

COVENTRY LINK NEWSLETTER

Issue 7: May 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

Review the year and help plan the next

All LINK members are invited to Our Annual Meetings

At 9:45 on Sat 26 and Wed 30 June

There's a choice of two dates and venues so more people can come

Book your place now -
with the enclosed flyer/form

Spread the word - we want to gather feedback on local services and ideas for the next LINK work programme from as many people as we can

Work programme updates

Out of hours mental health services:

The Hospital Service Working Group's recommendations about out of hours mental health support services have been sent to the lead commissioner for these services at NHS Coventry. These included points regarding improving information about services and considering the future resourcing and remit. There is a 20 working day response time for a reply.

Hospital discharge:

The Hospital Services Working Group is meeting with the discharge manager from University Hospital on 9 June to discuss LINK's recommendations about discharge submitted to the Trust in March.

GP appointment systems:

A report analysing the findings from our survey of GP practices and findings from the national patient GP survey has been sent to the Chief Executive of NHS Coventry and published. We collected a wealth of information about what practices do and have drawn conclusions which should be useful to commissioners. The report can be found on the LINK website in the impact section.

Volunteers from the working groups are following the survey up with visits in May/June to talk to 5 practice managers to gather more information.

A response has been received from NHS Coventry to an information request asking for information about out of hours GP services and the nature of quality checks that are in place.

Consultation response:

The Community Health Services Working group has fed into a national consultation on removing GP boundaries/catchment areas, using information gained through LINK work. The consultation runs to 2 July find out more at: www.gpchoice.dh.gov.uk/

Personalisation focus groups:

A series of 6 focus groups is being held during May to enable different people who use social care services to have a say about how this new approach is being implemented locally. Personalisation aims to give people more say and control over the services they receive.

Quality Accounts:

Each Trust in the country must produce a Quality Account this year. This is a report for the public to assess the quality of services and identify areas of work for improving quality in the coming year. Every LINK has the right to add a 500 word comment to the document.

Therefore we have been reviewing the draft Quality Accounts of Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust and University Hospital Coventry and LINK volunteers have met with managers from these trusts. Draft commentaries will go to the next LINK Steering Group meeting for approval.

LINK can also comment on the West Midlands Ambulance Trust Quality Account as decision on this will be taken by the Steering Group.

LINK Annual Report:

Each LINK must produce an annual report every year to tell local people what work it has been doing. The report also goes to the Secretary of State for Health.

We are working on the report now and copies will be available at the annual meetings.

LOCAL NEWS

NHS Coventry survey results

More than 2,000 people gave their views, opinions and experiences of using GPs in the City commissioned by NHS Coventry. Face to face street researchers in shopping centres and neighbourhoods and a telephone poll were used to collect views.

Esther Peapell, Head of Patient and Public Involvement for NHS Coventry, said: "We want to make sure the feedback is used in a meaningful way to inform decision making and priority setting. The results of this survey will be shared widely with managers, doctors and clinicians across the NHS in the city."

Esther attended a meeting of LINK's Community Health Services Working Group to present some of the key findings as this group is looking at access to GP appointments and is also interested in information about GP services.

Consultation begins on specialist learning disability services

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust has announced plans to move an inpatient unit for people with complex learning disabilities into the Caludon Centre in Coventry. This is currently provided from Heathcote House in Leamington, and Whitefriars in Coventry. The move aims to help make the service safer, improve quality and more cost-effective. The move could take place this year if approved.

The 12-week consultation was launched on Monday 17 May and will end on 13 August.

The consultation document is available from the Trust at www.covwarkpt.nhs.uk, by email at enquiries@covwarkpt.nhs.uk, or by phone on 024 7658 8857.

A series of consultation meetings have been organised to enable local people to comment on the consultation proposals. The Coventry meeting is:

Date	Time	Venue
Wed 21 July	6 pm-8 pm	The Lounge, Methodist Central Hall, Warwick Lane, Coventry

OTHER NEWS

Health ministers announced

The new Ministerial portfolios have been confirmed by Health Secretary Andrew Lansley:

- Simon Burns MP is Minister of State for Health
- Paul Burstow MP is Minister of State for Care Services
- Anne Milton MP is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health
- Earl Howe is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Quality

Government policy

The detail of government policy regarding NHS and adult social care services is not yet clear including which initiatives of the previous government will continue.

However, Health Secretary Andrew Lansley recently said that the government is committed to ending top down health policy and re-organisations and is committed to devolving power to local people, patients, GPs and councils.

He outlined criteria that he expects decisions on NHS service changes to meet:

- focus on improving patient outcomes; consider patient choice;
- have support from GP commissioners;
- be based on sound clinical evidence.

Local NHS organisations, which have already started to look at changing services, will need to make sure that their plans meet these criteria before continuing.

There is a focus on an increased role of GPs to steer local services and devolution of responsibility to clinicians and the public, with an improved focus on quality.

Mr Lansley has also spoken about: 'strengthened arrangements for public and patient engagement, including local authorities.'

NICE launches web page for public

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence has launched a new page on their website to enable, patients, carers and members of the public to search for versions NICE of guidance in one place. You can access the web page below:

www.nice.org.uk/patientsandpublic/

Report highlights mental health provision for refugees and asylum-seekers

A report, produced by mental health charity MIND details the findings and recommendations of research involving speaking to 150 refugee community groups in England and with service providers to find out the mental health needs of refugees and asylum seekers. They asked how services are helping or failing refugees and asylum seekers and how more effective help can be provided. To view the full report visit

www.mind.org.uk/mentalhealthprovisionforrefugeesandasylum-seekers

The NHS Constitution

Before the election the previous government announced the results of its consultation on proposals to create a legal right to treatment in within certain time limits. Nearly nine out of ten people who responded to a consultation supported the proposals to give patients the right to maximum waiting times for elective treatment and for urgent cancer referrals, or for the NHS to look for an alternative provider if this is not possible. The previous government planned for this to be added to the NHS Constitution. It is not yet known if this will stand under the new government.

A handbook designed to give NHS staff and patients all the information they need about the NHS Constitution has been produced and can be found at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_113614

National inpatient survey 2009 results released

The results of the 2009 survey of hospital patients has been published by the Care Quality Commission. They show some slight improvement in some areas but scores largely similar to those of proceeding years.

For example, only 10% of patients who completed this questionnaire said they were asked to give a view on the quality of their care.

To see the results in full and to look up your local services please visit:

www.cqc.org.uk/newsandevents/pressreleases

GP patient survey results

The results for the first three quarterly patient surveys about GP practices been published.

The results provide a picture of how patients view their GP services at national, local and practice level. To find out more and look up local results visit:

<http://results.gp-patient.co.uk/report/main.aspx>

End of life care guidance

The General Medical Council has released a new edition of its guidance to doctors on end of life care.

The guidance stresses the vital importance of good communication between doctors, patients and their families as well as between members of the healthcare team.”

To download a copy of the guidance visit:

www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/news_consultation/7046.asp

Attitudes to mental health

The latest national statistics on Attitudes to Mental Illness produced by the Department of Health have been released. Since 2007 the survey has again been carried out annually.

The survey found that people are broadly

sympathetic towards people with a mental illness. However, some attitudes towards people with mental illness are worse compared to when poll began in 1994 whilst a number have improved. To find out more visit:

www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsStatistics/DH_114795

Meeting the needs of people with learning disabilities from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities

Valuing People Now, the Government's three-year plan for better services for people with learning disabilities, says that the agencies that plan and deliver health and social care services must pay more attention to the needs of the people who are most likely to be left out.

ARC, BILD and Mencap, the learning disability charities, are bringing people together for constructive dialogue in 9 regional summit meetings around England as part of an 18-month project funded by the Department for Communities and Local Government under its Tackling Race Inequalities Fund.

The regional meeting in our area will be in Birmingham at The Best Western Westley Hotel on 12 January 2011.

For further information or to register your interest, please contact project worker Philip Ware on 07763 016958 or email philip.ware@arcuk.org.uk

Contact Us

The Coventry LINK staff team is hosted by Voluntary Action Coventry



Voluntary Action Coventry

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