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LINK activities – find out more, get involved

To register your interest or to find out more about any of the activities listed here please contact us at the Kent LINK office.

1. Have you got time to get involved in the LINK?

We are looking for LINK participants to become:

- **'Authorised Visitors'** – to work on LINK projects that require the LINK to use its 'enter and view' powers in NHS and social care residential settings
- **'Mystery Shoppers'** – for LINK projects that may require the testing out of services from a client / user perspective using various scenarios
- **Representatives of the LINK** on NHS or social care groups which require a lay / community perspective and someone to act as an advocate for LINK.

We are also about to start work on the following projects and would like to recruit more volunteers to get involved:

- Learning lessons from Staffordshire and how **Trusts in Kent** have achieved Foundation Trust status
- **Training and supervision of care assistants** and is it sufficient?
- **Stroke Services** – progress in Kent hospitals since the last audit in 2008.

No specialist qualifications or skills are required, just a passionate interest, independence of mind and integrity. Expenses are paid in accordance with the LINK's expenses policy.

If you want to get involved in any area contact the Kent LINK office.

2. Priorities Panel – latest issues

Action by Friday, 2 July 2010

The following issues have been raised recently with the Kent LINK:

1. **Design of disabled toilet at the Renal Unit at Kent and Canterbury Hospital** – which the person raising the issue asserts makes it unusable – is detrimental to the dignity of those needing to use the disabled toilet in this particular department at the hospital.
2. **Sexual Health and HIV health and social care services** – proposal to set up a specific work stream / network within the LINK focused on Sexual Health and HIV to give the local community the opportunity to give feedback and influence future service development.
3. **Community Paediatric Service in West Kent** – waiting times for follow up appointments, particularly in the Dartford and Gravesend locality, are being looked at by West Kent Community Health and the LINK has been asked to gain input from users of the service to establish how this could be improved.
4. **Special measures lists full in some areas** – for patients who exhibit aggression or abusive behaviour towards GPs (meaning that they cannot see their usual GP but have to travel to an acute setting to see the GP within the locality of the Primary Care Trust). The resulting longer journeys have been reported to present a problem to some patients, especially those suffering chronic pain or those with

longstanding conditions.

5. **Children's rights to genital integrity** - the need for a resolve to make sure professionals are correctly informed of the various non-invasive treatments, which the person raising the issue feels is not being addressed. This may be an issue of equality of human rights, and NHS funds and resources may be being used to carry out genital surgery which may create both short term and lifetime suffering.

If you have relevant experiences you would like to share, or if you would like to make a comment on the action that should be taken, contact Sophie Swain, LINK Project Worker, by telephone 07814 427281, email sophie@kmn-ltd.co.uk or contact the Kent LINK office.

3. NHS West Kent commissioning – join the delivery teams

Action: Meeting Wednesday, 23 June 2010

Commissioning is the process by which the NHS buys in services. The Kent LINK is looking for people to join the Commissioning Delivery Teams (CDTs) which are being set up by NHS West Kent. If you are interested in joining the Team there will be an information meeting held on Wednesday, 23 June 2010 from 1.00pm to 2.30pm at Medway Room, NHS West Kent, Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE.

Each team will be responsible for a cluster of services as follows:

<p>Team 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cancers and tumours • End of life care • Blood disorders • Maternity • Neonatal conditions 	<p>Team 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulatory • Respiratory • Endocrine 	<p>Team 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dental • Eye / vision • Hearing • Skin • Infectious diseases • Gastro-intestinal system • Genito-urinary system • Healthy individuals (primary prevention)
<p>Team 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma and injuries • Musculo-skeletal • Neurology • Adverse effects of poisoning 	<p>Team 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health • Learning disabilities • Social care • Healthy individuals (increasing independence) 	

If you want to get involved contact Chris Bostock, LINK Development Worker, telephone 07976 596410, email chris@kmn-ltd.co.uk or contact the Kent LINK office.

4. Quality Accounts – annual statements for major hospitals

At the end of June major hospitals in Kent, together with those that provide mental health and ambulance services, will publish their annual quality statements, which are called Quality Accounts. Working with Canterbury Christ Church University, LINK participants have been speaking with users and carers with recent experience of these services to provide an independent view on these self-declarations.

The LINK's statement will be incorporated within each Trust's declaration.

If you are a registered LINK participant and want to contribute to the LINK's continuing work

with Canterbury Christ Church University on next year's Quality Accounts contact Sophie Swain, LINK Project Worker, telephone 07814 427281, email sophie@kmn-ltd.co.uk or contact the Kent LINK office.

5. Hygiene, Disinfection and Patient Experience in Hospitals Project

This report was presented to the Kent LINK's Annual Meeting on 26 May 2010 and Medway LINK's Annual Meeting on 9 June 2010.

The project, jointly undertaken by both Kent and Medway LINKs, involved volunteers visiting eight hospitals several times between September 2009 and March 2010. In total 1,353 observations were made of the use of alcohol dispensers and 145 swab samples were taken from wards. The bacteria testing showed that at key places, including nurses' stations, bathrooms and toilets and patients' bedsides, contamination was high enough to pose a risk to patient health.

The report shows the hand hygiene observations, swab results and patient accounts for each hospital visited along with a series of recommendations. The recommendations have been put formally to the NHS Trusts concerned to establish how these are to be implemented.

The full report, as well as the summary report, can be accessed on the Kent LINK and Medway LINK's websites at the links below:

www.thekentlink.co.uk/hygiene-disinfection-and-patient-experience-in-hospitals-report.html
www.themedwaylink.org.uk/index.php?q=640

To obtain a hard copy of the report, contact the Kent LINK office.

6. Community Engagement Event: Thanet – Thursday, 29 July 2010

Mark this date in your diary – we are currently finalising plans for this event and will issue full details shortly.

Notices – for information or action

If you are interested in any of the subjects covered in this section of the bulletin, please contact the agencies listed directly.

1. 'Be Our Buddy' – children and young people with Autism in Shepway

Action: volunteer to be a friend

'Be Our Buddy' is a befriending service for children and young people aged between 10 and 18 years of age (school years 6 – 13) who live in the Shepway area and who are on the Autistic Spectrum, have Aspergers or have social communication difficulties.

The project will be recruiting, supporting and training volunteers aged primarily between 16 -25 to befriend the young people and to encourage them to spend up to four hours a fortnight with them, accessing mainstream activities / events and facilities.

Through the delivery of this project, it is hoped to improve the young people's confidence, self esteem, relationships between them and their peers, see an improvement in their social skills, enable them to have new experiences and overall to improve their ability to access the community independently.

If you would like to take part as a volunteer in this new and exciting befriending project in Shepway, contact the Shepway Befriending Co-ordinator for further information on 07702 502408 or alternatively contact Rachel Webster, Voluntary Action Within Kent, 19 Monson Road, Tunbridge Wells, TN1 1LS, telephone 01892 530330, email rachel.webster@vawk.org.uk or visit the website: www.vawk.org.uk

2. Foundation Trust Roadshow – Focus on Pain

Event: Tuesday, 22 June 2010

The East Kent Hospitals NHS University Foundation Trust Roadshow will be taking place on Tuesday, 22 June 2010 from 1.00pm to 4.30pm at the Burlington Hotel, Earls Avenue, Folkestone, CT20 2HR. Health professionals will be on hand to talk about chronic pain issues, services and pain management with a presentation at 2.00pm.

For more information contact Lynda Pearce, Trust Offices, East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother Hospital, St Peters Road, Margate, CT9 4AN, telephone 01843 235053, email foundationtrust@ekht.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/home-page/for-members/

3. NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent - Board Meeting dates

Event: Thursday, 29 July 2010

The next Board Meeting of NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Community Services will be held on Thursday, 29 July 2010. The venue will be Whitstable Umbrella Community Centre, St Mary's Hall, Oxford Street, Whitstable, CT5 1DD.

The showcase event will begin at 11.00am followed by a question and answer session at 1.00pm and the Board Meeting starting at 2.00pm.

For more information contact Pauline Gardiner, Corporate Services Manager, NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Community Services, Trinity House, Eureka Park, 110-120 Upper Pemberton, Kennington, Ashford, TN25 4AZ, telephone 01233 667700, email pauline.gardiner@eastcoastkent.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.eckcommunityservices.nhs.uk

4. Carers Week 2010, NHS West Kent – “Do you look after someone?”

NHS West Kent is marking Carers Week 2010, which began on Monday, 14 June 2010, by asking a simple question – do you look after someone?

The crucial role of carers is increasingly recognised by government and society, but sometimes it isn't recognised by the people who matter most – the carers themselves. Up to one in ten people are estimated to be a carer, looking after someone who couldn't manage on their own, for example if they have a disability, are ill, frail or an addict.

Assistance will be given to any carer who wants to find out what support might be available. For more information contact Caroline Burrington, NHS West Kent, Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE, telephone 01732 375200, email caroline.burrington@wkpct.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.westkentpct.nhs.uk

5. Health Checks for Carers in Ashford

'Health Checks for Carers' was set up in 2008 by Ashford Carers, funded by the Primary Care Trust.

The health checks give carers the opportunity to have their blood pressure checked, enabling them to talk about their situation; whether they are feeling overstretched, eating sensibly, sleeping well and having time to relax. Topics also covered are drinking habits, smoking, weight, the future and their general state of mind and wellbeing, identifying health worries before they become serious.

Health checks are now to be taken into the business sector as many companies employ staff who also have a caring role.

For more information contact Keeley Taylor, Carers Support, Norman House, Beaver Business Park, Beaver Road, Ashford, TN23 7SH, telephone 01233 646709, email services@carers-ashford.org.uk or visit the website: www.carers-ashford.org.uk

6. Thousands more NHS dental appointments in Maidstone and Aylesford

NHS West Kent has opened two new surgeries offering around 12,000 more patients in Maidstone and Aylesford the opportunity to see an NHS dentist.

Maidstone Dental Centre and The Willows in Aylesford are part of a £2.6million investment made by NHS West Kent. This means 30,000 more patients across West Kent will have access to NHS dentistry, with the placement of nine new dental contracts across the area.

For more information contact Customer Services, NHS West Kent, Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE, telephone 0800 0 850 850, email customer.services@wkpct.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.westkentpct.nhs.uk

7. HACO – helping African communities affected by HIV

Health Action Charity Organisation (HACO) provides a unique one-stop peer support centre for people from the African community infected / affected by HIV. They have recently been registered by the Care Quality Commission to deliver domiciliary care to people living in their home in Medway and Kent. They provide a comprehensive Health Guide with valuable health information and tools for managing your health.

HACO say: "Dealing with a medical condition is often difficult. Connecting with others who are going through the same thing can make a world of difference. HACO is a place where you can make those connections."

For more information contact Tina Murphy, HACO, 1b Northgate, Rochester, ME1 1LS,

telephone 01634 844044, email info@healthaction.co.uk or visit the website: www.healthaction.co.uk

8. Grants for volunteer community groups

Grassroots Grants has benefited well over 350 volunteer led community groups across Kent and Medway since August 2008 and are now in their final year.

Groups with income below £30,000 per annum, particularly those that may not have applied for funding previously, can get grants of up to £5,000. Application forms are straightforward and there are no deadlines for submitting them. There will be a very quick turnaround time once a completed bid is received, but all Grassroots Grants must be spent and accounted for by 31 March 2011.

Awards can be used for many purposes which might include:

- purchase of equipment
- revenue costs up to 31 March 2011
- small refurbishment or access projects.

Groups that apply need to:

- have been active for a year
- have annual income of less than £30,000
- be able to run activities that benefit their community.

For an application pack or more details about the fund, email admin@kentcf.org.uk or telephone 01303 814500. Help with the completion of application forms is available.

For information in East Kent contact John Jackson by email John.Jackson@kentcf.org.uk or telephone 01303 815157 or 07812 555023.

For information in West Kent and Medway contact Manjit Sohal by email manjit@kentcf.org.uk or telephone 07812 555024.

9. Dementia website launched

On 18 May 2010 the new Dementia Support website, which is described as 'an all-age dementia information resource for Kent and Medway', went live. The website can be accessed at: www.dementiawebkentandmedway.org.uk

The site gives up to the minute information on resources and support networks available within Kent and Medway. Alongside the 24 hour helpline (0845 604 4391) it should help carers and those living with dementia.

For more information contact Elizabeth Pilgrim, Kent and Medway Dementia Web, The Guideposts Trust, c/o Alzheimer's and Dementia Support Services, Dene Holm House Basement, Dene Holm Road, Northfleet, Gravesend, DA11 8JY, telephone 01474 533 990, email epilgrim@guidepoststrust.org.uk or visit the website: www.dementiawebkentandmedway.org.uk

10. Tunbridge Wells District Partnership Groups – for people with learning difficulties

The District Partnership Groups (DPGs) are for people with moderate or severe learning difficulties, their families and friends, and professionals who come into contact with people with learning difficulties.

The Tunbridge Wells DPG is now going to meet twice a year as a group to exchange information and perhaps have some fun. Also, a newsletter will be sent out every other month with information which it is hoped will be of interest.

If you have something which you think will be of interest to the Group or wish to receive their newsletters, contact Gillian Douglass, Carers First, 192 High Street, Tonbridge, TN9 1BE, email Gillian.douglass@carersfirst.org.uk or telephone 01732 357555.

11. New General Medical Council guidance launched on end of life treatment and care

The General Medical Council (GMC) has launched new guidance 'Treatment and care towards the end of life: good practice in decision making' which comes into effect on Thursday, 1 July 2010.

The key purpose of the guidance is to help doctors navigate the complex issues often raised in such a complicated and sensitive area of health care. Equality, dignity and respect for the individual are key themes in the guidance. It also emphasises that improving communication between all concerned is vital to providing good care towards the end of life.

You can view the guidance and the supporting materials at: www.gmc-uk.org/end_of_life_care. If you would like a hard copy of the document, email publications@gmc-uk.org or telephone 0161 923 6602.

For more information contact Kerstin Doe, General Medical Council, Regents Place, 350 Euston Road, London, NW1 3JN, telephone 020 7189 5314, email KDoe@gmc-uk.org or visit the website: www.gmc-uk.org/end_of_life_care

12. Royal College of Radiologists – Clinical Oncology Patient Liaison Group

The Royal College of Radiologists has a Clinical Oncology Patient Liaison Group (COPLG) which aims to:

- provide patient and public perspectives to assist in improving services at a national and local level
- provide opportunities for patient and public input into Royal College of Radiologists work programmes
- promote participation in oncology treatment decision making
- prepare and review publications
- contribute to training programmes for oncologists.

The group comprises:

- eight lay members for the UK who are or have been cancer patients or carers
- up to four clinical oncologists
- the Dean of the Faculty of Clinical Oncology
- a radiographer.

For more information contact Sol Mead, Royal College of Radiologists, 38 Portland Place, London, W18 1JQ, telephone 020 7636 4432, email enquiries@rcr.ac.uk or visit the website: www.rcr.ac.uk/coplq

13. Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust Registration

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) announced in May that it has removed two conditions placed on the registration of Kent and Medway. The conditions both related to safeguarding vulnerable people who use services and the Trust has provided evidence to show that they are now compliant.

In its assessment of Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, the CQC had been concerned with the Trust's implementation of the Mental Capacity Act.

The Trust's informal leave policy promoted the detention of informal patients without any legal framework for the first three days of their in-patient care.

During the site visits the CQC spoke to people using the Trust's services and to staff. The visits provided clear evidence that a high percentage of staff have been trained since the end of March and that this has had a positive impact on the experience of patients.

For more information contact Jo Holmes, Regional Communications Manager – London and South East, Care Quality Commission, Finsbury Tower, 103-105 Bunhill Row, London, EC1Y 8TG, telephone 020 7448 9235, email jo.holmes@cqc.org.uk or visit the website: www.cqc.org.uk/kentandmedway

14. New Department of Health team announced

Secretary of State for Health

- The Rt Hon Andrew Lansley CBE MP (Con)

Minister of State

- Paul Burstow MP (Lib Dem)
- Simon Burns MP (Con)

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

- Anne Milton MP (Con)
- Earl Howe (Con)

Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

- The Rt Hon Eric Pickles, MP

Minister of State

- Greg Clark, MP

- Grant Shapps, MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

- Andrew Stunell, OBE, MP
- Bob Neill MP
- Baroness Hanham, CBE

Ministerial Portfolios to date:-

- Simon Burns MP - Minister of State for Health, portfolio includes:
 - Legislation
 - NHS Performance
 - Health Services
 - Reconfiguration of Services
 - Patient Safety
 - Application of Quality Regulation
 - NHS Workforce
 - Mixed Sex Accommodation
 - Connecting for Health
- Paul Burstow MP - Minister of State for Care Services, portfolio includes:
 - Long Term Care Reform
 - Adult Social Care
 - Carers
 - Personal Health Budgets
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
 - End of Life Care
 - Long Term Conditions, including cancer and diabetes
 - Dementia
 - Mental Health
 - Physical Disabilities
 - Autism
 - Learning Disabilities
- Anne Milton MP - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health, portfolio includes:
 - Public Health, including sexual health, tobacco, drugs and alcohol
 - Vaccination and Immunisation
 - Blood and Transplants
 - Fertility and Embryology
 - Fluoridation
 - Food, diet and nutrition
 - Children's Health
 - Maternity Services
 - Nursing and Midwifery
 - Health Visiting
 - Professional Regulation
 - Medical Education and Training
- Earl Howe - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Quality (Lords), portfolio includes:
 - NHS Constitution
 - NHS Commissioning Reform

- Primary Care
- Dentistry
- Medicines, Pharmacy and Industry
- National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE)
- Research and Development
- Innovation
- Finance
- Review of Arm's Length Bodies

Consultations – have your say

1. GP Choice – consultation deadline extended

Action by: Friday, 2 July 2010

A public consultation is underway looking at how to give patients greater choice of which GP practice they register with. The consultation is seeking views on the various options for enabling patients to register with the GP practice that best meets their needs, whether that is a practice near their work, or simply a different practice near their home that offers more services or longer opening hours.

The deadline for comments has been extended until Friday, 2 July 2010.

For more information contact Hannah Price, Communications and Citizen Engagement Directorate, NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent, Suite 7, Wilson House, Chestfield, Whitstable, CT5 3QT, telephone 01227 282968, email Hannah.price@eastcoastkent.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.easternandcoastalkent.nhs.uk/get-involved/consultations-and-surveys/your-gp-your-choice-your-say/

2. Single Equality Scheme – consultation extended

Action by: Friday, 18 June 2010

The new deadline for this consultation is Friday, 18 June 2010. The Citizen Engagement and Equality Diversity Human Rights teams are currently seeking patient and public input on the Single Equality Scheme.

The UK today is a diverse and multicultural society. The NHS needs to know more about the communities it serves at a local level in order to do the best possible job of meeting the health care needs of everyone.

For more information visit the following website: www.easternandcoastalkent.nhs.uk/get-involved/consultations-and-surveys/single-equality-scheme/

If you or your community group would like to be part of a focus group, contact Sally Denley, Mental Health Practitioner, NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent, Suite 7, Wilson House, John Wilson Business Park, Chesterfield, Whitstable, CT5 3QT, telephone 01227 282967, email Sally.denley@eastcoastkent.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.easternandcoastalkent.nhs.uk

3. Disability needs assessment in Canterbury – could win you £50!

Action by: Saturday, 31 July 2010

- Are you aged between 18 and 60 years of age?
- Do you have a disability?
- Are you living independently?
- Do you live in the Canterbury district?

If so, Canterbury District Council would like to hear from you. The Council are conducting a survey to find out the needs of people in the area who have a disability to help them improve their services for you.

The survey is available online at: www.canterbury.gov.uk/survey.cfm?file=mcd_disability. The survey may also be completed in hard copy format or can be completed over the telephone. It is also available in Braille, large print, audio tape or in other languages.

If you return the completed questionnaire by Saturday, 31 July 2010 you will be entered into a free prize draw.

For more information contact either:

- Helen Carter: email helen.carter@canterbury.gov.uk or telephone 01227 862 518
- Gemma Stevens: e-mail gemma.stevens@canterbury.gov.uk or telephone 01227 862 521.

Written correspondence may be sent to Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury, CT1 1YW or visit the website: www.canterbury.gov.uk

4. Appeals against Deal Pharmacy applications

Action by: Friday, 25 June 2010

Appeals have been submitted to the NHS Litigation Authority for applications SHA/15730 – Apotek Ltd and SHA/15731 – Paydens Ltd. Apotek Ltd applied for inclusion in the pharmaceutical list in the vicinity of Pilots Avenue and Davis Avenue, Deal. Paydens Ltd applied for preliminary consent to change premises from 17 Queen Street to the new Health Centre in St Richards Road, Deal.

If you would like to make comments on these appeals, contact the Appeal Unit directly before Friday, 25 June 2010.

For more information contact Abby Richards, NHS Litigation Authority, Family Health Services Appeal Unit, 30 Victoria Avenue, Harrogate, HG1 5PR or telephone 01423 530280.

5. Margate Pharmacy – additional information

Action by: Wednesday, 30 June 2010

Additional information regarding the services to be provided by Rowlands Pharmacy has been received. This information states that the pharmacy currently, and will continue to provide, clinical governance, electronic prescribing service and compliance aids required under the Disability Discrimination Act, disposal of unwanted medicines, promotion of healthy lifestyles, sign-posting patients to other NHS services, stop smoking, support for

self care and medicines use reviews.

It also states that the proposed opening times will be from 9.00am to 6.00pm – Monday to Friday.

If you would like to make comments on this application or amend any comments you have already submitted, please do so by Wednesday, 30 June 2010 to Kent Primary Care Agency.

For more information contact Sheilagh Jeffery, Pharmacy Contracts Manager, Kent Primary Care Agency, 11 Station Road, Maidstone, ME14 1QH, telephone 01622 655133, email sheilagh.jeffery@kpcn.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.kentandmedway.nhs.uk/welcome/nhs-organisations/primary-care-agency/?locale=en

6. Pharmacy relocation – Ramsgate

Action by Friday, 18 June 2010

Kent Primary Care Agency has received an application from S G Court Ltd to relocate their pharmacy to 8 Grange Road, Ramsgate. Comments are invited to the Kent Primary Care Agency by Friday, 18 June 2010.

For more information or to register your views, contact Debra Bell, Pharmacy Contracts Office, Kent Primary Care Agency, 11 Station Road, Maidstone, ME14 1QH, telephone 01622 655036, email Debbie.bell@kpcn.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.kentandmedway.nhs.uk/welcom/nhs-organisations/primary-care-agency

Expenses

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

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)