



News

1. What's going on in the LINK?

i) Shepway hosts LINK Quarterly Event

The 'Big Care Debate' was the main topic at the LINK's Quarterly Event on 10 November 2009. The Government's Green Paper, Shaping the Future of Care Together, posed a number of possible solutions, particularly how it is all to be paid for – all care being paid for out of general taxation has been ruled out. The options being:

- Government and older people sharing the cost
- a private insurance solution
- a national insurance scheme.

The LINK's response to the Green Paper can be found at:

http://thekentlink.org.uk/assets/files/Publications/FINAL_Kent_LINK's_Big_Care_Debate_Feedback_131109.pdf

The event also provided an opportunity for the LINK Governors' Group to report on their activities and for the Priorities Panel to report on the issues that are being raised by LINK participants.

ii) New Governors appointed

Following recent selection events, new LINK Governors have been appointed with identified areas of responsibility:

- John Ashelford Performance Management
- Mike Eddy Strategic
- Cate Jackson Liaison with Priorities Panel
- Stan Richardson No specific role
- David Swaffer Equality and Diversity

The following Governors were reselected:

- John Fletcher Project Management
- Sally Keverne Community Engagement and Partnerships
- Roger Kendall Finance

iii) Getting involved and gaining influence

LINK participants continue to get involved in helping to shape Kent's health and social care services in a variety of ways:

- NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent has published its 'Community Services Commissioning Strategy 2009 -2013'. The significant contribution that was made to this strategy by such a diverse group of LINK participants is acknowledged in



the document and a commitment given to involve the LINK at each stage of its implementation.

- To be able to influence, you have to gain an understanding of how the planning and purchase of health and social care services operates. To help with this, NHS West Kent are laying on a series of events that will cover:
 - identifying health needs and people's aspirations
 - getting the public involved in making decisions, setting priorities and strategies
 - involving patients in improving services
 - buying services
 - monitoring and improving the performances of services.

If you want to know more about these opportunities contact Cate Boland at cate@kentlink.org or via the LINK office on 01303 297050.

- LINK participants, Roy Coles and John Gallimore, attended the NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent's Trust Board meeting on 18 November 2009 in Margate. The LINK Governors have accepted on the LINK's behalf two places at the Board's table with speaking, but non voting, rights. This is a major step forward in enabling the voice of the LINK in East Kent to be heard. Roy and John's reports of proceedings will be published on the LINK's website and LINK participants' issues will be conveyed to them so that they are kept in touch with patients, users and carers views in East Kent.
- NHS Trusts have in place, or are in the process of setting up, Patient Experience Committees. As the name implies they are vehicles for listening to and involving patients and the local community in developing services that are sensitive to their needs. To date the LINK has nominated a number of LINK participants to be a conduit with the LINK and the NHS Trusts concerned on these. They are:
 - Ann Thompson – NHS West Kent Patient Experience Group
 - David Morris – Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust Patient Experience Committee
 - Roy Coles and Nicki North – Patient Experience Sub-Committee NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent

A number of LINK participants are already involved in the Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust Patient Experience Group.

- LINK participants John Gallimore, Nicki North and Cate Jackson have taken part in an East Kent Citizens Panel. The Panel's task was to review NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent's Strategic Commissioning Plan. The Strategic Commissioning Plan sets out what the NHS will do over the next five years to dramatically improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Eastern and Coastal Kent. The plan was originally conceived in 2008 and it is now time to review it to ensure that it is still fit for purpose.
- Roger Kendall has been appointed to represent the LINK on the Kent County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC). Roger has taken



one of two non voting places on the Committee – the other place is still to be decided. LINK Governor, Mike Eddy will attend HOSC meetings with Roger until the other place is confirmed.

If you want to get a bit more involved in the LINK, contact us at info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or telephone on 01303 297050.

iv) Care Quality Commission and LINK meet

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the key regulator for health and social care services in this Country – it took over earlier this year from the Health Care Commission and the Council for Social Care Inspection. The LINK's relationship with the CQC is a vital one if the LINK is to be effective in enabling the community of Kent to have an effective way of articulating, through the LINK, its views on the quality of health and social care services in the County. The LINK will play an important role in being one of the ways of keeping the CQC in touch with the users of services.

On 20 November 2009 the CQC met with LINK participants. The meeting had a number of purposes:

- for the CQC to tell the LINK what action they had taken on the evidence the LINK had given as part of last year's Annual Health Check – this was the system whereby the NHS assured itself that standards and quality of services was up to the mark
- to discuss how the LINK can contribute to quality checks as part of a new system of registration for NHS and social care organisations. This will require the LINK to submit evidence by the end of January 2010
- to establish an effective working relationship between the LINK and the new CQC.

v) Update on projects

a. Hygiene and cleanliness in hospitals – the first two stages of this project are about to commence. They will involve a series of unannounced visits to major hospitals throughout Kent and Medway to assess adherence to hand hygiene policies, standards of cleanliness and disinfection. The LINK 'Authorised Visitors' will use their powers of observation and use some simple sampling techniques to check for certain organisms and to also check chlorine levels in the cleaning water used to disinfect areas close to where patients are being nursed. This stage of the project will be finished by 8 January 2010. The third stage of the project will involve a survey of LINK participants to find out, from their recent experiences, their views on standards.

b. Older people's day centres in West Kent – the mystery shopping element of this project has been waiting for the process for 'authorising' the LINK's visitors to be signed off. By the time you read this that process should be complete and the mystery shopping exercise able to commence. This will involve, so-called Mystery Shoppers assessing the day centres as prospective users of these services.



c. Review of transport services – information is currently being gathered on transport and travel plans held by all NHS Trusts across Kent and Medway. Approximately 18 participants have expressed an interest in being involved with this project although at this stage they are just being kept informed of progress.

d. Stroke service review – the first stage of this project has involved finding out why certain hospitals in parts of West Kent had not done well in the last audit of stroke services and to see what plans are in place to address these shortfalls and where they currently are in making these improvements. A series of meetings for LINK participants interested in this project are being arranged across the County to feedback on these findings and to decide what further action the LINK may need to take.

e. LINK youth engagement strategy – the views of young people throughout Kent are being sought on how they can best get involved and contribute to the LINK. If you have any ideas on how this should be done, contact Louise Murrell by email louise@kmn-ltd.co.uk or telephone 07976 596797. A draft strategy will go to the Governors' Group of the LINK on the 17 December.

vi) KCC to review dental services

The LINK has been invited to submit evidence on the current state of NHS dentistry to the County Council's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC). The LINK is required to submit written evidence by 18 December 2009. If you have recent experience of NHS dentistry in the County and wish to contribute to the LINK's submission, please let us know by email at info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or by post to The Kent Local Involvement Network, KMN, Freepost NAT 17761, Folkestone, CT19 4BR.

vii) LINK current programme of work

This can be found on the LINK's website at http://www.thekentlink.co.uk/assets/files/Publications/Final_LINK_Work_Programme_2009_2010_as_of_091109.pdf

If you have an issue that you think the LINK should be made aware of, contact us by email info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or by telephone 01303 297050. Please remember that the LINK does not deal with complaints – these should be directed to the appropriate NHS Trust in respect of NHS services and to Kent County Council for social care concerns. However, the LINK is keen to learn of those issues that are likely to affect the community of Kent – this could be the results of a single complaint after it has been investigated.

viii) Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) webcasts

In the last Bulletin we incorrectly stated that proceedings of the HOSC could be viewed on Kent TV. In fact, they can be seen via a webcast that can be accessed via the following internet link:

<http://www.kent.ukcouncil.net/site/>

Our sincere apologies to those that were inconvenienced by this error.



2. Darent Valley Hospital

Would you like to help influence the development of services that are provided at Darent Valley Hospital?

Then become a NHS Foundation Trust Member - membership costs nothing and you will have the opportunity to become involved in your hospital. Your involvement can be as little or as much as you like.

Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust is renewing its application to become a NHS Foundation Trust – still as part of the NHS and still aiming to provide high quality, accessible patient care for your community, but having more independence from central government.

They are looking for members of the community from every walk of life, from the age of 16, who want to support their local hospital and are interested in helping to shape the future.

For more information and a membership form contact Tracey Cummins, Fundraising, Voluntary Services & Foundation Trust Membership Manager, Darent Valley Hospital, Darent Wood Road, Dartford, DA2 8DA, email Tracey.Cummins@dvh.nhs.uk telephone 01322 428150 / 01322 428256 or visit the website:
http://www.dvh.nhs.uk/downloads/documents/C91F82BJ76_DVH_Winter_Newsletter.pdf

3. Phlebotomy clinic - Swale

NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent has taken the decision to stop extended Phlebotomy clinics on Saturday mornings at Sittingbourne Memorial Hospital and Sheppey Community Hospital because more people are now accessing the service from their GP. The last clinic took place on 21 November 2009.

The Trust apologises for any inconvenience caused to the small number of patients that will be affected, but hope they will use the 13 GP practices in Swale now contracted to provide phlebotomy services.

For more information, contact Julia Rogers, NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent by email julia.rogers@eastcoastkent.nhs.uk or telephone 01227 791163.

4. New dentist for Cliftonville

NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent has approved new contracts for NHS dental services in Cliftonville and Thanet. This is part of a £4.5 million investment in dentistry in eastern and coastal Kent.

Dentalpol Ltd has been awarded the contracts for a surgery at Northdown Road,



Cliftonville and in the High Street in Broadstairs; both will open in December 2009.

Both surgeries will be open from 8.00am to 5.00pm on Monday and Tuesday, 10.00am to 8.00pm on Wednesday and Thursday, 9.00am to 5.00pm on Fridays and 9.00am to 12.00noon on Saturdays.

Another improvement for people trying to locate a NHS dentist is the opening of a dedicated dental helpdesk which went live on 2 November 2009.

The helpline is also able to provide non clinical advice such as:

- helping patients who currently don't have a dentist get emergency dental treatment
- explain the NHS charges and the treatment included in each price band
- provide information on how to access specialist dental services such as orthodontics and domiciliary dental care.

People needing NHS dental treatment or a check-up can call free on 0808 238 9797 (mobile networks may charge the caller) or you can text 0794 309 1958 for a call back. The helpline is open from 8.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday.

For more information contact Christine King, NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent by email christine.king@eastcoastkent.nhs.uk or telephone 01227 795089 or visit the website: www.easternandcoastalkent.nhs.uk

5. NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Community Services are looking for patient / public representatives for various groups

Patient Experience Group

This Group oversees all the patient satisfaction surveys and all other types of patient engagement. It also monitors the action plans to improve the patient experience. The Group meets on the last Thursday of the month, from 10.30am to 12.30pm at Trinity House in Ashford.

Community Hospital Patient Experience Groups

These are local groups for the community hospitals in Deal, Faversham, Herne Bay, Sheppey, Sittingbourne and Whitstable. The Groups will monitor the patient experience of people using services at the hospital, and monitor action to improve these services. The Groups will meet three times a year and meetings will be held at each hospital site.

Integrated Provider Stroke Rehabilitation Group

This Group has been set up to ensure that stroke rehabilitation in the community is provided in an integrated way, in line with the National Stroke Strategy and to involve people who have had a stroke and carers to ensure that the stroke rehabilitation pathway meets the needs of people that have a stroke and their families wherever



possible. The group will meet every two months in Herne Bay at the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital.

Nutrition and Dietetics Resource Governance Group

This Group ensures that all dietary resources used within the nutrition and dietetic department are streamlined, consistent, up to date, evidence based, cost effective and are produced in line with community services guidelines on producing patient information. Patient involvement is required to provide additional assurance that the resources are understandable, readable and appropriate to the needs of the local population. The Group will meet monthly and the venue will alternate between Ashford and Herne Bay.

Local people of all ages and backgrounds are needed to be involved in these groups. As volunteers, patient / public representatives you will receive information, on-going support and out-of-pocket expenses

For more information on any of these groups, contact Karen Edmunds, Trinity House, 110/120 Upper Pemberton, Eureka Park, Kennington, Ashford, TN25 4AZ email Karen.Edmunds@eastcoastkent.nhs.uk or telephone 01233 667816.

6. NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent - staff achievement recognition scheme

NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent are to reward their staff for their exceptional work. The Staff Awards scheme 2009 / 2010 aims to ensure recognition for those staff who you consider to have gone significantly 'beyond the call of duty' when carrying out their work.

There are four categories this year covering community services, support staff and voluntary groups. Final closing date for nominations is Friday, 18 December 2009.

An independent panel will shortlist from the nominations received.

For more information or a nomination form contact Charlotte Baker, NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent, Trinity House, 110/120 Upper Pemberton, Eureka Park, Kennington, Ashford, TN25 4AZ, email Charlotte.Baker@eastcoastkent.nhs.uk or telephone 01233 667816.

7. Mental Health Matters helpline

Mental Health Matters is an innovative organisation to promote health and wellbeing. It has a dedicated team to deliver a comprehensive range of services to meet people's needs. The helpline has a team of highly trained and experienced support workers who use counselling skills to provide emotional support, guidance and information to support



mental wellbeing. The telephone helpline is available 5.00pm to 9.00am Monday - Friday and 24 hours at weekends and Bank Holidays on 0800 107 0160.

If you have difficulty talking on the phone about your problems, an online chat service called 'Time Online' is available. This service is similar to MSN and details are given below.

For more information contact Alan Heyes, c/o MCCH, Raglan House, St Peters Street, Maidstone, ME16 0SN, email AHeyes@mentalhealthmatters.co.uk, telephone 07590 950241 or visit the website: www.mentalhealthmatters.com

8. East Kent Local Arthritis and Musculoskeletal Alliance (ARMA) invites people with musculoskeletal conditions to join the network

The East Kent ARMA local network brings together patients and patient groups, clinicians and commissioners to work towards improving musculoskeletal services at a local level through:

- monitoring local service provision
- identifying and campaigning on local service issues using the ARMA Standards of Care and other policy initiatives
- providing a shared forum for service users, providers and planners.

ARMA is the umbrella body providing a collective voice for the arthritis and musculoskeletal community in the UK. Together, ARMA and its member organisations work to improve quality of life for more than 9.6million people in the UK with these conditions.

For more information contact Helen Madzokere, Consultant AHP (Physiotherapy), East Kent Hospitals University NHS Trust, Ethelbert Road, Canterbury, CT1 3NG, telephone 01227 766877 ext 74015 or visit the website: www.ekhut.nhs.uk

9. Relocation of River Surgery

The Pharmaceutical Regulations Committee has approved the relocation of the surgery of D L M Wright and Partners from 110 London Road, River to the rear of 114 Canterbury Road, Lydden, Dover.

For more information contact Linda Gibbs, Kent Primary Care Agency, 11 Station Road, Maidstone, ME14 1QH, email linda.gibbs@kpca.hns.uk or telephone 01622 655134.



10. Help the Aged and Age Concern unveil their new identity – Age UK

On 1 April 2009 Age Concern England and Help the Aged joined together to create a new charity dedicated to improving the lives of older people. Operating under the name 'Age Concern and Help the Aged' they wanted to be one voice on behalf of all older people.

They are working with partners to ensure that together they can improve the lives of older people. Also, on 1 April 2009 the national Age Concerns of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland also joined together with Help the Aged to create new charities, like Age Concern England. Age UK works closely with 342 local Age Concerns across England helping them provide high quality service for older people in the area where they live.

The new name 'Age UK' will be used officially from Spring 2010. For more information visit;
www.age.uk.org/

11. The Department of Health (DH) has launched a Quality Mark

The DH has launched a Quality Mark for providers of information and advice to users of health and social care services.

The Information Standard is designed to help people identify trustworthy sources of advice among the 50,000 organisations producing health and social care information in England.

For more information, visit the website:
www.dh.gov.uk/theinformationstandard

Events

Please note that in accordance with the LINK's Governance, expenses are not reimbursable for attendance at the events shown below.

1. Wellpoint launch day invitation

The Wellpoint is coming on Tuesday, 1 December 2009. Check your weight, hydration, BMI, body fat content, heart rate, and blood pressure FREE at the Town Hall Tunbridge Wells for one month only.

The Wellpoint is a non invasive, confidential health check kiosk which measures all of



the above. It will be available in reception throughout December for staff and partner agency use only. On the 4 January 2010 the Wellpoint is moving to the Gateway and will be available for public use.

Healthier Communities Staff will be available to offer help and advice. Please use the contact number below to find out times and dates available.

For more information contact Helen Wolstenholme, Healthier Communities Co-ordinator, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Town Hall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1RS, telephone 01892 554230, email Helen.Wolstenholme@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or visit the website:
www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk

2. Attention all carers – Caring with Confidence

Caring with Confidence is aimed at unpaid carers aged 18 and over and can help to empower and build confidence.

What is Caring with Confidence:

It is a facilitated group session, run by local providers who have experience and knowledge of working with carers to explore the essentials of looking after someone on a daily basis. The programme begins with the induction session, Finding Your Way, followed by Caring Day-to-day, Caring and Communicating, Caring and Resources, Caring and Coping, Caring and Me and Caring and Life.

Each session lasts three hours, and are held one day per week. Carers have the opportunity to meet others, share experiences and build on skills. There is help with travel and caring costs.

Caring with Confidence is an opportunity to help carers by:

- building on their strengths as a carer
- giving them an opportunity to share experiences and learn from others in similar situations
- giving useful information, ideas and tips about looking after someone
- helping them decide what they might like to change about their caring role.

What are the benefits:

- carers who look after their own health and wellbeing are more likely to be able to continue caring for longer therefore those they care for may be less likely to need long-term care
- they become better informed and more confident and come into contact with relevant information.

Individual carers report practical benefits as a result of being involved in Carers with Confidence – such as using relaxation techniques, awareness of additional resources and entitlements and moving into new education and training opportunities.



For more information, or to register for a course, contact Helen Appleton, Course Co-ordinator, by email cwc@carerskent.org or telephone 01474 369159.

3. Help us to help you breathe more easily

The Department of Health (DH) is developing a national strategy for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in England, working with the British Lung Foundation and Asthma UK.

The strategy is due to be launched next year and is designed to help improve patients' health and wellbeing. The strategy covers better prevention and changing behaviour for those at risk to aid diagnosis and treatment through to better care for people with COPD at the end of life. It will also highlight the similarities and differences between the diagnosis and care of COPD and asthma.

The views, insight and experiences of people with COPD and asthma and their carers are needed to ensure that the plans in the strategy meet their needs.

Join others at one of their five events in England to help them get it right: The venues are:

- 4 December 2009 Walsall Football Club, Walsall
- 9 December 2009 Cleve Hotel, Wellington, Somerset
- 12 December 2009 Aintree Racecourse, Liverpool
- 17 December 2009 Hilton Stansted Airport, Stansted

Lunch and refreshments will be provided and reasonable travel expenses will be paid. To register for this free event or to obtain a registration form, telephone 0113 398 4052 (Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm) or visit the website for more information: www.pcc.nhs.uk/events/respiratory

4. East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust Board - meeting dates

Future dates for the meeting of the Trust Board are:

- 14 January 2010, 9.00am – 2.00pm, Willesborough Baptist Church, Hythe Road, Ashford, TN24 0QR
- 13 April 2010 – venue and time to be confirmed
- 13 July 2010 – venue and time to be confirmed
- 28 September 2010 – venue and time to be confirmed.

For more information, contact East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust, Kent and Canterbury Hospital, Ethelbert Road, Canterbury, CT1 3NG, telephone



01227 766877, email general.enquiries@ekht.nhs.uk or visit the website:
www.ekhut.nhs.uk

5. NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Board - meeting dates

Future dates for the meeting of the Trust Board are:

- 27 January 2010 – Singleton Environment Centre, Wesley School Road, Ashford, TN23 5LW
- 17 March 2010 – Chartham Village Hall, Station Road, Chartham, Canterbury, CT4 7HX
- 19 May 2010 – St Mary's Bay Village Hall, 109 Jefferstone Lane, St Mary's Bay, Romney Marsh, TN29 0SQ
- 21 July 2010 – Swale, venue to be confirmed
- 15 September 2010 – Dover, venue to be confirmed
- 17 November 2010 – Thanet, venue to be confirmed
- 26 January 2011 – Ashford, venue to be confirmed
- 16 March 2011 – Canterbury, venue to be confirmed.

All meetings are held from 9.30am to 1.00pm.

6. Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust Board - meeting dates

Future dates for the meeting of the Trust Board are:

- 28 January 2010
- 25 February 2010
- 25 March 2010.

All meetings will be held in the Board Room, Level 4, Darent Valley Hospital, Darent Valley Hospital, Darenth Wood Road, Dartford, Kent, DA2 8DA

For more information telephone 01322 428100 or visit the website:
http://www.dvh.nhs.uk/page.asp?node=343&sec=Trust_Board_meeting_dates

Consultations

1. Survey for organisations supporting carers

Voluntary Action Maidstone is carrying out a survey for those who offer support to carers in Kent. The independent survey has been commissioned by the Kent Carers Advisory Group. If you would like to take part, the online survey is available at:
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/publications/social-care-and-health/carers-independent-consultation.htm>



If you would like to complete the survey in hard copy format, contact Barbara Hagan, Maidstone Carers Project, 39 - 48 Marsham Street, Maidstone, ME14 1HH, email barbara.hagan@vam-online.org.uk or telephone 01622 685276.

2. Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust Consultation – Single Equality Scheme

The Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust has launched its Single Equality Scheme consultation document and would like to hear your views about the future of equality, diversity and human rights. The Single Equality Scheme consultation

has questions about race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and belief, age, disability and human rights.

Those interested in participating in this survey may feed back their views about equality, diversity and human rights to the Equality and Diversity Team by completing an online questionnaire or sending views direct by email.

If you would like a copy of the questionnaire sent to you, contact Benjamin Aishnine, Equality and Diversity Team, Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, 35 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4AX, telephone 01732 523353, email equalities@kmpt.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.kmpt.nhs.uk/equalitydiversity

3. Invitation to respond: Age Equality in Health and Social Care consultation commencing 23 November 2009 – 15 February 2010

In April 2009 the then Secretary of State for Health asked Sir Ian Carruthers OBE, Chief Executive of NHS South West, and Jan Ormondroyd, Chief Executive of Bristol City Council, to undertake a review of age discrimination and age equality in the health and social care sector.

The review was set up to help health and social care meet the ban on age discrimination, and the new public sector equality duty in the Equality Bill.

The review published its report to the Secretary of State on the 22 October 2009. The consultation paper now invites views on the recommendations and conclusions made that are not directly tied to the legislation.

To accompany this consultation a number of stakeholder engagement events will also be held. Details of these will be published on the website given below in due course.

There will also be a further consultation on a draft Order in 2010.

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a Local Involvement Network

For more information contact Age Consultation, Room 602, Department of Health, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2NS, email ageequality@dh.gsi.gov.uk or visit the website:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_108887

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)