

Winter 2010

Oxfordshire



Newsletter

Your voice on local health and social care

1st Health Hearsay!

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Following positive feedback received about the Hearsay! event for Social Care services, Oxfordshire LINK held the first Health Hearsay! event, in partnership with the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre (NOC), on Friday 26th November at the Four Pillars Hotel, Witney.

This first Health Hearsay! was a LINK engagement event to gather patient and carers views on the Outpatient Services provided by the NOC and to give people the opportunity to speak directly to those who manage and deliver the services. We asked people who attended to make suggestions for improvements in three areas: *'Before'*, *'During'* and *'After the Appointment'*, also to feedback what works well and together form a list of key priorities for change. We also gathered comments from people who could not attend but who had been a patient of the NOC within the last 18 months.

All the comments we received are currently being put together into a 'Making Change' document to be presented to the NOC later in December. A commitment has been obtained from the NOC to work on the recommendations and, where feasible, to implement improvements suggested or obtain clarification as to what services or procedures are not able to be changed due to cost or practical implications. The full report, together with an action plan, will be published during January.

LINK Locality Manager Adrian Chant said, : "This event was a great opportunity for Outpatients to talk with those NOC staff who can influence & improve the service which they and all other patients receive."



Your Voice on Social Care and Health Services

LINK Project Updates

Self Directed Support (Personal Budgets)

The LINK has carried out a research project to understand individuals' experience of the new social care system of Personal Budgets in Oxfordshire. The final report has been presented to Oxfordshire County Council's Adult Services Scrutiny Committee and to the Adult Social Care team in charge of this transformation of the way services are obtained. A summary or the full report can be read online at

www.makesachange.org.uk/cms/site/news/oxfordshire/link-self-directed-support-personal-budgets-project.aspx or be obtained on request from the

LINK office.

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, and a project plan is being drawn up to initiate this to further help improve the implementation of these significant changes.

Social Care Hearsay!

The next quarterly report is due at the end of December. Social and Community Services (SCS) have a detailed plan in place to address remaining actions from this year. A small group of Hearsay! participants have been invited to meet SCS Directors & Officers for a more detailed discussion about specific issues raised through Hearsay and to contribute to the planning for the second Hearsay! event, which is taking place on 11th March 2011, at which participants will 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. There will shortly be interactive pages launched on both OCC and LINK websites which everyone can use as a means of assessing the quality of different services. If you would like full details of the changes the Council have been making and their plans for improvements to your services, or to receive a copy of the Hearsay! recommendations, please contact the LINK office.

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 early next year 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 see how the new service is developing, once it has become more established.

LINK Project Updates

Community Mental Health Services

A Project Group Open Day took place on 12th November to disseminate information, receive further first hand experiences and propose the next steps with those LINK participants involved. The LINK is receiving information about all nine Community Mental Health Teams regarding caseloads, vacancies, availability of interim support and waiting times for various services (including 'Talking Space' - the Psychological Therapy Service). If you have any comments or would like to be part of the project group, please contact Sue at the LINK office by phone, email or post. There is also a discussion board on the website at the LINK website where we would welcome your stories and comments.



Podiatry

Most of the feedback the LINK has received shows that there appears to be significant gaps in knowledge about foot care services in Oxfordshire, about alternative treatments and where to find advice and sources of additional information. Following meetings with the PCT Podiatry service and 'Sole Mates' at Age UK, the LINK has been looking into creating an information resource that will inform people where they can go to access chiropody and other foot care services across Oxfordshire. The intention is to publish a directory of services, both printed and online, and to make the resource widely known through our contacts and networks. Look out for further news of publication in the New Year.



GP appointments (extended hours)

The first focus group meeting took place on 26th October from which a 'Good Practice Guide' has been compiled and is being circulated. This will inform the next steps for the project in partnership with Practice Managers, the PCT and GP Patient Practice Groups (PPGs). The guide & report can be viewed on the www.makesachange.org.uk/cms/site/news/oxfordshire/link-gp-appointments-project.aspx or obtained from the office. Further work will be required in 2011 to inform PPG and GP Consortia about the potential for public engagement with support from the LINK and leading towards the establishment of GP Commissioning and the local HealthWatch in 2012. Oxfordshire GPs have been chosen to lead the way in implementing new government changes to the way the health service is organised. They have been approved to be part of the GP Consortia Pathfinder Programme which will enable them to take the first steps in pressing ahead with commissioning health care for local patients.



LINK Project Updates

Become a member of Oxfordshire Unlimited

The LINK has been working on a membership & recruitment project to assist Unlimited's Committee in the development of this User Led Organisation for those with physical disabilities in Oxfordshire. The partnership work 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. If you or your organisation would like to receive a membership pack or hear more about the work of Unlimited, please contact Sue at the LINK office or you can read more and download the pack at

www.makesachange.org.uk/submenu/oxfordshire/oxfordshire-unlimited.aspx

Look out for more publicity about Unlimited in the New Year.



Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance (ONA)

The ONA committee has been focusing on the structure of the organisation, its business plan and promotional material. Pump prime funding from LINK has enabled ONA to develop and to expand its membership of specialist organisations, for example DENDron – dementia; MS Society; Omega – ME society; Parkinson's UK and individual memberships. LINK will continue to support ONA's development in 2011.



Community News & Events

Proposals to integrate Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust (ORH) and the Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre NHS Trust (NOC)

Included with the newsletter is an update from the NOC and ORH. It was announced in September that the ORH and the NOC would explore the option of combining into a newly named organisation to create a comprehensive provider of acute hospital services for Oxfordshire. The development of the business case for merger is progressing well with both hospital Trust Boards endorsing the vision and rationale for merging at their meetings on 2nd December. The two Boards are expected to approve the full business case early in 2011. It will then have to follow an approval process, which, it is hoped, will lead to the merger becoming effective from summer 2011. Both NOC and ORH would like to hear views and comments from patients, staff and members of the public.

For further information or to comment please contact:

Melanie Proudfoot at the NOC - Tel: 01865 737563; Email: melanie.proudfoot@noc.nhs.uk
www.noc.nhs.uk/aboutus/FutureoftheNOC.aspx

or Heather Barnett at the ORH - Tel: 01865 231473; Email: heather.barnett@orh.nhs.uk
www.oxfordradcliffe.nhs.uk/news/newsrecords/1012/101205nocupdate.aspx

Report from the Chair of the Stewardship Group



The Stewardship Group consists of eight LINK members, elected in 2009, to work with the officers employed by Help and Care to collect and report on the views of Oxfordshire people on the quality and quantity of care provided or commissioned for them by the County Council (social care) and local NHS Trusts (health care).

This newsletter reports on various projects undertaken by the LINK - at least one of the Stewardship Group is involved in each of these projects, so that we are fully informed on the LINK activities.

In July the new coalition government published a White Paper on the future of the National Health Service - the main proposal is to involve General Practitioners more in commissioning services from hospitals (replacing the Primary Care Trusts which currently do this). Other changes include giving more responsibility to local government (for public health and for co-ordinating commissioning priorities). The government also proposes to replace the present LINKs with new 'HealthWatch' bodies in 2013.



Many of the powers and duties of HealthWatch will be similar to those of the present LINKs, but there are many details still to be agreed. Members of the Stewardship Group are talking to other LINKs and to Government ministers and civil servants as well as the local NHS and County Council officers about the White Paper and the future structure and governance of HealthWatch. Several were members of the old Community Health Council, then of Patients' Forums and now of our LINK. The transitions between these organisations were not well-handled, so we are working hard to make sure that we can continue to feed back comments on social and health care to the commissioners and providers without a gap while LINKs evolve into an effective HealthWatch.

The Stewardship Group receives regular reports on comments by LINK members, please continue to inform us of your concerns, so that we can play our part in improving services in Oxfordshire.

Dermot Roaf



Community News & Events

South Central Ambulance Service Public Consultation Meetings

South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SCAS) is gearing up to become a Foundation Trust with the help of local residents aged 14 years and over. With your help they will be able to develop services that are more sensitive to the needs of their patients.

To find out more about your local ambulance service and to enrol as a member for free, come to one of their public consultation meetings.

Bicester Community College	Bicester Community College Queens Avenue Bicester OX26 2NS	13 January 2011	18.30 - 20.30
Oxford Brookes	Oxford Brookes University Gypsy Lane Oxford OX3 0BP	01 February 2011	18.30 - 20.30



MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR!



Oxfordshire Local Involvement Network

Meet the Oxfordshire LINK Staff Team

Adrian Chant — Locality Manager
Nicky Robinson — Development Officer
Sue Marshall — Development Officer
Man Liu Clark — Communication & On-line
Support Officer
Nancy Darke — Administration Assistant

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Your Voice on Social Care and Health Services

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