

COVENTRY LINK NEWSLETTER

Issue 11: February 2011

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

LINK NEWS

LINK work programme update

LINK's Working Groups have been taking forward lots of work to both follow up on previous recommendations and look at areas under the new work programme:

Patient transport for renal patients:

We have been requesting information about the contracts for the patient transport service and doing further fact finding about how the service is run locally and practice in other parts of the country, so that we can make comparisons and identify good practice.

LINK 'Enter and View' visits to the renal ward at UHCW have taken place to talk to patients about their experiences and views on transport.

What is Enter and View?

- A power for LINKs under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007
- The opportunity for Authorised Representatives of LINK to visit health and social care services as a part of the LINK's work programme to see how services are run
- May be announced or unannounced

Mental Health – inpatient activities

We have been finding out about new patient activity work which is being introduced and will be carrying out an 'Enter and View' visit to talk to patients about what activities they would like to do.

Following up on recommendations:

Last year LINK published a number of reports and recommendations about different health and social care services.

LINK recently met with mental health commissioners to discuss actions arising from recommendations in the report: *Out of hours mental health services in Coventry Recommendations for mental health Commissioners* published July 2010. Key recommendations were about ensuring services are joined up and resourced appropriately through commissioning.

LINK's Mental Health Working Group has also reviewed new leaflets produced by Coventry Warwickshire Partnership Trust about the new single point of entry to services and raised concerns about accessibility.

At the end of last year LINK wrote to the Chief Executive of UHCW regarding issues with outpatient booking processes after LINK investigations into these systems. The Steering Group Chair followed this up with the Chief Executive and Medical Director in January. UHCW is now doing work to review booking letters which LINK hopes will make these more accessible and user friendly.

LINK Volunteers

LINK relies on its volunteers and we have been recruiting new people to help with LINK's work programme in different ways. As part of our support for volunteers we recently ran volunteer induction training for new volunteers.

We are also recruiting people to help promote LINK and spread the word about what we do. If you are interested in becoming a LINK volunteer and wish to speak to someone about the current opportunities on offer please contact Latifah on 02476 220 381 or l.omitogun@vacoventry.org.uk

LINK views on outcomes for social care

Coventry LINK has sent in views on proposed ways of measuring the effectiveness of social care. This highlighted support for measuring outcomes to give a truly personalised approach to the different services people receive.

We highlighted the need to ensure people get the information and support they need to access services and that outcomes measures need to reflect the important role of carers.

We raised a number of questions about the proposals where the Government's ideas weren't clear.

We championed simple information on outcomes; user feedback as a key way of measuring success and the need to ensure that data can be compared for peer review.

LINK promotional activities

LINK has been actively promoting its work in the Coventry area recently. Activities have included visits to schools and colleges to raise awareness with young people and a week-long stall at University Hospital Coventry outside the Hospital Information Centre.

LOCAL NEWS

Personalisation - it's about you event

Saturday 26 February 2011

Coventry City Council has arranged an event for people who require social care and for their carers. It is all about more choice and control over the services people get.

The event is tailored around enabling people to understand what a personal budget is and how they can exercise their choice and control in the way they are supported. The venue is Coventry Transport Museum. And it is on between 2 pm and 7 pm.

To find out more information contact the Council on **024 7683 3465**.

Or visit:

www.coventry.gov.uk/info/287/social_services-direct_payments/768/personalisation

Guide to help you choose a GP

A new local guide to help people choose their GP and signpost patients to health care services has been launched. The guide has been compiled by NHS Coventry and developed with patients and doctors surgeries.

As a step to developing the guide NHS Coventry carried out a survey to gather information about patients understanding of services and patient choice.

The leaflet will be made available at a number of locations including community centres, libraries and leisure centres. As part of the launch a number of road show dates have been arranged throughout February.

For more information please visit:

www.coventry.nhs.uk/PressReleases/ViewSingle.aspx?PRID=141

Safeguarding...uhhh...what's that? Coventry LINK asks for your views

We are working with Coventry City Council to make some words that they use easier to understand for everyday people.

'**Safeguarding**' is a complicated word and includes the ideas around keeping people safe: preventing, protection and giving power that enables a person to retain independence. It would be better if the Council could simplify this in some way.

The word '**abuse**' is another word that people are unsure of or feel uncomfortable using; it seems to mean different things to different people.

LINK is keen to find out what people's views are so it can help the Council find new words to use to replace these to help people have a clearer understanding.

LINK will be circulating a survey on the LINK website and on its Facebook page soon and a copy is enclosed with this newsletter. We would really value you taking 10 minutes to complete it. If you need an alternative format or help phone the Coventry LINK team on 024 7622 0381.

Positive response for inpatient services

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust has said that a survey carried out by Quality Health on the Trust's behalf showed that mental health hospitals were rated highly by patients last year. 94% of the patients reported that they had a positive experience.

The survey was carried out among the 1,000-plus mental health inpatients who used services provided for adults aged between 18 and 65 during 2009-10 in the Caludon Centre in Coventry and St Michael's in Warwick.

For more information visit:

www.covwarkpt.nhs.uk/News/PressReleases/Pages/Patientspositiveaboutinpatientservices.aspx

OTHER NEWS

Health and Social Care Bill published

The Health and Social Care Bill was unveiled in January and will pave the way for a major shakeup of the NHS. Its key ideas are:

- GP Consortia will be set up across the country and will be responsible for commissioning healthcare on behalf of patients and also control a budget of around £80 billion.
- For all hospitals in England to become Foundation Trust Hospitals. This will mean that they will have more freedom and have an increased ability to earn by treating private patients.
- Creating Public Health England a new body will have the responsibility of improving public health in the country.
- Primary Care Trusts (PCT's) will be abolished by 2013 and along with other bodies including the Health Protection Agency and Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority.

The second reading of the Health and Social Care Bill was introduced on the 31st January 2011. The Bill passed with a vote and will now be put forward to be considered at the Public Bill Committee.

The Bill will be scrutinised by the Committee and there is a call for written evidence.

If you have views you wish to put forward to the Committee please follow the link below to read further guidance:

www.parliament.uk/business/news/2011/january/health-and-social-care-bill-second-reading-/guidance-on-submitting-evidence-to-a-pbc/

To monitor the progress of the Bill visit: <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/healthandsocialcare.html>

Early support to tackle mental health problems

The new Mental Health Strategy for England has been announced by the Government and promises an extra £400 million for mental health therapies including counselling in a bid to increase access by 60%. The plan will focus on dealing with mental health problems at an early stage. For more information visit: www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/Mentalhealth/MentalHealthStrategy/index.htm

Women and Mental Health

Research entitled *Women like me: Supporting wellbeing in girls and women* by Platform 51 has found that 62% of girls and women in England and Wales have been affected by mental health problems of some kind. Events such as emotional and physical abuse can trigger mental health problems 29% of 2000 women polled had been victim to this.

Other triggers include getting pregnant, being unemployed and getting into debt. Platform 51 found that women need a range of services in places where they feel secure and confident with 82% stating that access to women only services was important. To read the full report please visit: www.platform51.org/downloads/resources/reports/mentalhealthreport.pdf

GP Practice performance findings

The Health Service Journal (HSJ) has found that around one in five GP's are underperforming across a number of quality measures.

They analysed use by PCT's of GPs score cards. They use a red, amber or green system to rate practices. 43 PCT's which responded to them out of 110 stated that they used GP scorecard systems. 23 PCT's provided useable information to aid the analysis, which covered an area of over

8,500 practices in England. Of this figure 241 were rated as red on more than a third of their indicators.

Performance Indicators included:

- The proportion of patients from a practice who could get an appointment with their GP
- The rate of accident and emergency attendances/admission amongst their patients
- The proportion of eligible population who receive relevant immunisations
- The identification and motoring of patients who were living with long term health conditions
- Screening uptake by patients

There is a variation between PCT's on the use of different indicators and also thresholds i.e. what can be considered a 'red rating', therefore direct comparison between areas and practices cannot be made.

The HSJ also found that a third of the respondents did not operate a scorecard or similar system, 30 more PCT's planned to develop this and out of the 43 who had produced scorecards only six are available to view by the public.

Localism

The Governments' Decentralisation and Localism Bill aims to give more power to local communities. One of the Actions is to "empower communities to do things their way". Under the Right to Request, NHS staff have the right to propose to form social enterprises to run the services they deliver.

For more information on the ideas visit:

www.communities.gov.uk/publication/s/localgovernment/decentralisationguide

CQC stroke care review

A Care Quality Commission review of care for stroke patients has found the extent to which patients are supported in coping with life after a stroke varies significantly across England. Although the report highlights some good services built around the individual, their family and carers, The North East and South West of England being particularly good, the CQC found that this approach is far from universal.

The report found that rehabilitation services after transfer home

from hospital were inconsistent across the country and people in some areas had little or no access to stroke specialist community-based rehabilitation. The Commission found only two-thirds of PCTs commissioned specialist stroke physiotherapy and less than 40% of areas provided good access to psychological therapy or stroke

Other findings were:

“Stroke is the single largest cause of disability in adults and our evidence shows that early access to intense rehabilitation is beneficial to people’s recovery. - CQC Chief Executive Cynthia Bower

- Early supported discharge, which provides more rehabilitation at home rather than in hospital and is known to achieve better results for people and cut pressure on hospital beds, was available across only 37% of areas.
- In 48% of areas, people had to wait two weeks or more, on average, until they received community based speech and language therapy.
- Only 37% of areas provided rehabilitation services to people based in their community, focusing on helping them return to work.
- While 68% of areas provided a named contact to help people plan and organise their care after transfer home, in only a half of areas did these contacts look across health, social and community services.

Services were not always adapting well to meet people’s needs, such as the communication needs of people with aphasia or the needs of people who do not speak English.

Cancer Strategy

The Government have recently published the new Cancer Strategy. Cancer waiting time targets will be retained. The strategy wants to implement a system whereby it can save a total of 5,000 lives a year by 2014- 2015. It also seeks to increase the number of clinical nurse specialists in order to provide one to one care.

However it is noted that cancer networks will lose guaranteed funding as the Government will rely on investment from cancer charities in order to achieve its targets.

To find out more visit:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_123371

Rate NHS dentists online

Patients can now rate their dentist online. They will also be able to read other people’s comments regarding the following areas:

- Ease of getting an appointment
- Recommendations of the practice
- Patients experience of staff treatment
- Patients opinions on their involvement in decisions surrounding their care

You can rate your dentist here:

www.nhs.uk/servicedirectories/Pages/ServiceSearch.aspx?ServiceType=Dentist

Health Ombudsman report on care of older people

The Health Care Ombudsman the Ombudsman Ann Abraham has released a report into the care of older people in hospital.

The Ombudsman investigates serious complaints about NHS care and this report examines the cases of 10 patients aged over 65, which took place between 2009 and last year, and draws wider conclusions about care of older people on wards.

Half of the patients did not consume adequate food or water, some were not washed, others were discharged in a “shambolic” fashion, while in many cases their suffering was ignored.

The Ombudsman warned that the cases detailed in the report were not exceptional, with almost one in five of the 9,000 complaints it received last year concerning the care of older people.

The Ombudsman said that “real and urgent change” was needed, including listening to older people and their families, as well as learning from mistakes.

“The findings of my investigations reveal an attitude – both personal and institutional – which fails to recognise the humanity and individuality of the people concerned and to respond to them with sensitivity, compassion and professionalism. The reasonable expectation that an older person or their family may have of dignified, pain-free end of life care in clean surroundings in hospital is not being fulfilled. Instead, these accounts present a picture of NHS provision that is failing to meet even the most basic standards of care”.

- Ann Abraham

Dentists call for fines for missed appointments

The British Dental Association (BDA) has called for fines to be imposed on patients who miss their appointments. Research carried out by the BDA shows that missed appointments total up to 2 weeks annually.

Some surgeries use reminder techniques including letters, telephone calls and text messages to notify patients of up and coming appointments.

Mixed - sex wards warning

A warning has been sent to hospitals about the issue of mixed sex wards. A new fining system will be put in place from April this year where hospital trusts can be charged up to £250 when a patient stays on a mixed ward.

Figures from the Department of Health show that 11,000 breaches occurred in December last year.

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

Wendy Donnelly LINK Project Officer has a new mobile number: 07760 912 720