

# COVENTRY LINK NEWSLETTER

Issue 13: June 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:**

#### **Patient transport for renal patients**

We have published LINK's report and recommendations into patient transport for renal dialysis patients in Coventry.

LINK reviewed practice in Coventry and in other areas of the country, and carried out an 'enter and view' visit to talk to patients and gather their feedback on transport.

LINK found that kidney dialysis patients often experience long waits for patient transport, both when going to the unit and particularly for the journey home.

LINK called for tougher quality standards (including the nationally identified waiting time standard of 30 minutes); more use of patient feedback; work to improve communication between the ambulance service, the renal ward and patients; and ensuring that the specific needs of renal patients are reflected in the contract for patient transport.

LINK recently received a response from NHS Coventry to its recommendations and is pleased that NHS Coventry is considering, in the first instance, adding specific reference to renal patients within the generic patient transport contract.

LINK's full report and recommendations, plus the response can be found at [www.coventrylink.org.uk/impact](http://www.coventrylink.org.uk/impact)

#### **Hospital car parking**

The recent announcement of lower car parking charges at University Hospital Coventry is very welcome. LINK has been campaigning for improvements to car parking for some time. In January LINK's Steering Group Chair raised the issue with the Chief Executive of UHCW and called for a free period for dropping people off etc.

#### **Clearer language**

LINK carried out a survey to gather views on how the language and terminology used to explain Safeguarding could be made easier to understand.

We received 96 responses and found that many people did not like the words currently used.

People suggested alternative words/phrases instead, which described the meaning more simply. For example instead of 'Abuser' it was suggested that 'the person who ... kicked, punched, stole from, etc' would be easier for people to understand.

The findings of the work have been reported back to the Coventry Safeguarding Board and can be found on the LINK website at:

[www.coventrylink.org.uk/impact](http://www.coventrylink.org.uk/impact)

#### **Staffing news**

LINK is recruiting a Project Assistant to provide administrative and communications support as Barinder Johal has moved on from the post. For more information see [www.coventrylink.org.uk](http://www.coventrylink.org.uk) or phone the office.

## Changes to mental health services

We have been following up on our recommendations regarding out of hours mental health services by meeting with the operational manager of adult mental health services at Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust.

LINK is pleased that new user friendly information leaflets are now being produced for the public and patients to explain services.

LINK is also pleased that triage to out of hours mental health support services is now being done by the mental health helpline, rather than members of the Crisis Resolution Home Treatment Team on their mobile phone. Ending this practice was a key recommendation in LINK's report published last year.

## LINK Annual Meeting

71 people attended Coventry LINK's annual review meeting on 8 June to hear about LINK's work and achievements over the last year.



Participants fed in their views about how Coventry HealthWatch could provide information to help people make choices about NHS and social care services. We also gathered ideas for LINK's next work programme.

## LOCAL NEWS

### **NHS COVENTRY PUBLIC, PATIENT AND CARER EVENT**

**Thursday 28 July 2011 11.00 am – 2.00 pm at Coventry Rugby Club, Butts Park Arena**

LINK is working with NHS Coventry on this event to focus on how patients, the public and carers can be better involved and have influence on decisions about health services. As the health service is changing under the Government's plans we want to think of the best possible framework for patient and public involvement for Coventry.

Please let us know if you would like to attend either telephone **Wilma Bristow on tel. 024 7624 6099** or email [wilma.bristow@coventrypct.nhs.uk](mailto:wilma.bristow@coventrypct.nhs.uk) to book a place. There will be a limit of 100 places available, so please contact Wilma asap.

## Arden Cluster

NHS managers in Coventry and Warwickshire are now working together as part of a new management arrangement to be known as the Arden Cluster.

The Arden Cluster, consisting of Primary Care Trusts NHS Warwickshire and NHS Coventry, will be run under the leadership of Stephen Jones, former Chief Executive of NHS Coventry, who has been appointed as Arden Cluster Chief Executive. The changes being made are as a result of national guidance and Primary Care Trust Clusters are being introduced across the NHS in England.

## Local Mental Health Service celebrates its first year as a Charity

Coventry AIMHS (Actively Influencing Mental Health Services) – is currently seeking new members and has voluntary positions available for people who have experienced mental ill health, their carers, friends and family.

In the last year our involvement has helped to make a real difference to people who endure mental ill health. AIMHS work has focussed on improving people's experience of mental health services. Our collective voice does make a difference.

Membership of AIMHS is free and we have various training and involvement opportunities, we also hold regular support meetings – if you would like more information please contact Kay or Andy on 024 7667 0606. Website: [www.aimhs.org.uk](http://www.aimhs.org.uk)

## OTHER NEWS

### Health and Social Care Bill

The NHS Future Forum has reported back its ideas for making the Health and Social Care Bill better. The Forum met in 4 groups during the NHS 'Listening Exercise' and looked at:

- Choice and Competition
- Education and Training
- Clinical Advice and Leadership
- Patient and Public Involvement

The Future Forum made a number of recommendations and the Government has published its response highlighting areas where the Bill will be changed. In all 181 amendments to the Health and Social Care Bill are proposed.

These include: a bigger role for local Health and Wellbeing Boards; the creation of clinical senates to advise local decision makers; and GP Consortia to become commissioning groups with a change to the membership to make sure a range of professionals play a part in commissioning.

There are steps to improve accountability including having lay members on Commissioning group boards and public meetings; plus steps to establish a clearer duty to involve patients and the public.

Monitor's core duty is to be changed to promoting patient interests rather than promoting competition.

Because of the number of changes the timetable is being amended. Primary Care Trusts will still be abolished in 2013, but where new commissioning groups are not ready to take over commissioning by 2013 their commissioning will be taken care of by the NHS Commissioning Board.

Foundation Trusts will have longer to be established and the start date for HealthWatch will now be October 2012.

For more details on the plans visit:  
<http://healthandcare.dh.gov.uk/>

### Consultation on a New Excellence Award for Adult Social Care

The CQC has recently launched its consultation on a developing a New Excellence Award for Adult Social Care. In April 2012, a new excellence award scheme will launch for adult social care services in England. The consultation will close on Monday, 1 August 2011. Find out more at: [www.cqc.org.uk/yourviews/consultations/excellenceaward.cfm](http://www.cqc.org.uk/yourviews/consultations/excellenceaward.cfm)

### Reports on essential standards of care

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published the first 12 reports from an inspection programme, which examines whether elderly people receive essential standards of care in 100 NHS hospitals throughout England.

The programme focuses on whether people are treated with dignity and respect, and whether they get food and drink that meets their needs. A national report into the findings of the programme will be published in September.

These first 12 inspection reports identify three hospitals as failing to meet the essential standards required by law; Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, The Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust and Royal Free Hampstead NHS Trust. Less serious concerns were identified in a further three hospitals, with the remaining six found to be meeting essential standards

For more information go to:  
[www.cqc.org.uk/newsandevents/newsstories.cfm?FaArea1=customwidgets.content\\_view\\_1&cit\\_id=37390](http://www.cqc.org.uk/newsandevents/newsstories.cfm?FaArea1=customwidgets.content_view_1&cit_id=37390)

### Government commits funding to Cancer Networks

The Department of Health has committed to fund Cancer Networks in 2012/13. The networks provide expertise to help commissioners, providers and patients work together to plan and deliver high quality cancer services. Previously the Secretary of State for Health had signalled that decisions

on future finding would fall to the new NHS Commissioning Board.

### Drop in patients in mixed sex wards

Reported figures show that reported breaches of mixed-sex accommodation rules in NHS hospitals has fallen by 77 per cent since December.

In April 2011, hospitals reported that 2,660 patients were placed in mixed-sex accommodation without any justification. This compares to 11,802 patients in December 2010, when monthly collection of mixed sex accommodation was introduced.

From this month, hospitals found in breach of rules will be fined £250 for each patient affected and each day that they stay in mixed sex accommodation.

### Safeguarding adults

Plans to strengthen the protection of vulnerable adults by making it a legal requirement for all local authorities to have a Safeguarding Adults Board have been announced by Care Services Minister Paul Burstow.

Safeguarding Adults Boards provide leadership to those involved in adult safeguarding work across the full range of safeguarding issues. These range from serious incidents in hospitals and institutional abuse in care settings to financial abuse and “scams”, bullying and victimisation.

### Carers save the NHS £119 billion every year

According to research conducted by Carer's UK and the University of Leeds, carers who look after relatives or friends save the NHS £119 billion every year. The figure, equivalent to £13.6m every hour, represents the value of the contribution of the estimated 6.4 million informal carers, when priced at the official unit cost of home care by paid workers, £18 an hour. The figure of £119 billion is close to the yearly budget of the NHS and is three times the national defence budget.

### Patient experience

The latest National Statistics on the Overall Patient Experience measure, produced by the Department of Health and the Care Quality Commission, were released on 26 May 2011. Overall Patient experience of NHS adult inpatient services showed no change in 2010. The overall score was 75.7, compared to 75.6 in 2009. There was a small decline in experience of ‘access and waiting’ (down from 85.0 to 84.2). Patient experience of ‘clean, comfortable, friendly place to be’ showed a slight increase (from 79.1 to 79.3). For more details see:

[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsStatistics/DH\\_126772](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsStatistics/DH_126772)

### NICE issues new guidance on how to spot common mental health disorders

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has published new guidance for doctors on how to diagnose common mental health conditions, including anxiety and depression. It is hoped that the guidance will give GPs better support to help diagnose patients. The guidance brings together in one place all of NICE's existing guidance making it easier for GPs to access the information.

According to NHS figures, common mental health disorders affect one in six adults and cost the UK economy £25 billion every year. One in three GP consultations has a mental health element.

### 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@vacoventry.org.uk](mailto:coventrylink@vacoventry.org.uk)