

COVENTRY LINK NEWSLETTER

Issue 9: October 2010

Welcome to the latest LINK members' newsletter – keeping you up to date with LINK work and developments in health and social care

LINK NEWS

New LINK Work Programme set

The LINK Steering Group has agreed the new LINK Work Programme. The Group held a work planning session in August and the new work programmes is confirmed as:

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| 1 | In-patient activities at the Caledon centre |
| 2 | Patient transport for renal patients |
| 3 | Choice and control for service users of adult social care |

LINK will also be beginning work to identify specific issues of concern around care for people with Dementia in Coventry.

Your chance to join LINK's new working groups

We are looking for LINK members to join the new LINK working groups that will carry out the work in the new Work Programme. **Could you give some time regularly to help LINK work for better patient and service user experiences?**

We are recruiting people for 3 working groups one for each of the 3 work streams above. Each group will be facilitated by a staff member and will develop a project plan for its investigations.

The existing Hospital Services Working Group will also continue to work following up LINK's recommendations. So we are looking for people with a general interest in hospital services to join this group too.

More information about our working groups is enclosed with an expression of interest form.

Information is also available at: www.coventrylink.org.uk/link-volunteering-roles or if you like to discuss the roles phone the LINK team on 024 7622 0381.

We have moved office

Coventry LINK's Host organisation including the LINK staff team have moved offices from Coventry Point to:

3 Castle Yard, Hay Lane, Coventry CV1 5RF.



Our New Offices at Castle Yard

Our phone number is still 024 7622 0381 and email addresses have not changed. The new office is situated in beside St Mary's Guildhall (Bailey Lane).

LINK NHS White Paper response

98 people came to LINK's public meeting on the NHS White Paper in September. We facilitated lively discussions about the key themes in the White Paper.



White Paper Event

The information gathered was used in four responses to the Government Consultations.

A summary of the key points from the meeting is enclosed. The four consultation responses can be downloaded from the LINK Website: www.coventrylink.org.uk/link-response-nhs-white-paper-2010 Two of the responses are long and detailed due to the number of consultation questions and the wealth of feedback we gathered. If you would like a paper copy of any of them please phone Latifah on 024 7622 0381.

LINK reports & recommendations

Since the last newsletter LINK has published its report of focus group discussions about implementing personalisation in Coventry. The report can be found on the LINK website at: www.coventrylink.org.uk/impact or contact us at the office if you would like a paper copy.

LINK staffing update

Wendy Donnelly has started work as the new LINK Project Officer. Wendy replaces Jenny Wall who moved to Wales.

Paige Morgan has joined the staff team as the new Admin Apprentice. Sadia Zarooof came to the end of her apprentice year in the middle of September. Paige will be working for a NVQ2 in business administration whilst she is with us.

LOCAL NEWS

Seasonal Flu campaign launch

The annual seasonal Flu campaign has been launched in Coventry and Warwickshire this month. Entitled *Flu-rrggh* the campaign aims to encourage people who are at risk of the flu to get vaccinated for free.

A new development is that pregnant women can also be vaccinated. The treatment also protects pregnant women against H1N1 also known as swine flu.

Anyone over the age of 65 is offered the vaccination and plus those under 65 with long term health conditions including diabetes, heart conditions, liver disease and asthma. For further details visit:

www.coventrypct.nhs.uk/news_story.asp?newsID=306

A better life – survey of people over 55 in Coventry

The findings of a survey of people aged over 55 in Coventry has been published. 1558 people took part. The questionnaire asked about:

1. Health and wellbeing
2. Choice and control
3. Economic and educational participation
4. Social and community participation

The report can be found at:

www.coventry.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/council--government-and-democracy/corporate-research-team/consultations/a-better-life/



White Paper Event

OTHER NEWS

Government launches two more Health Service consultations

Through the White Paper, *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS, the Government* pledged to give people greater control about the care they receive.

Two new consultations on **Patient Choice** and on **Information** set out proposals including:

- Choice of provider for diagnosis
- Choice of treatment and provider in mental health services.
- The extension of maternity choice to include pre-conception, antenatal and post natal care.
- Patient control of care records

Views are being gathered on how choice will work in practice, for example, what information and support patients might need.

For further information visit:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_120080

The consultation closes on **14 January 2011**.

Comprehensive Spending Review

The Chancellor of the Exchequer has announced Government spending plans for the next 4-5 years. NHS spending will increase by 0.4% in real terms. The Government has said it will invest extra money into social care with a focus on re-ablement to help people regain their independence. They also plan to increase access to talking therapies.

People with long term conditions will not now get free prescriptions and plans by the previous government for one to one cancer nursing and a one week wait for cancer diagnosis are not being put into action.

The NHS will still need to make £20 billion of efficiency savings over the next four years

which the Government says will be reinvested to meet rising demand. This will include a 33% cut to the administration budget.

Doctors concerned about NHS reforms

The doctors professional organisation, the BMA, have criticised aspects of the plans to reform the NHS. Their main concern is the pace of change which doctors believe will threaten the target £20 billion of savings the NHS must make by 2014.

Doctors also fear that the reforms will increase the amount of involvement of the private sector and will lead to competition between GPs at the expense of patient care. The BMA has described the Government's "obsession" with competition as "potentially damaging."

Summary of recent health policy announcements

- An end to mixed sex wards by the end of the year
- Cancer Drug fund of £200 million for patients who need drugs that have been rejected for free prescription to be able to receive them for free.
- A restructuring of the proposed NHS IT system that will reduce the cost by £700 million.

NHS Constitution & Whistleblowing

Views are being sought on amending the NHS Constitution to state that NHS staff will raise concerns about safety, malpractice or wrong doing at work which may affect patients, the public, other staff or the organisation itself as early as possible;

Plus a NHS pledge to support all staff in raising such concerns and respond to and where necessary investigate concerns raised.

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/index.htm

NHS complaints

The Health Service Ombudsman has warned that the NHS is failing to listen and learn from complaints and is therefore missing out on this rich and free source of information.

The first Report from a series entitled *Listening and Learning; the ombudsman's review of complaint handling* discusses the number of complaints received and outcomes from those issued.

The Report shows that the poor handling of the complaints can increase the difficulty in a situation for not only the patients, but the families involved. Find out more at: <http://nhsreport.ombudsman.org.uk/>

Community mental health services

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published the views of 17,000 people who had contact with specialist community mental health services between July and September last year

It finds that some people who use community mental health services in England are still not getting the care and support that fully meets their needs.

Many reported that they had not been involved as much as they would have liked in some aspects of their care. Significant numbers of people said they would have liked more explanation of, or more say in, their treatment and support, such as their medication or care planning.

Nearly half of those surveyed did not know who to contact in a crisis outside normal office hours. Of those who said they wanted some form of talking therapy, 73% had received it but 27% had not.

View the results at: www.cqc.org.uk/publications.cfm?fde_id=16107

Dementia care

Paul Burstow, Minister of State for Care Services, has introduced a revised Dementia Strategy Implementation Plan setting 4 priorities:

- Good-quality early diagnosis and intervention for all;
- Improved quality of care in general hospitals;
- Living well with dementia in care homes;
- Reduced the use of antipsychotic medication.

To find out more visit:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_119827

Standards to expect from the regulation of NHS hospitals

Following the introduction of a new law, all NHS hospitals in England must now be licensed by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). To be licensed hospitals must show that they are meeting new essential standards of quality and safety. Now CQC has published a leaflet which informs patients, their carers and families, what they can expect from the essential standards. The leaflet can be read or downloaded from CQC's website at www.cqc.org.uk

At the same time the CQC website publishes an up-to-date directory of all licensed NHS hospitals. You can now look up the current status of any NHS hospital trust in England.

Contact Us

The Coventry LINK staff team is hosted by Voluntary Action Coventry



and can be contacted by calling 024 7622 0381 and the Team email of: coventrylink@vac Coventry.org.uk