



Your voice on local health and social care

**Oxfordshire Local Involvement Network
Update for Adult Services Scrutiny Committee
meeting 7th December 2010**

Public, patient and carer concerns, issues and compliments collected through LINK engagement and outreach activities during the summer and autumn have resulted in the following projects being taken forward during the remainder of this year. These are described below alongside existing project work:

Ongoing projects/engagement:

Self Directed Support (Personal Budgets)

The final report on this phase was presented at the last Scrutiny meeting and a written response received from Alan Sinclair. The LINK wishes to follow up on the research once re-assessments of those clients still receiving traditional services have been completed and after they are in receipt of Individual Budgets. We also intend carrying out research with minority and 'hard to reach' groups - a project plan is being drawn up to initiate this. As SDS develops, the LINK project would need to continue this work into the next financial year and is dependent on sufficient funding being available for the LINK during the transition year 2011-12 to make the full scope of the research viable.

'Social Care' Hearsay

The next quarterly report is due at the end of December. SCS have a detailed forward plan in place to address remaining actions from this year. A small group of Hearsay participants will be invited to meet SCS directors for more detailed discussion about specific issues raised through Hearsay. Planning is underway for the second annual event (provisionally on 11th March 2011) to hear if the quality of services people receive has improved, receive an update from the 2010 key recommendations, explore what further the LINK and Oxfordshire County Council can do to change or improve services and to set further recommendations for 2011-12. The full report for this year can be obtained from the LINK office or

www.makesachange.org.uk/cms/site/news/oxfordshire/hearsay-report.aspx

'Enter and View' visits to Care Homes

The LINK is making arrangements to carry out visits to 31 Care Homes initially, the criteria being size, locality to evenly cover the County and a range of service providers. LINK authorised visitors (in pairs) are now making arrangements with the Homes which they have been asked to visit. Managers of all Care Homes have been informed by both Andrew Colling and the ones selected to visit by the project lead, Mary Judge. Questionnaires for both staff and residents have been drawn up for consistency across the visits. There have inevitably been some delays before the visits can start and it is unlikely that we can produce a report before the end of February at the earliest.

'Health' Hearsay event – 26th October

Using the Hearsay model, this an engagement event to gain patient and carers views on Outpatient Services provided by the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC) and to give patients & carers the opportunity to speak directly to those who manage and deliver the services and make suggestions for improvements, feedback what works well and

together form a list of key priorities. A commitment has been gained from the NOC to look at these comments and to implement improvements suggested, where feasible, or obtain clarification as to what services or procedures are not able to be changed. (The event had not taken place at the time of writing – a verbal report will be shared at this Scrutiny meeting).

Drug Recovery Project

The new Residential Detoxification Project was opened at Howard House in Oxford on 1st November. The LINK will be holding a further meeting in public during January 2011 to report back to those who have taken part in the project and on the new service as it develops. We will also arrange a visit to the service, for information purposes, once it has become established.

Other projects:

Community Mental Health Services

A questionnaire is being used with those who have approached the LINK to find out more details of people's experiences with services provided through Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs). We are working alongside the CMHT service manager and OBMH PPI lead, receiving information about all nine CMHTs regarding caseloads, vacancies, availability of interim support and waiting times for various services including 'Talking Space' (Psychological Therapy Service). A Project Group Open Day took place on 12th November to disseminate information, receive further first hand experiences and agree next steps. OBMHT, Oxfordshire MIND and Oxfordshire PCT will be informed about initial findings.

GP appointments (extended hours)

Interviews have taken place with those who have referred comments to the LINK, to provide a framework for issues and the project remit. The first focus group meeting took place on 26th October. A report from the group is about to be finalised and will inform the next steps, alongside PCT and GP Patient Practice Groups (PPGs). Further work will be required in 2011 to inform PPGs and GP consortia about engagement potential, with support from the LINK leading towards the establishment of GP Commissioning and local HealthWatch.

Podiatry

The LINK is collaborating with the PCT on a survey being conducted, which will also inform service users about the LINK and the project. We are following up with respondents to gain a better insight into their experiences of service provision. There is a specific concern about Podiatry services in the Headington area – individuals have contacted the LINK and we are looking to establish a user group to inform the PCT of issues.

LINK Partnerships:

Alongside the main work programme, the LINK is working alongside several Oxfordshire groups and organisations in order to improve or develop services and to provide the LINK with a wider base of interested participants:

Oxfordshire Unlimited

The membership project is underway to assist in the development of this User Led Organisation for those with physical disabilities in Oxfordshire. This partnership project is providing Unlimited with the ability to increase its membership and become better known throughout the county and hence to offer to the community a key reference base for information and services in the future. Copies of membership packs will be available at the meeting.

Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance

The LiNk is providing ongoing support for the local branch - supporting ONA to publicise its work and raise public awareness - and the LiNk is helping to produce promotional materials, publish a website and provide additional channels of contact with local people.

Community Chest / 'Have a Say' Fund

The LiNk wants local people to have a voice and to recommend changes to services. We recognise the difficulties facing small groups & organisations with limited finances and the LiNk is offering the opportunity to apply for small grants (maximum £500 each). Constituted voluntary and community groups have been invited to put forward proposals that meet the LiNk remit and grant priorities: Engaging with local people so that they can have their say on health and social care issues that affect them personally or the population as a whole; Engaging with people who use health and social care services; Engaging with groups and organisations who are helping to supply people with appropriate health and social care services. Five applications have been received to date and will be assessed by the LiNk Steering Group and Host representatives. The fund will continue to be promoted until the end of the year.

Current and past LiNk newsletters and bulletins can be found at

www.makesachange.org.uk/cms/site/news/oxfordshire/latest-oxfordshire-link-newsletter.aspx

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