



News

1. What's going on within the LINK?

i) LINK Quarterly Event

The next Kent LINK quarterly event is to be held between 11.00am to 3.00pm on Monday, 27 July 2009 at The Healthy Living Centre, off the Broadway, Sheerness, Kent ME12 1HH.

The purpose of the event is to:

- Provide opportunities for the local community to find out more about the Kent LINK and health and social care services in their area;
- Enable LINK participants to raise and debate issues of interest within Kent;
- For LINK Governors and the LINK's Priorities Panel (the group of LINK participants that decide how issues brought to the LINK are to be dealt with) to be held to account for their work on the LINK's behalf.

ii) Selection events held

There have been two selection events for the purpose of assigning roles to LINK participants who want to get a bit more involved. These include making appointments to the Panel of Visitors, ie those LINK participants that can exercise the LINK's 'enter and view' powers; and members to the LINK's Priorities Panel. References are being taken up and, for LINK visitors, CRB checks are being undertaken. We will announce these appointments when this process of checking has been completed.

iii) NHS foundation trusts: debate

There is a discussion going on at present on the LINK's website at:
<http://www.thekentlink.co.uk/index.php?q=365>

If you have a view about how NHS foundation trusts are constituted and, bearing in mind the experiences at Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust, then why not join in the discussion. At the LINK's AGM it was agreed that a project should be undertaken by the LINK - see later on this subject.

iv) Bulletin frequency

As a result of a survey of LINK participants we have decided to reduce the frequency with which these Bulletins are produced. In future this will be every four weeks. However, the content of the Bulletin is placed on the LINK's website more frequently at www.thekentlink.co.uk

If you wish to receive future Bulletins electronically rather than hard copy, then please contact us by email at info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or telephone 01303 297050.



2. Kent LINK Annual Meeting

Kent LINK held its first Annual Meeting in Ashford on 28 May 2009. Over 80 people attended to hear what the LINK had been doing since it started back in December last year and what it planned to do in the coming year.

Much of the LINK's efforts to date had been about establishing a network of networks, recruiting participants to the LINK and establishing the foundations (its governance arrangements) for the LINK to safely undertake its role of involving the community of Kent in decisions made about local health and social care services.

Projects that the LINK is looking at in the coming year include:

- Access (transport) to health and social care services - getting to and from health / social care units, including use of public transport or travelling by car and associated car parking availability and charging
- Review of the county's health and social care commissioning plans – the KCC's and NHS's plans for the services we will receive in the future
- Following up the LINK's work on the Annual Health Check and planning for next year's programme
- Care provided for people who have suffered a stroke - reviewing those services already provided and exploring any concerns of local people
- Training and supervision of care assistants – exploring what are acceptable standards
- Hygiene standards in Kent's hospitals
- Following the report into standards at Mid Staffordshire Foundation Trust, to review the situation in Kent and in relation to existing foundation trusts and those currently preparing for such status. Areas of interest include:
 - Ensuring that savings are not made at the expense of patient services
 - Examining how the trusts listen to their patients
 - How open and transparent is the trust in conducting its business.

If you are interested in getting involved in any of this work, please contact us at the LINK and we will ensure that you are involved or kept informed as you wish.

For a copy of the LINK's Annual Report, including a report of the LINK's expenditure to 31 March 2009, contact us by telephone on 01303 297050, email info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or visit the website at www.thekentlink.co.uk

A summary of the report is in production, a copy of which will be sent to all Kent LINK participants.

3. Help wanted!

We need young people! The Kent LINK is keen to have young people on board to



influence the improvement and development of health and social care services in county.

We are developing a strategy to help us ensure young people in Kent have equal opportunities to get involved with the LINK at all levels. If you are a young person or know of young people who would like to help us develop this strategy and be part of the LINK please contact us. We would also be interested in hearing from youth workers or people who have worked or still do work with young people to support the development of the strategy.

Please contact Louise Murrell, KMN, Unit 24, Shearway Business Park, Folkestone Enterprise Centre, Shearway Road, Folkestone, CT19 4RH, telephone 07976 596797, email louise@kentlink.org or visit the website at www.thekentlink.co.uk

4. Keeping it real!

Talks have begun between the Kent LINK and NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent to look at ways of working together to further involve communities in the commissioning of health services in East Kent. The LINK has been asked to work in partnership with NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent to help them 'keep it real' in becoming a world class commissioner.

Watch this space for further information about how you will be able to take part.

5. Be a friend and make someone happy!

Befriending – make someone smile! The Volunteer Centre in Gravesham has re-launched its Befriending Scheme.

What is the Befriending Scheme? It is a service whereby volunteers visit lonely and isolated people in their own homes that are in need of some company - older people aged 65 and over and disabled people who live on their own.

A Befriender visits a person needing help and support and becomes a friend. Induction / Training days are provided and expenses also will be reimbursed. There is also regular one to one support and social events to assist the development of Befrienders.

To find out more about becoming a Befriender, or if you would like the services of one, contact The Volunteer Centre Gravesham, The Arc, 45 Windmill Street, Gravesend, DA12 1BA, telephone 01474 322729, email befriending@graveshamvolunteers.org.uk or visit the website at www.graveshamvolunteers.org.uk



6. Become a member of Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Foundation Trust

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust is in the final stages of applying for foundation trust status and this is an opportunity for all Kent LINK participants to get involved.

By becoming a foundation trust, the Trust will have greater freedom to develop its services in line with the specific needs of local communities. This is where the local community can help, as patients, service users and local people can all play a direct and meaningful role to influence the future of their local NHS services.

Foundation trusts represent the move away from centralised control of health care provision and places this firmly in the hands of local communities. The key to this is the Council of Governors and the members of the foundation trust that the Governors represent.

To become a member or for more information, please visit the Trust's website at www.kmpt.nhs.uk or contact Martine Nichols, Member and Governor Manager at Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, 35 Kings Hill Avenue, West Malling, ME19 4AX, email FTOffice@kmpt.nhs.uk or telephone 01732 520488 or freephone 0800 376 9229.

7. £4.5 million investment in dental services for East Kent

NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent have announced an investment of £4.5million that will see new dental surgeries operational in Deal, Dover, Chestfield, Whitstable, Faversham, Broadstairs, Cliftonville, Isle of Sheppey and Hawkinge.

8. Birchington pharmacy – relocating

The Pharmaceutical Regulations Committee has approved the relocation of the Birchington Pharmacy currently in Station Road to Birchington Medical Centre in Minnis Road.

9. Whitstable pharmacy moves down the road

Whitstable Community Services Ltd, currently situated at Unit 5, Suite 2, Boorman Way, Estuary View Business Park is on the move and will be relocating to 25 Boorman Way on Estuary View Business Park.

10. £1.8 million boost for patients' privacy and dignity in Medway

NHS Medway is investing £1.8million in a programme of improvements to enhance dignity and privacy for patients. The aim is to dramatically reduce the small percentage



of people still nursed in mixed-sex accommodation by creating single-sex wards and washrooms, among other improvements.

Most of the money, which is from a special Department of Health fund announced by former Secretary of State for Health Alan Johnson earlier this year, will be spent at Medway Maritime Hospital.

Facilities for Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust patients in A Block at Medway Maritime Hospital and for people using Medway Community Healthcare's St Bartholomew's Hospital in Rochester and the Wisdom Hospice in Rochester are also being upgraded. Work at Medway Maritime Hospital will begin in the next few months to convert many of its current mixed-sex wards into single-sex. Sluices will be duplicated, as will toilets and showers to ensure patients do not have to pass patients of the opposite sex on their way to personal facilities. New blinds and partitions are also being installed to protect the modesty of patients and doors are being secured to prevent patients from being able to enter a nearby ward of the opposite sex. Four new showers will be installed for patients on mental health wards in A Block at Medway Maritime Hospital where there will be further work towards establishing a women's only ward. In St Bartholomew's Hospital and the Wisdom Hospital where there is no mixed-sex accommodation, funds are being spent on upgrading curtains around beds and signage.

Staff training and patient surveys focusing on patients' experience of the care they receive, will be a priority for each of the sites involved.

For further information contact Emma Burns, Media Manager, NHS Medway by email at emma.burns@nhs.net or by telephone on 01634 382705.

11. The safe network

A government funded service to support charities to safeguard children was launched last week.

The Safe Network Unit will be run by the NSPCC and Children England, an umbrella body for children's charities. It is designed to help charities prevent abuse, train staff to identify possible abuse and introduce safer recruitment practices.

For more information visit the website at www.safenetwork.org.uk

12. Training grants in palliative care for children

Children's palliative care charity ACT has reopened its training grants programme to help practitioners and family carers develop their skills in looking after children with life-limiting illnesses.



For more information email Debbie@act.org.uk or telephone 0117 916 6422.

13. Mobility aids warning from consumer watchdog

Consumers are being urged to watch out when buying mobility scooters, bath aids and orthopaedic furniture. A consumer watchdog has reported a sharp increase in the number of complaints it has received, from defective products to dodgy sales staff.

Mobility aids warning: Consumer Direct, the Office of Fair Trading managed advice service, received eight per cent more complaints about mobility aid purchases in the first four months of 2009 compared to the year before. Many complaints related to defective products and customer service issues, whilst almost a quarter were about sales and business practices, including complaints that traders were making misleading claims. Callers complained about salespeople engaging in high pressure sales tactics, spending several hours in their homes, and in some cases falsely claiming to be working for Social Services, the Department of Work and Pensions or the NHS.

Your consumer rights: new laws that came into force in October 2008 in most cases give consumers seven days to cancel contracts they agreed to in their homes. Other regulations make it illegal for traders to: "Treat consumers unfairly, mislead them through acts or omissions, subject them to aggressive practices such as high pressure selling techniques. Traders also have to leave the premises when asked."

To find out more about your consumer rights visit the website www.direct.gov.uk or to speak to someone direct you can telephone Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06.

14. New 'fit note' to replace doctor's sick note

A new 'fit note' is being introduced to replace the doctor's sick note. The fit note will outline what work an employee can do and is intended to help more people stay in work rather than drift into long term sickness. In May 2008 2.6 million people claimed incapacity benefits.

Lord Bill McKenzie, Works & Pensions Minister said: "Employers tell us that managing sickness absence can be a challenge. This is compounded by a 'sick note' system that makes sickness absence a black and white issue – either you are unfit for work or you are not". He then went on to say: "We recognise how important it is to help people who are sick to stay in work or get back to work quickly – the new 'fit note' will help do just that."

The new 'fit note' has been developed with the support of health care professionals, employer representatives and trade unions and will roll-out across Britain in Spring 2010.



15. How to complain – for people detained under the Mental Health Act

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) can help with complaints about health services received if you have:

- been detained
- are subject to guardianship
- are on supervised community treatment.

You will need to contact the independent health care provider or the NHS trust in the first instance. For more information on these complaints processes visit the links below. If, however, you are not satisfied with their response, you can contact the CQC at the address also given below.

What will CQC do? They will acknowledge your complaint within five days and respond to your complaint within 25 days.

What are their powers? Whilst their powers to investigate are limited to the use of powers and duties in the Mental Health Act, they can make sure that health services are correctly applying and interpreting the Mental Health Act – the key law which ensures that the rights of people subject to detention, guardianship or supervised community treatment are respected and retained.

So, whilst they cannot formally investigate all aspects of your care and treatment, they can make sure that they provide advice and assistance if you are making a complaint against a health service and that the service is fully meeting the requirements of the Mental Health Act.

For further information contact the Care Quality Commission, Maid Marian House, 56 Hounds Gate, Nottingham, NG1 6BG, telephone 0115 943 7100 or visit the website www.cqc.org.uk/contactus/howtoraiseaconcernorcomplaint.cfm

16. Shocking report galvanises Scotland to act on dementia

The Scottish government is to produce the nation's first dementia strategy after a "deeply shocking" report on the plight of people with the condition living in care homes (writes Gordon Carson). Scotland's Care Commission and Mental Welfare Commission found widespread evidence of the so-called 'chemical cosh' to control residents' behaviour.

The regulators said anti psychotic drugs should be used as a last resort, not a first, and called for doctors and pharmacists to review prescriptions for people with dementia.

The regulators told 24 out of 30 homes they visited to improve their medication ordering.



They found that none of the 30 had a system that could provide a complete up to date record of all medicines ordered, whether they were taken and what was disposed of. The report also showed that about 50% of care home residents never went out and about 25% rarely went out.

It also pointed to a lack of training among care home staff with only 10 managers having completed a recognised dementia training course. Scottish Care, which represents Scotland's residential care providers, said there would be significant resource issues for homes to provide individualised activity programmes and manage challenging behaviour.

Up to 67,000 people in Scotland have dementia and about 40% of them are in care homes or hospital.

England's first dementia strategy was published in February.

Events

1. NHS West Kent commissioning with the voluntary sector event

NHS West Kent, the Primary Care Trust, is hosting an event to bring together voluntary sector organisations located in the West Kent area to:

- learn about the PCT's commissioning cycle and strategic plan
- discuss the challenges commissioning brings to the voluntary sector
- understand how voluntary sector organisations and the PCT can commission the best health services for West Kent.

The event is being held on 23 July 2009 from 9.00am – 2.15pm at The Angel Centre, Angel Lane, Tonbridge, TN9 1SF.

For more information or to register your place at the event contact Emma Cain by email at Emma.cain@wkpct.nhs.uk or telephone 01732 375287.

2. East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust – Council of Governors Public Meeting

The Council of Governors Public Meeting will be held on Tuesday, 14 July 2009 from 9.00am – 1.00pm at Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, Ashford Business Point, Waterbrook Avenue, Sevington, Ashford, TN24 0GB.

For more information email foundationtrust@ekht.nhs.uk or telephone 01843 225544.



3. East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust – Council of Governors Annual General Meeting

The Council of Governors will be holding their Annual General Meeting on Tuesday, 29 September 2009 at 7.00pm at The Kent County Cricket Club, The St Lawrence Ground, Old Dover Road, Canterbury, CT1 3NZ.

For more information email foundationtrust@ekht.nhs.uk or telephone 01843 225544.

4. Free Seminar on Living Well with Dementia

The National Dementia Strategy: Implications for Care Homes to be held at Deal Town Hall on 30 June 2009 from 3.30pm to 5.00pm. Presented by Ben Bano, Director, Telos Training Ltd.

The National Dementia Strategy emphasises the need to improve the quality of care people with dementia in care homes receive. The strategy requires care homes to identify a senior member of staff to take the lead for quality improvement and develop a local strategy for the management and care of people with dementia in the home.

This seminar will highlight the implications of the National Dementia Strategy for care homes and provide advice on the implementation of it within your care home. There will be an opportunity to discuss guidance for your staff training needs and how these can be met.

For further information contact Stephanie Hayman or Jane Langstaff by telephone on 01304 362563 or email partners@theprospersitynetwork.co.uk

5. Charity show – Indian dinner and dance at Medway

Naataya Kendra Dance Academy, Medway, a voluntary non profit organisation who teach children and adults to dance and music to encourage them to be part of the community are holding another Dinner Dance Show. The show will take place on 28 June 2009 at New Brompton College, Gillingham from 5.00pm-8.00pm followed by dinner. Proceeds will support the Macmillan Cancer Care Unit at Medway Maritime Hospital and also Pallium India - a palliative care charity based in India. The last show raised £10.5k to support Macmillan Cancer Care Unit in Medway.

For further information about the event contact Dr Athmaja by telephone on 07795 575065 or visit the website www.naatyakendra.com

6. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) consultation events on new registration standards

CQC are running a series of regional consultation events for people who use services,



care providers and stakeholders during June and July 2009. These events form part of the consultation on their guidance for compliance with the new registration requirements.

CQC's aim is to accommodate as wide a range of stakeholders as possible at each of the events, but please note that places are limited.

For further information telephone 0208 8481 3313, Typetalk 18001 0208 481 3313, email cqcevents@livegroup.co.uk or visit the following websites:

www.cqc.org.uk/getinvolved/consultations/consultationonnewregistrationstandards.cfm

www.greengelive.com/events/?RID=123

Consultations

1. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) wants you to help shape the regulation of health and adult social care services

The regulation of health and adult social care is changing. Take part in the CQC's public consultation to help them develop guidance on what care services must do to meet new legally enforceable registration standards.

From April 2010 all regulated health and adult social care providers will be required by law to register with CQC. This is the first time all public and independent health and adult social care services in England will need to meet essential common standards of quality and safety.

CQC would like your feedback on whether their guidance appropriately reflects the new registration standards, and what should rightly be expected of a safe, quality care service. Anyone interested in this regulation of health and adult social care can take part in this consultation.

To find out more telephone 0208 8481 3313, Typetalk 18001 0208 481 3313 or visit the website at

www.cqc.org.uk/getinvolved/consultations/consultationonnewregistrationstandards.cfm

Contact Information

The Kent LINK may be contacted via the Host Organisation as below:

KMN, Unit 24 Folkestone Enterprise Centre, Shearway Road, Folkestone, CT19 4RH.

Tel: 01303 297050

Email: info@kmn-ltd.co.uk

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm (Answerphone available out of hours)