

Oxfordshire



Your voice on local health and social care

Annual Report

April 2009 — March 2010



Oxfordshire Local Involvement Network

Your Voice on Social Care and Health Services

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Oxfordshire LINK is hosted by Help and Care.
Help and Care is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.
Company Number 3187574.
Charity Number 1055056

INTRODUCTION TO OXFORDSHIRE LINK

The Local Government legislation of November 2007 required that Public and Patient Involvement Forums (PPIFs), be replaced by a single 'Local Involvement Network' (LINK), for each County Council and Unitary Authority.

All Oxfordshire residents are members of its LINK. Following widespread publicity, approximately 500 residents registered their further interest in the work of the LINK. Those who had registered elected a Stewardship Group (SG) of 10 people to drive the process forward. The SG began operating in March 2009.

The Legislation requires that the LINK monitor the quality of Health and Adult Social Care provision, on behalf of Patients and of the Public. This involves a critical review of both Oxfordshire NHS and of the Social Care Directorate of the County Council. This covers the work of: GPs, all the Hospitals, the Ambulance Service, Mental Health Services, the Learning Disabilities providers, the Social and Community Care Services, the Community Hospitals, and all aspects of Community Care.

This report gives an account of what has been achieved thus far, in spite of the significant challenges of establishing and implementing a totally new piece of legislation.

We have always endeavoured to build on the work of the predecessor PPIFs, whose experience we have greatly valued. This has been helped by the fact that four former PPIF members serve on the SG.

The Stewardship Group of the Oxfordshire LINK commend this, their second Annual Report, to the citizens of Oxfordshire.

LINK Host

Help and Care is the host organisation for Oxfordshire LINK. It is an independent, people-led organisation which has been working with older people, carers and local communities in Bournemouth, Dorset, Poole and surrounding areas since 1985. Help and Care has evolved into a large voluntary organisation at the forefront of delivering partnership services with the public sector and developing a range of innovative information and support services whilst maintaining effective engagement with local communities. Help and Care was appointed to be the Host Organisation for Oxfordshire in August 2008 together with many other LINKs in Southern England. Our role is to support LINKs to be effective voices for people in these areas. We are keen to ensure that LINKs has a broad base and are as diverse and inclusive as possible. We are particularly interested in people and groups who are usually under-represented and want to find ways in which they can be involved.

Help and Care Oxfordshire LINK Staff

Adrian Chant – Locality Manager

Sue Marshall – Development Officer

Man Clark – Communication & On-line Support Officer

Jo Ord – Development Officer

Nancy Darke – Administration Assistant

Nicky Robinson – Development Officer

STEWARDSHIP GROUP

Oxfordshire LINK Stewardship Group members:

Catharine Arakelian (until December 2009)

Sue Butterworth

Barrie Finch

Anita Higham, OBE

John Hutchison

Mary Judge

Richard Lohman

Barbara Pensom

Dermot Roaf

Gene Webb

The Oxfordshire LINK elected Stewardship Group (SG) of ten members (nine from the end of 2009, as one member stood down) met 14 times during the year. During this time, SG members:

- agreed on work programme priorities;
- agreed a local marketing and promotion strategy; which included developing local marketing, publicity & health/social care response materials;
- finalised local policies: Terms of Reference, Decision Making, Expenses, Financial, Monitoring and Reporting; Compact of Working; Dispute Resolution;
- received monthly accounts for the LINK and agreed budgets & expenditure for LINK work;
- received information on development and engagement work being carried out by host staff;
- received information and feedback about local health and social care issues and concerns in order to inform and develop future projects;
- held an 'Away Day' between SG, Host and Oxfordshire County Council to clarify accountability and lines of responsibility within the LINK contract;
- planned and carried out a series of meetings in public taking place in Didcot, Banbury, Witney and Oxford during September and October to engage with those communities & receive feedback about local issues. Additionally, a meeting in Oxford was arranged to discuss the Drug Recovery Project with invited representatives from related organisations and the Drug & Alcohol Action Team;
- participated in project work with specialist local groups for sustainability, development of services and good practice.

STEWARDSHIP GROUP

SG members have brought a diverse range of experience in terms of local politics, management, NHS consultation, representation nationally and locally, together with those who represent minority and hard to reach groups.

Stewardship Group members have been offered various training opportunities, commissioned by Help and Care, from *'Patient and Public Involvement Solutions'*.

Following a second 'Away Day' held in March 2010 between the LINK SG, host team & commissioner, the work programme priorities identified in 2009 are being reviewed and a year planner for 2010-11 is being adopted in order to take forward current issues and feedback received.



LINK Commissioner

As commissioners of this service, Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) have been pleased to see Oxfordshire LINK become a more robust and active organisation during 2009/10. The LINK has played an important role in supporting OCC in its wider agenda around consultation and involvement, both through contributing to some of our internal activities such as the Social and Community services involvement reference group and the Council's 'Ask Oxfordshire' Board. They have also taken the lead in important consultation and involvement events such as 'HEARSAY'.

We have been pleased to see significant partnership work taking place both within Health and Social care, but also with the wider community. Their wish to foster a community development approach to involvement this year has been welcomed.

Our hopes for the LINK this year are to see a more inclusive model developing with a particular push on more representation from seldom heard communities, more involvement in the commissioning of Health and Social care, and better prioritisation of activities leading to more promptly delivered outcomes.

ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

Oxfordshire is the most rural county in the South East of England, with its internationally famous city at its heart. It offers a vibrant culture, rich heritage, and bustling rural and urban towns and villages situated within beautiful countryside.



Oxfordshire is currently home to almost 640,000 people. Over three quarters of the land is devoted to agricultural management and almost one quarter of the county falls within one of three 'Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty', including the Chiltern Hills, the Cotswolds and the North Wessex Downs.



The county is a popular tourist destination not only for its rural beauty but also the urban attraction of the numerous market towns and the dreaming spires of Oxford. It is a county alive with enterprise, beauty, learning and history.

The health of people in the region is generally better than the average for England. Although levels of deprivation are low, there are a number of areas in Oxfordshire that fall within the 20% of most deprived areas in England. Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than average.



ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

There are inequalities in health within the South Central Strategic Health Authority (SHA). For example, the health of people in large towns and cities such as Southampton, Portsmouth, Oxford and Slough is generally worse than the national average. In contrast, the health of people in more affluent areas such as Wokingham and Winchester is better than average.



The health of children living in the South Central SHA area is better than average with a low proportion living in poverty. The percentage of children classified as obese is lower than average and breast feeding initiation rates appear high. Teenage pregnancy rates are low and GCSE achievement is higher than the national average.

Death rates from cancer, heart disease and stroke have reduced substantially over recent years and remain well below the national average.

SHA regional priorities are: improving health and wellbeing, addressing the underlying causes of ill health in a sustainable way and reducing health inequalities.

Oxfordshire LINK has a good understanding of the demographics and community profile of Oxfordshire. It has begun to engage with and reach out to the different groups and populations within the community, gathering views and experiences from a diverse range of people about their local health and social care issues.



INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

Oxfordshire LINK Development Officers have been carrying out visits to social care and health service providers, alongside using promotional opportunities at relevant events, meetings and talks in order to:

- **raise awareness of the LINK**
- **provide opportunities for public, patients and carers to feedback information to guide and inform the LINK work programme**
- **promote the benefits of registering with the LINK and encourage involvement in project and visiting groups**

See 'APPENDIX 1' for full Record of Engagement

Some specific examples of our engagement work

From attendance of the Rural Inclusion Group meetings held by Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, various links have been made with other agencies. Amongst them, the Health Improvement and Strategy Officer at Cherwell District Council.

Through her, we have secured the use of the Cherwell Health Bus – a minibus kitted out with a consultation room – which

we intend to use for a Spring and Summer Roadshow around the County, promoting the LINK and encouraging people to register and to feedback any issues, concerns and positive comments they have regarding their health and social care services.



Through Public Meetings that were held during September and October, we have made contact with the *Child Brain Injury Trust*. They have approached us with a potential project to look at acquired child brain injury.

The Development Officers spent time during 2009 visiting Day Centres across Oxfordshire. We encouraged people to sign up and find out more about the LINK by entering our LINK Quiz. The Quiz included a Word Search and an Unscramble the Words game. All the answers were LINK related, helping people to find out about what we do and what services we would like feedback on.



INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

Community Development Project: Accessing hard to reach groups and individuals

A LINK Development Officer has been investigating ways to involve more people in the LINK from a wider range of backgrounds, who wouldn't normally be able to express their views. This has involved visiting local user led organisations, housing associations, voluntary groups and involvement teams in order to broaden the network of local contacts and resources through attending drop-in sessions, steering group meetings and community events. The next step was to build on this involvement and provide a route for those more marginalised groups to start feeding back their views to health and social care managers and commissioners.

Further exploration was undertaken into the idea of using participatory tools as a means by which there could be more effective communication. Possible ways forward include collating the best practice that's already being used in the community in terms of good involvement, sharing that across organisations or assisting groups who are user led to articulate their successes and communicate this to service providers. Participatory skills taster sessions were provided to see if this was something we can use with local groups.

Development of this work has been in partnership with the County Council's 'Taking Part' Team and the PCT to make use of their skills and to involve them in the programme, as key to the success of this work will be whether it brings service providers and users together.



MARKETING

The Public Face of The LINK

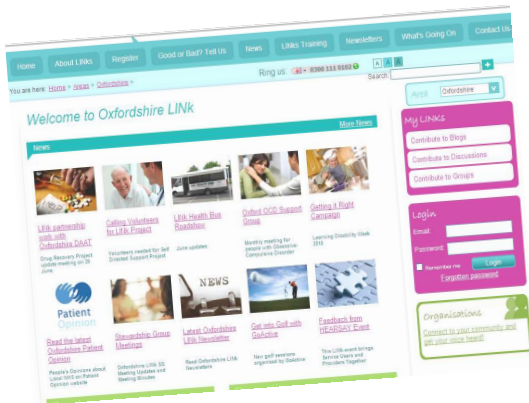
Promotional Literature

A localised marketing strategy was agreed between LINK staff and the Stewardship Marketing sub-group, and has been put into place. A **new** package of marketing materials was developed, with a local identity, including an information card, sign-up leaflet, booklet, poster, bookmark and contact card. Those materials were distributed to libraries, GPs, dental surgeries, pharmacies, optician practices, local communities and organisations over Oxfordshire.



Website

The dedicated Oxfordshire pages on www.makesachange.org.uk are constantly under review and updated regularly. The website is an information portal for the LINK; not only providing news stories, events and relevant documents, but also acting as an interactive platform with discussion board, blogs and networking opportunities in order to give the public another way of 'having their say'.



Structural upgrades were made to improve navigation and to make the web site more user friendly.

LINK information and developments are posted on local Health Trusts, the County Council and other organisations websites with hyperlinks to the LINK website.

To increase the search ranking of the LINK website, the domain name www.OxfordshireLINK.org.uk has been registered and redirected to the Oxfordshire LINK page on the makesachange website. Google AdWords has been used for search engine optimisation, and now any Oxfordshire health or social care related web search will bring the LINK website to the top of search results.



MARKETING



The LINK has launched a group on the popular social networking website Facebook to also encourage local people, especially young people, to get involved and share their views.

Newsletters and E-Bulletins

Four newsletters and five E-Bulletins were produced, and distributed to LINK members with regular LINK updates and local relevant health and social care news. All these newsletters and information are also available on the LINK website.

Other organisations, voluntary sectors and community groups were contacted to cascade the LINK's newsletter and place the LINK information in their newsletters and e-bulletins.



Press Releases

Regular press releases were made to local media and to Health Trusts publications, County Council and other organisations about the LINK public meetings, projects, events, and surveys.

Advertising

A variety of media including radio, newspaper and magazine advertising was used to promote the LINK and LINK events.

From April 2010, we will be running a bus advertising campaign to raise LINK's profile and increase our membership.

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Your voice on health and social care

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Your Voice on Social Care and Health Services help care

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS

Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust



NHS Oxfordshire has been keen to establish a working relationship with LINKs. We were involved with the original recruitment of the provider and have continued to be part of the quarterly monitoring process. We are keen to see LINKs move on and establish a new role for itself but also keen to retain some of the best parts of the previous arrangements. Several LINKs members sit on project groups or committees within the PCT and we have been working hard to re-establish a long standing arrangement for a pre-board meeting with representatives from the Stewardship Group.

In October we took part in an extended half day of training for the LINKs Stewardship Group who received presentations from a director and other senior staff from NHS Oxfordshire – to explain and expand on some of the key issues and the direction of travel for the organisation.

Members of our engagement team have maintained a working relationship with the development staff, providing advice and guidance about working with the organisation. LINKs are automatically informed and invited to participate in all major consultative activity and have a page on our public website. We attended and supported their recruitment events and have had stands at these to present key work for NHS Oxfordshire and to show our support and commitment to LINKs. We have worked to ensure that routes into the organisation are easy and senior staff have met with representatives of the Stewardship Group to advise and reassure them about matters of concern.

We would like to see LINKs developing some strong commitment now to action plans which encompass a real drive to see improvement in quality, performance and commissioning in the NHS. We are keen to work closely with LINKs to build on and extend the public engagement and participation we already undertake.

~ *Judy McCulloch, Communications and Engagement Manager*

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS



Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust

The Trust is committed to supporting the LINK in Oxfordshire. Oxfordshire LINK and the Trust support each other to promote involvement opportunities and share information via our social networking sites and our public facing websites.

The Involvement and Diversity Officer has met with the Oxfordshire LINK staff to discuss how we can support the LINK moving forwards and we have agreed to have quarterly meetings.

~ *Emma Heath, Involvement and Diversity Officer*

Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC) NHS Trust

This year the NOC set up a new PPI Steering Group and LINKs were invited to send a representative. A representative has attended this and also our Patient Liaison Group. A representative has provided feedback on our first Quality Accounts document and also on a number of items of patient information for our sarcoma (tumours of bone and soft tissue) service and for our infection control team. The LINKs team have had displays in the NOC atrium to promote involvement in LINKs.



~ *Kathy Wilshaw, PALS and PPI Manager*

Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust

The Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust has liaised with the Local Involvement Network, through the Oxfordshire Stakeholder Group, to develop communication links and a constructive working relationship. The Trust is a firm supporter of stakeholder involvement and we are enthusiastic about developing that relationship during the coming year. During 2010 LINK has been invited to participate in the Trust's Patient and Public Involvement Planning.

~ *Jan Cottle, Public Involvement & Health Improvement Manager*

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS

Ridgeway Partnership NHS Trust (Oxfordshire Learning Disability) and others

One of the Oxfordshire LINK Stewardship Group members is involved with the Ridgeway Partnership. He has been part of a team which has carried out Patient Environment Action Team (PEAT) inspections within Oxfordshire and has also visited and inspected Oxfordshire Learning Disability registered care homes, although these were not formal inspections.

This SG member has also been involved with Ridgeway Trust and their eventual application to become a Foundation Trust; with the Membership Engagement Group of Ridgeway, which has been involved with all matters of the Trust, particularly focusing on increasing the Membership of the Trust; and is currently involved within this group to work towards forming the membership of the Board of Governors.

He is also heavily involved with Oxfordshire Mencap and uses these connections to involve families of people with Learning Disabilities within his work to ensure that the Transforming Adult Social Care model currently being rolled out within Oxfordshire fully meets the needs of people with a Learning Disability. He is involved with the Oxfordshire Family Support Network programme which is currently working on a project to develop support for elderly family carers, initially through locally held events, and information to address the needs identified.

The same LINK member is working with Mencap and other Learning Disability organisations to enable the LINK to have a closer knowledge that the Transforming Social Care agenda is meeting the needs of those with Learning Disabilities and their families as it is rolled out across Oxfordshire to all by April 2011.



INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS

Oxfordshire LINK representation with NHS Commissioners and Service Providers

LINK representatives:

- sit on action groups for dentistry, pharmacy and other Primary Care Trust planning committees. These are the groups which assess need, consulting widely by the use of surveys, and decide what action needs to be taken in the light of the results
- are involved with Community hospitals including the new City Community hospital planning group and the proposed new build at Bicester and Townlands
- sit on the Priorities group for Oxfordshire, which has now been re-organised by South Central Strategic Health Authority into one committee for the North of the Region which covers Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire, two Berkshire Trusts and Buckinghamshire and is now known as the MOBB. New treatments and drugs are considered in detail, taking into account advice from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, and recommendations are made to the Clinical Executive Board of the PCT.
- sit on the Case review committee of the Primary Care Trust Priority group which considers individual cases referred to them from those with special needs, potentially changing from low priority
- are involved with Practice based commissioning and the steering committee Oxford City Consortium
- regularly attend Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Adult Services Scrutiny Committee meetings and contribute to the debates
- attend the Primary Care Trust and Community Health Oxfordshire Board meetings and pick up any public concerns which need to be raised with them
- attend the Oxfordshire County Health and Well-Being Partnership Board and are able to contribute views of the public to the work in the Public Health agenda. The Board is jointly chaired by PCT and County Council Adult services with the voluntary organisations and is tackling three priorities: Mental ill-health, Obesity and Successful Ageing. A member sits on the Steering Group for this Board.
- attend the Better Healthcare Board and Community Partnership Forum for North Oxfordshire. The Board was set up by the PCT to address recommendations for services at the Horton Hospital, following an earlier consultation which was referred back to the Secretary of State for Health. The Forum was established as the focus for public engagement under the Better Healthcare Programme.
- attend the Enhanced Clinical Executive of the PCT deciding which of the models proposed by the GP Consortia are able to be advanced in terms of financial viability and Governance
- sit on the Health and Social Care Panel for Age UK Oxfordshire
- attend meetings for the Review of the South Central Ambulance Services, with regard to improving the quality of service to rural areas
- sit on the City and North Oxfordshire Practice Based Commissioning Consortia
- sit on the Transforming Adult Social Care Programme Assurance Group

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS

Oxfordshire LINK is a member of:

- The National Association of LINK Members
- The Patient and Public Steering Group of the NHS Alliance

One of the LINK Stewardship Group sits on the Clients & Carers Reference Group which has been running alongside of the Pilot since December 2008 and meets every other month as an advisory group to assist The Oxfordshire Transformation Adult Social Care Team. The group ensures that the pilot is carried out in the best way to meet needs and give people the freedom to use their budget in the most appropriate way. Also to meet their care needs and help improve the health & wellbeing both for the clients and also the carer.

Since December 2009, the LINK also has representation on the important Programme Assurance Committee which is made up of senior officers and a representative from Age Concern, Mental Health, Learning Disabilities ('My Life My Choice').

Ask Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire County Council is committed to promoting and supporting the LINK in Oxfordshire. Over the last year, our Ask Oxfordshire Programme has benefited from the LINK locality manager being an equal partner at Board meetings.

Through his participation we have been able to regularly share information and spot opportunities for joint working. In return, Oxfordshire County Council has been able to provide the LINK with access to our Ask Oxfordshire learning and development activities, practical resources and the opportunity to build relationships with our expert practitioners via networking events.

~ *Carole Stow, Consultation and Involvement Manager*



User Led Organisation (ULO) Development Group

LINK representatives have been pleased to be a part of the development of the ULO consortium. The group will represent the voices of all disabled people and carers in the development of new and existing services and will help ensure disabled people and carers can access support and activities that are appropriate, sustainable and help achieve their individual outcomes for the life they wish to lead.

TRAINING

Host Staff Training

A Training Needs Assessment has resulted in a training plan for host staff, implemented during the year, taking into account the following priorities identified: Social Care and NHS structure information (local); presentation skills; managing conflict; Datacentre; Community Development; marketing and promotion skills; data protection; First Aid; Personal Safety; Facilitation Skills; Equality and Diversity; Ask Oxfordshire (Oxfordshire County Council)/Consultation Institute Learning and Development; Project Management; and Event Planning.



Enter and View

Information

A visit made by authorised representatives of a LINK to enter and view services should be an activity that forms part of a project or item of work that the LINK is undertaking as part of their overall work plan. It should enhance work already being undertaken and aim to complete a picture of how services are being provided.

Once a visit has been made, a report is completed and agreed by the service provider as factual. The Visiting Team should aim to work together with the Project Group to look at the findings from the visit together with any other information the Project Group may have been gathering before making a decision about recommendations.

Final recommendations should go to the service provider as part of a full report from the Project Group including other information and evidence gathered outside of the visiting process. Other stakeholders who might receive a copy include the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Commissioners of Services and Regulators.

TRAINING

Enter and View

Training

Local Involvement Networks have an important statutory power that entitles authorised representatives of the LINK to be able to enter and view health and social care services as they are being provided.

Oxfordshire LINK ran an initial Enter and View training workshop in July 2009 for those people wishing to become an Authorised Visitor. This provided people with an opportunity to find out more about the process and to ensure they had a full understanding of the skills and personal qualities required to participate in entering, viewing and observing services. 17 people attended the workshop and all were invited for an informal individual 'interview' with the authorising Stewardship Group sub-group to ascertain their areas of interest within the LINK workplan priorities and in order to complete the authorisation process.

A further training workshop was delivered in February 2010 together with subsequent interviews with the Enter and View sub-group. There is now a group of 13 individuals, some still awaiting CRB clearance, who have undergone the training.

Following agreement with the Stewardship Group, the host team are now seeking potential visits via health trusts and social care providers through promoting the benefits of an 'Enter and View' visit.

Oxfordshire LINK Authorised Visitors

Fatima Elawad
Tom Griffin
Peter Hindshaw
Mary Judge
Caroline Molloy
Barbara Pensom
Irene Rae
Chris Ringwood
Dermot Roaf
Irene Taylor
Ann Tomline



Awaiting CRB clearance:

Elizabeth Audars
Richard Barnes
John Hughes
John Lant
Jean Nunn-Price

SUMMARY OF LINK ACTIVITY

Project Groups

Self Directed Support (Personal Budgets)

Oxfordshire County Council are changing the way they deliver Social Care to give people independence to choose services that meet their needs. This means that by April 2011 anyone in Oxfordshire who fulfils the criteria to receive a service will be provided with a personalised budget. From responses received, Oxfordshire LINK Stewardship Group made the decision to include Personalised Budgets as part of the LINK work programme for 2009 / 2010.

Over the last few months the Self Directed Support (SDS) sub group have been working closely with an experienced researcher in the field of social care to design an innovative research project that can assess the quality of this new service and the impact it is having on people's lives. It is intended to be a qualitative piece of research aimed at understanding the experience of the new system of Self Directed Support from the perspective of a sample of clients in Oxfordshire.

During 2010/11 we will be interviewing:

- 7 clients who are already in receipt of SDS and
- 7 clients of social care who are not yet in receipt of SDS.

This will allow a comparison of experiences in two ways:

- between those with and without SDS now
- how things have changed for each group one year later.



The questions the LINK would like to address through this research include:

1. What are the benefits to clients of SDS, what are the drawbacks?
2. How does the type of service available under SDS compare with traditional support services?
3. Is there a consistent quality of service?
4. Has receiving Self Directed Support improved the quality of care and well being for the person being cared for and also, where appropriate, improved the well being and any health needs of the carer?

The findings and recommendations of the research will be made available later in the year.

This is a huge programme for social change and Oxfordshire LINK is committed to monitor the changes, reflect any gaps and to assist in enlightening and educating the public and individuals who may benefit from this. It will work together with Health and Social Care professionals to ensure good practice and opportunities for all.

SUMMARY OF LINK ACTIVITY

Project Groups

Drug Recovery Project

Established at an Oxfordshire LINK organised public meeting, the LINK Drug Recovery Project Group thoroughly reviewed the situation and events which led to the closure of the service in 2007 and subsequent delays in the opening of a replacement residential detoxification facility. Using evidence gathered by requests for information, a snapshot survey and discussions with members of the public the LINK Project Group supplied a report to Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OJHOSC) for their January meeting. This resulted in a full response from the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT, commissioner), the Primary Care Trust (PCT, the DAATs required public organisation host) and the Substance Misuse Arrest Referral Team (SMART, a local service provider) at the March meeting of the OJHOSC. The Committee acknowledged the concerns of the LINK that there had not been a full public consultation about the closure of the service and agreed that the DAAT and PCT statement saying 'no-one has been disadvantaged since the closure', needed to be explained. The committee wrote to the PCT and DAAT of their disappointment that they had not been informed of the closure at the time and reminded several organisations of their duty to respond to LINK requests for information on time. At the time of writing the LINK is awaiting further recommendations from the OJHOSC - the good news is that premises for the new service in Oxford are in the process of being secured and work on refurbishment is anticipated to commence by the end of June 2010.

See 'APPENDIX 2' for DRP report and OJHOSC response



SUMMARY OF LINK ACTIVITY

Project Groups

Access to Services in Rural Areas

Accessibility of Health services in rural areas has long been identified as an issue. A Project Group was set up in Faringdon with an aim to improve access to health services in rural areas. An initial survey of the services available in Faringdon found that there are no local GP Out of Hours service, no Minor Injuries Unit, no antenatal classes, a poor ambulance service and only a few short term stay nursing beds in a nursing home.

The ambulance service fails to meet national response targets and secondary and urgent care services are provided in Witney, Oxford and Wantage. Public transport is limited or non-existent. Some services are provided from Swindon as Faringdon is near the Oxfordshire boundary.



Faringdon Area Project (FAP) Health Group was formed with the aim of influencing Health service providers to improve access to local people. The aim of the Project Group is to:

- promote and obtain involvement with service reviews, planning and service specification, in order to ensure that the situation in rural areas is properly considered and services are improved
- ensure that the rural situation is included as part of a service strategy

It was found that there are many service providers, other than the PCT and GPs, who provide health services. With assistance from the LINK, FAP Health Group produced an information leaflet to help raise awareness of these services. This was widely circulated to Pharmacies, GP surgeries, and the Faringdon library.

SUMMARY OF LINK ACTIVITY

HEARSAY! Event – 12th March, 2010

Oxfordshire LINK, working with Social and Community Services, ran an event called HEARSAY! in March 2010. The purpose of the day was to listen to the views of local people who use adult social care services. From comments and evaluation received, the day was judged to be a big success, with everyone contributing to produce a list of priority issues which concern them.

Approximately 90 members of the public came to have their say, including service users and their carers, friends and family members. People shared their experiences and spoke directly to Oxfordshire County Council directors and staff. They gave their views on current services and suggested things that could be improved.

Examples include: lack of information and timely communication about services, availability of respite services, support for carers, transport and care at home.



“We would be happy to be involved in future events like this again”

“We felt like Social Services were wanting to listen and benefit all services”

The LINK lead Development Officer for HEARSAY! has produced a report based on the responses collected, which has been very well received by the Social and Community Services Directorate Leadership Team and presented to the Adult Services Scrutiny Committee. All those who attended the event will receive the final report and it is publicly available. The LINK will ensure that Social and Community Services take on board the foremost concerns which were raised and review them at regular intervals during the year to help ensure that services are changed for the better. A similar event will be held in March 2011 to hear what has been achieved during the year and to obtain new feedback.

SUMMARY OF LINK ACTIVITY

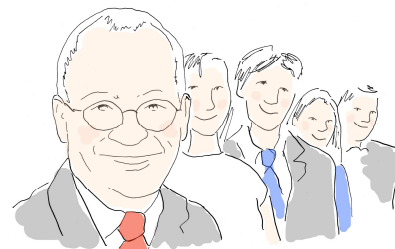
HEARSAY! Event – 12th March, 2010

Comments from John Jackson, Director for Social and Community Services, Oxfordshire County Council, regarding HEARSAY!

As Director for Social and Community Services I am grateful that you have asked me to comment on the LINK's annual report.

I attended the HEARSAY! event that the LINK ran in March for people who use social care, their family and friends. The event allowed over 80 people who attended to say what was most

important to them and suggest ways in which things could be improved. I found the day very helpful, and as I said at the event, we need to encourage people who use our services to say what we do well and what we can do to improve further. If our services are not delivering what the people who use them want and need, then we need to change them.



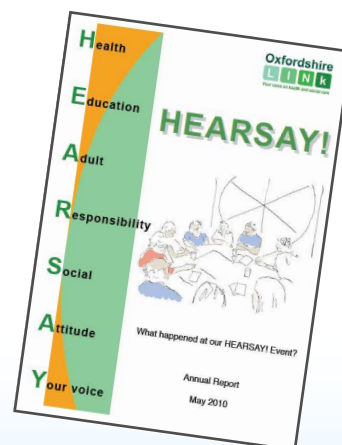
I have read the report the LINK have produced following the event and accepted the recommendations and agreed with you what changes we will make. I am pleased that the LINK will be monitoring progress. A senior manager (which will be me on occasions) will attend your stewardship group to provide updates throughout the year.

Local Involvement Networks were set up to give people the chance to say what they think about services and to suggest ideas to help improve services. I think that HEARSAY! fulfilled this brief perfectly. It allowed the council and service users to talk positively together and we look forward to continuing to work with the LINK on projects such as this.

John Jackson

Director for Social and Community Services

See 'APPENDIX 3' HEARSAY! Report



SUMMARY OF LINK ACTIVITY

LINK Partnerships

Alongside the main work programme themes, the LINK has been approached by various groups and organisations in the county with a view to working in partnership to improve or develop services and awareness:

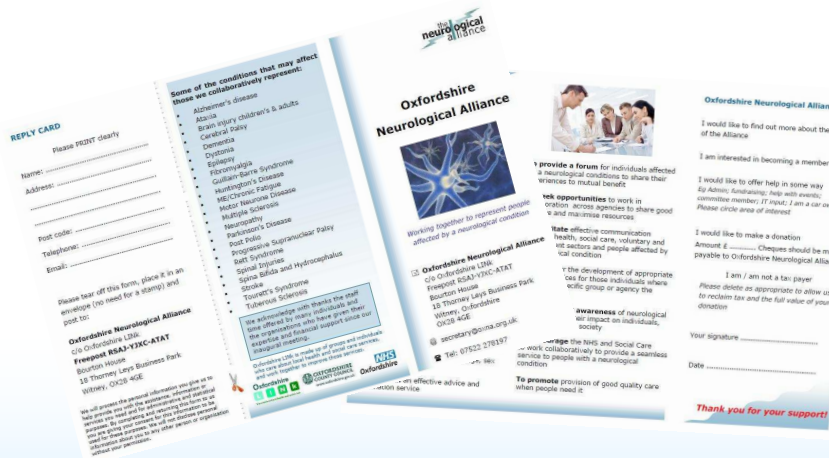
Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance (ONA)

ONA is affiliated to the Neurological Alliance which brings together regional and local neurological charities so they can speak with one voice to represent the needs of individuals living with a neurological condition and to provide a collaborative lobby to statutory authorities with evidence based practice.



A member of the LINK stewardship Group, a former Occupational Therapist and specialist in voluntary sector user led service delivery represents those with longterm conditions and now sits on the committee of Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance.

Helping to establish infrastructure: since 2008 several specialist organisations have helped to establish the Oxfordshire branch with Oxfordshire County Council and the Primary Care Trust and LINK's role in this in 2009 was to help raise the profile of the emerging organisation. LINK provided some funding for promotional materials and the LINK staff responsible for marketing worked with the Stewardship Group member and the local Neurological Alliance to develop and produce a newly designed leaflet and membership application form. This professional publication was then distributed by LINK via known channels and networks on their behalf.



Most small organisations do not have an office and here LINK has offered a postal address which gives security to individual ONA volunteers and confirms the partnership between the two organisations.

SUMMARY OF LINK ACTIVITY

LINK Partnerships

Likewise, LINK has worked on the development of a business plan with ONA and also helps with its' representation on other Development groups such as the ULO – user led organisation, which is another potential co-operative across a broad range of local groups representing older people, mental health, physical impairment, learning disabilities and minority hard-to-reach groups.



LINK has a seat on the PCT Local Area Involvement Group (LIG) for longterm conditions and currently works with other members to review existing services, the information needs of users in accessing services and to represent the need for an increase in specialist staff. This has been in key areas such as Parkinson's Disease, Multiple sclerosis and continual funding for brain injury.

LINK's role as facilitator, monitor and proactive collaborator in bringing groups together provides an opportunity to hear individual and collective views and to represent these to the statutory authorities and other policy makers to make any appropriate changes. It is essential to the process of altering attitudes of both healthcare staff and those receiving services in this day of economic pressure that users themselves identify leaner, smarter services and direct funding to areas of concern. This includes effective early diagnosis, good planning for the personal management of a longterm condition, swift re-entry into services before a crisis and support for families.

Oxfordshire Unlimited

We are assisting in the development of a 'User Led Organisation' for those with physical disabilities in Oxfordshire. This partnership project will provide Oxfordshire Unlimited with the ability to develop its membership and hence to offer to the community a key reference base for information and services.



SUMMARY OF LINK ACTIVITY

LINK Partnerships

Child Brain Injury Trust

Research project into the quality of information and consistency of service received by children, young people and their families who are admitted to A&E and/or a ward with any event that could also be associated with an acquired brain injury. The desired outcome of this work is to facilitate the instigation of better support for children and their families in the early stages after a childhood ABI. This has the potential to greatly reduce longer term issues experienced by families, the number of children and young people needing access to future and additional services, and would go some way to help tackle the cycle of deprivation identified within the Oxfordshire Director of Public Health Second Annual Report, 2007-2009.

Patient Voice

A study of hospital discharge with particular reference to medication collection and research into the quality of medical information. A report will be presented to the LINK Stewardship Group during June 2010



Public Open Forum

An inspection team from the Care Quality Commission visited Oxfordshire in June 2009 to find out how well Oxfordshire County Council was delivering social care services. Oxfordshire LINK was asked to assist with gathering information for the inspectors, which included holding a Public Forum event. The event was a chance for individuals and carers who use services for older people, or those who may fund their own support, to give their views to visiting Care Quality Commission inspectors on what is good and what needs improvement in local arrangements. The findings from the Inspection were published in an Inspection Report. Oxfordshire County Council plan to improve services based on this report and its recommendations.



SUMMARY OF LINK ACTIVITY



Diversity & Equality Survey

A Diversity & Equality survey of LINK database contacts was carried out during September and demonstrated that considerable development work is required to target participation, raise awareness and offer support for many less or unrepresented communities.

See 'APPENDIX 4' for report

Meetings in Public

A series of five meetings in public took place during September and October across Oxfordshire in order to draw more participants for the main work programme project groups, inform the public about LINK work and receive comments and views about services.

Patient Environment Action Team (PEAT) Inspections

This year the LINK was asked to provide volunteers to help local Community Hospitals carry out inspections with their patient environment action teams. Six LINK members were involved as lay representatives carrying out these inspections at eight local hospitals:

- Witney
- Chipping Norton
- Wallingford
- Bicester
- Townlands, Henley-on-Thames
- Abingdon
- Wantage
- Didcot



Inspections are self-assessed and cover standards across a range of services including food, cleanliness, infection control and patient environment, including bathroom areas, décor, lighting, floors and patient areas.

Neighbouring LINKs

Oxfordshire LINK representatives attended a Cross-Boundary meeting hosted by LINK Milton Keynes. Other LINKs represented were from Northamptonshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, Milton Keynes, Bedfordshire & Luton, where they were able to share issues, concerns and best practice. From this meeting, a LINK Network has been formed. One of the main outcomes was the importance of LINK organisations continuing to share their experiences as widely as practicable.

FINANCES

**OXFORDSHIRE LINK
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT 2009/10
PERIOD 1 APRIL 2009 TO 31 MARCH 2010**

	Actual costs 1.4.09 to 31.3.10 £	Budgeted costs 1.4.09 to 31.3.10 £	Variance - difference between actual and budget £
HOST COSTS			
Organisation - staffing, management, training and supervision	151,882	171,852	19,970
Overheads - office premises and running costs	13,908	8,348	5,560
Communications - marketing, promotion, website, IT and communications	10,291	16,768	6,477
Host under-spend - brought forward from 2008/09	0	1,820	1,820
TOTAL HOST COST	<u>176,081</u>	<u>198,788</u>	<u>22,707</u>
LINK COSTS			
LINK group - participant expenses, training, meeting costs, research and development	21,825	32,841	11,016
TOTAL LINK COST	<u>21,825</u>	<u>32,841</u>	<u>11,016</u>
TOTAL COSTS 2009/10	<u>197,906</u>	<u>231,629</u>	<u>33,723</u>
GRANT RECEIVED FROM LOCAL AUTHORITY 1.4.09 TO 31.3.10		200,700	
UNDER-SPEND BROUGHT FORWARD FROM 2008/09		<u>30,929</u>	
		<u>231,629</u>	
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH FUNDING TO LOCAL AUTHORITY 1.4.09 TO 31.3.10		223,000	

**NOTES:
VARIANCES - BLACK FIGURES - COSTS BELOW BUDGET
RED FIGURES - COSTS EXCEED BUDGET**

WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS

With regard to those health and social care issues that have been gathered by Oxfordshire LINK over the last few months, we are currently in the process of agreeing on a number of Projects that the LINK will be working on during 2010/11. Our focus will be moving these projects forward, along with a number of other work priorities which have been identified. Prominent issues currently under consideration centre on Podiatry, Community Mental Health Teams, Hospital Discharge Care Packages, Maternity Services and GP Appointments.



Hearsay!

Following a very successful first event and positive feedback, Oxfordshire LINK plan to run a follow-up event in March 2011 to hear if the quality of services people receive has improved, receive an update from the 2010 key recommendations and explore what else the LINK and Oxfordshire County Council can do to change or improve services.

Health Hearsay

The first Hearsay! concentrated on Social Care and now we want to use the same model for people to comment on their health services. This is at the discussion stage but the concept has been well received by local health trusts.

Enter and View

We are actively approaching NHS Trusts and Social Care providers to promote the Enter and View statutory power of the LINK and ascertain potential visits for future projects.

Self Directed Support (Personal Budgets)

This new and large Government programme puts choice and self-determination at the heart of services for any individual with complex need wishing to live independently. It will involve great social change and understanding in the provision of care and equipment for daily living and means educating both public and health and social care professionals in the new methods.

A research project is under way with 14 people expected to be interviewed in depth about their experiences of Self Directed Support. A summary of findings is due to be made available later in 2010 with a full report to follow.



WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS

Drug Recovery Project

A second meeting in public will be held in June 2010 to share the reports from Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the responses to that report from the Primary Care Trust and the Drug and Alcohol Action Team.



Oxfordshire Unlimited

We are in the final stages of completing a partnership working agreement, following Unlimited securing core funding from the County Council. The LINK will provide Development Officer support and administration time to develop the organisation's membership and structure.

Open Day

We are organising an Open Day for our existing members to come along and see what the LINK has been doing over the last year. We will encourage these members to become more involved in different aspects of LINK work and with project groups.

Health Bus

The Health Bus is going on a tour of the county on various dates over the summer to gather issues, concerns and positive comments from each region of Oxfordshire, increase awareness of the LINK and to register more participants.

Marie Curie tea Party

A joint event will be held in June 2010 to help increase support for Marie Curie Cancer Care and to promote the LINK.

Community Chest Fund

We are proposing to make a fund available to voluntary and community groups that will enable them to apply for grants that meet the LINK's remit and work priorities.



INVOLVEMENT PATHWAYS HOW YOU CAN BE INVOLVED IN YOUR LINK



Register with us and join the LINK. You will receive regular updates via post or email, including a quarterly Newsletter, be kept up to date with our work and informed of ways in which you can become more involved.

**Register
with
us**

**Represent
us at
an event**

We attend many events, speaking to people about their issues and concerns. If this is something you might like to do, let us know and you could be out there as a LINK representative.

Come along to one of our workshops to explore the tools you need to develop ways of feeding back about services that you want to see changed.

**Come along to
a workshop**

**Tell us
your
concerns**

We want to hear from you about any issues you have regarding your Health and Social Care services. We cannot help with an individual complaint, although we CAN signpost you in the direction of someone who will help. We DO want to hear about issues that are affecting the community in which you are living.

Project Groups have been set up to look at the issues that are currently concerning the LINK. If there is a particular issue of interest to you, why not join a group? Or if you have an idea for a particular project, let us know and we could help you set up your own group.

**Become part
of a project
group**

**Help us
Enter
And
View**

Enter and View forms part of a range of activities that the LINK carries out to examine services in more detail. Volunteers who are trained and authorised to Enter and View are able to access health and social care services so that they can observe the nature and quality of the service, help produce a report and feed the report back to the service provider.

We held our first HEARSAY! event earlier this year, where people came along to tell us their issues and concerns regarding social care services. The report from this event is now published, with a list of recommendations about how these services could be improved. We can send you a copy of the report if you would like to see it. Come along to the next one and have your say, too!

**Come
to our
Hearsay!
Events**



On behalf of the LINK Stewardship
Group and the Host Staff Team
we would like to convey grateful thanks
to all the people of Oxfordshire who
have helped with the work of the LINK
over this year.



Your Voice on Health and Social Care

If you want to make your voice heard, either:

- Register online at www.oxfordshirelink.org.uk
- Call us on 01993 862855
- Email oxfordshirelink@makesachange.org.uk
- Fill in the reply card below, place it in an envelope (no need for a stamp) and post to:
Freepost RSAJ-YJXC-ATAT
Oxfordshire LINK, Bourton House, 18 Thorney Leys Business Park,
Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 4GE



Join us, make your voice heard!

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Do you want to speak out about a social care or health service in your area? For example, care homes, GPs, hospitals, dentists, etc. You can use this space to tell us about your experiences good and bad, and how you think services can be improved — *together we will make changes.*

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Oxfordshire



Your voice on local health and social care

01993 862855

www.oxfordshirelink.org.uk

OxfordshireLink@makesachange.org.uk

Oxfordshire LINK is hosted by Help and Care.
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Company Number 3187574.
Charity Number 1055056

