK Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest policies at all times and adhere to other LINK policies and procedures.
6. Undertake training as required.
7. Demonstrate commitment to inclusivity and valuing diversity in this role.
8. Work constructively with other LINKs where issues cut across health and social care administrative boundaries.

Personal Qualities Required:

- The ability to contribute to group meetings/discussions.
- Good listening skills.
- The ability to work effectively as a member of a team.
- The ability to deal with confidential information sensitively and appropriately.
- An ability to work with a wide range of people from different backgrounds.
- The ability to take a strategic perspective and to apply good independent judgement to discussions and decisions.
- Ability to make collective decisions and stand by them

Knowledge or experience

It is not necessary to have a lot of knowledge of health and social care service to carry out the role of an individual member of the group.

In reviewing the applications for voluntary and community group places on the group the Steering Group will be looking to see what knowledge, expertise and links with local people and service users the groups can bring to the LINK.

Other ways to be involved in the LINK

The LINK Steering Group is not the only way of being involved in Coventry LINK and it won't be right for everyone.

The LINK also has working groups, which are groups of volunteers who will do the practical work of looking at NHS and Social Care services in different ways. The

work priorities for these groups are set by the Steering Group through the LINK Work Programme.

More information

For an informal chat about the role please contact Ruth Light the LINK Project Manager on 024 7622 0381 or email r.light@vacoventry.org.uk .

If you want to know more about the LINK then visit: www.coventrylink.org.uk