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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 contact the Kent LINK office.

### 1 NHS West Kent Responds to LINK's Representations

**Action: Volunteers needed**

In the light of LINK and other representations NHS West Kent has shelved plans to prevent consultant to consultant referrals. This was one of a number of measures planned by the NHS in the area to make financial savings. However, other measures are going ahead which include, for example:

- suspending routine planned surgery for a period to be determined
- stopping non-GP primary care referrals, with immediate effect, with the exception of Community Ophthalmology. This means that nurses and allied health professionals must get a GP to refer on their behalf
- cessation, with immediate effect, of surgical interventions for obesity, IVF treatment and gender reassignment.

The LINK's comments and the full response from NHS West Kent can be found on the LINK website. The LINK's group of volunteers in West Kent are very active in working with the NHS over these changes and if you want to contribute to these discussions contact Clive Brock by email [clive@kentlink.org](mailto:clive@kentlink.org) or telephone 07976 596410.

The LINK's next meeting of its West Kent Group is being held on Thursday, 27 January 2011, from 10.00am to 12.00noon at The Angel Centre, Angel Lane, Tonbridge, TN9 1SF. We welcome new attendees.

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### 2 LINK Volunteers Needed for Profile Raising Project

**Action: Volunteers needed**

The Kent LINK is about to launch a project to look at the LINK's 'First Point of Contact' role within Gateways and other community settings. Volunteers are needed to join the project group and help formulate a plan to increase the effectiveness of the LINK as a signposting and facilitating agency within community settings. We will also be looking for ideas on how we can raise the profile of the LINK across the county in preparation for the move towards the formation of HealthWatch.

For more information or if you are interested in becoming a part of the Project Group, contact Anthony Haynes by email [Anthony@kentlink.org](mailto:Anthony@kentlink.org) or telephone 07875 260742 / 01303 297050.

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### 3 Dementia Strategy Group – Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust

**Action: Volunteer needed**

The LINK has been invited to send a representative to contribute to the Trust's newly established Dementia Strategy Group.

The Group will focus on helping to improve the standards of care for patients with dementia, promoting the needs of carers and seeking to achieve improvements in services through early patient, carer and family involvement. It will use national guidance such as the National Dementia Strategy to challenge the organisation and improve the outcomes of care for patients with dementia. The group also aims to improve the organisation's understanding of dementia, promote early diagnosis and develop services.

The next meeting is being held at 9.30am on Wednesday, 9 February 2011 in Maidstone. Full Terms of Reference are available.

If you are a LINK participant and have an interest in such services and want to get involved, contact Cate Boland by email [cate@kentlink.org](mailto:cate@kentlink.org) or telephone 01303 297050 / 07976 596709.

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#### **4 Volunteers Required – Patient Information Group**

**Action: Volunteers needed**

The LINK is looking for people with diverse communication needs, who would like to take part in a Patient Information Group. You will receive information about the group's work and out-of-pocket expenses.

The main remit of the Patient Information Group will be to review patient information produced by Community Services. The Group will be responsible for ensuring that patient information is easily understood, clear and accessible, and that correct approval processes have been followed. The Group will meet monthly on the third Tuesday of the month, usually from 10.30am to 12.30pm. The meeting venue will rotate being held in Ashford, Dover or Sittingbourne.

The successful participant will need sufficient time to read papers and prepare for these meetings. Appropriate training and support will be given to ensure you are able to participate fully. Terms of Reference are available for this group. The LINK representative joining this group will be expected to feed back to the LINK and liaise with other interested LINK participants for which support would be given.

We would especially like to hear from LINK participants who have not yet had the opportunity to get involved with the work of the LINK to date.

For more information contact Cate Boland by email [cate@kentlink.org](mailto:cate@kentlink.org) or telephone 01303 297050 / 07976 596709.

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#### **5 Priorities Panel – Latest Issues**

**Action by: Wednesday, 26 January 2011**

The following issues have been raised with the Kent LINK:

1. Medway and Tunbridge Wells area regarding poor care of an elderly patient.
2. Lack of awareness by staff in audiology departments when communicating with people who have a hearing impairment. No staff on duty trained in British Sign Language (BSL).

3. Lack of information to take away about Sensory / Deaf Services, or any other support methods for those with a hearing loss. This is essential when a hearing loss is diagnosed.

If you have experience of any of these issues which you would like to share, or if you would like to make a comment on the action that should be taken by the LINK, contact Deborah Gibbons by email [deborah@kentlink.org](mailto:deborah@kentlink.org) or telephone 07875 286999.

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## **6 New Report: 'LINKs and CQC – Working to Improve Care'**

### ***Information***

This report provides an update on how the Care Quality Commission (CQC) is working with LINKs across the country, bringing together information from the national LINKs development project. This is the first of a series of reports about the relationship between LINKs and the CQC and can be accessed at: [www.cqc.org.uk/localvoices](http://www.cqc.org.uk/localvoices)

There are a limited number of hard copy documents, including Easy Read versions, which may be obtained by contacting the Folkestone Office on 01303 297050.

For more information contact Lucy Hamer, CQC National Correspondence, Citygate, Gallowgate, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 4PA, telephone 03000 616161, email [involvement.EDHR@cqc.org.uk](mailto:involvement.EDHR@cqc.org.uk) or visit the website: [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

***Further enquiries relating to the above information can be addressed to Kent LINK, Unit 24, Folkestone Enterprise Centre, Shearway Business Park, Shearway Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 4RH, email [info@kentlink.org](mailto:info@kentlink.org) or telephone 01303 297050.***

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## **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 'Pathfinder' GP Practices to Test New Commissioning Arrangements**

#### ***Information***

The Government has released details of 52 groups of GP practices who will manage budgets and commission health care for their patients. These groups, the 'pathfinders', will test out the new commissioning arrangements that will operate nationally from April 2013. These 52 GP practice groups comprise 1,860 practices, covering 12.8 million patients.

One of these pathfinder groups is in Kent: the Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley group that covers 34 practices and manages the health care of 240,000 patients.

For more information contact the Customer Service Centre, Department of Health, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2NS, telephone 0207 210 4850 or visit the website: [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Aboutus/Features/DH\\_122359](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Aboutus/Features/DH_122359)

## **2 Review of Maternity Services – East Kent**

### ***Information***

Maternity services across East Kent are to be reviewed to ensure the rising number of mothers-to-be continue to receive safe, high quality care and patient choice.

The joint review by the hospital trust (East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust), the PCT (NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent) and GPs will begin in January and run until May 2011.

Patients and the public across East Kent will be invited to give their views to ensure the needs of all women and their families are continuing to be met.

The review was agreed by the hospital trust's Board and follows a routine analysis of midwifery services. The Trust is up to full strength with midwifery numbers but anticipated changes may mean extra staff are needed to cover services.

Recent temporary staff shortages have meant that the Dover Birthing Centre has been closed for births but open for all other services. This unit will open again in January but the Canterbury birthing centre will now suspend its birthing services in January. It will remain open for all other services from 9.00am to 5.00pm, seven days a week.

For more information contact Julia Rogers, NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent, Brook House, Block C, John Wilson Business Park, Whitstable, CT5 3QT, telephone 01227 791163, email [communications@eastcoastkent.nhs.uk](mailto:communications@eastcoastkent.nhs.uk) or visit the website: [www.easternandcoastalkent.nhs.uk/](http://www.easternandcoastalkent.nhs.uk/)

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## **3 Revamp of Women and Children's Services – South West Kent**

### ***Information***

The Secretary of State for Health has given further backing to the plans to revamp women and children's services in South West Kent.

Andrew Lansley wrote to NHS West Kent on 22 December 2010 agreeing that the work to centralise consultant-led maternity services and inpatient paediatric services at the new Pembury Hospital should go ahead.

For more information contact Samantha Colyer, NHS West Kent, Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE, telephone, 01732 375200, email [samantha.colyer@wkpct.nhs.uk](mailto:samantha.colyer@wkpct.nhs.uk) or visit the website: [www.westkentpct.nhs.uk](http://www.westkentpct.nhs.uk)

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## **4 Deaf Children's Award for West Kent Audiology Service**

### ***Information***

The West Kent Audiology Team, which provides care to children, including new-born screening, has been presented with a Special Recognition Award by the Kent Deaf Children's Society for its exceptional standard of support towards young deaf people and their families.

Only two schools or organisations each year are selected to receive the honour.

For more information contact Jane O'Rourke, NHS West Kent, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE or email [Jane.ORourke@wkpct.nhs.uk](mailto:Jane.ORourke@wkpct.nhs.uk)

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## **5 Assessment Panel Members Required – NHS West Kent**

### ***Action – Volunteers required***

NHS West Kent is looking for three members of the public to help assess candidates for the role of Chief Executive for Kent Community Health NHS Trust (the new organisation which is being formed from the merger of West and East Kent Community Services).

An assessment day will be held on either Monday, 31 January or Wednesday, 2 February 2011 – you will need to be available all day (venue still to be confirmed). Details are still being finalised, but it is envisaged that part of the assessment group will be formed of about 3 - 5 people with a common theme.

The short listed candidates will be expected to present briefly on a specific relevant topic and there will then follow a discussion. Afterwards, facilitators will debrief the panel and ask a number of questions about the performance of the candidates that will then provide input to the final interview panel members.

If you would like more information or would like to submit your interest in taking part in the assessment, contact Emma Cain, NHS West Kent, Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE, telephone 01732 375287, email [emma.cain@wkpct.nhs.uk](mailto:emma.cain@wkpct.nhs.uk) or visit the website: [www.westkentpct.nhs.uk/Have\\_Your\\_Say](http://www.westkentpct.nhs.uk/Have_Your_Say)

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## **6 Practice Based Commissioning – NHS West Kent**

### ***Information***

Practice Based Commissioning (PBC) is about engaging practices and other primary care professionals in the commissioning of services. PBC groups will be the starting point for the GP consortia. It looks likely that in West Kent there will be three consortia:

- Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley (DGS) – maintaining its current form
- Maidstone and Malling
- South West Kent – incorporating Invicta, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and Weald and some / all of Sevenoaks.

This will be subject to ratification through election by local GPs. DGS and Maidstone and Malling have applied to become pathfinder consortia from April 2011. The pathfinder programme has been established by the Department of Health and will identify and support groups of practices who are keen to make faster progress in taking on the roles set out in the White Paper.

For more information contact Emma Cain, NHS West Kent, Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE, telephone 01732 375287, email [emma.cain@wkpct.nhs.uk](mailto:emma.cain@wkpct.nhs.uk) or visit the website: [www.westkentpct.nhs.uk](http://www.westkentpct.nhs.uk)

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## 7 Healthy Passport Campaign – NHS West Kent

### **Information**

This exciting campaign will promote a healthy passport initiative available to everyone in West Kent. People will be issued a passport upon application and encouraged to join for their own health, for people they care about, or as teams of friends and work colleagues.

Participants will be signposted to activities available in their local community. With each completed activity they will receive stamps in their passport, building points to represent 'distance' travelled to exotic locations. Incentives such as discount retail vouchers will be available at various stages of achievement.

Each participant will be supported and encouraged however small their steps to better health may be. Marion Gibbon, Consultant in Public Health for NHS West Kent said: "The Change4Life programme offers great opportunities for people to look at changes they can make to be healthier. Small changes can lead to a big difference."

For more information contact Emma Cain, NHS West Kent, Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE, telephone 01732 375287, email [emma.cain@wkpct.nhs.uk](mailto:emma.cain@wkpct.nhs.uk) or visit the website: [www.westkentpct.nhs.uk](http://www.westkentpct.nhs.uk)

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## 8 Free Disability Training from Pie Factory Music Group – West Kent

### **Action: Free training**

Pie Factory Music Group are offering free disability training sessions to any voluntary or third sector individuals / organisations working with young people in West Kent.

This is an opportunity to access high-quality, interactive training which will help to equip organisations to be accessible to all young people including those with disabilities.

Venues are being confirmed but all sessions will be in the West Kent area as follows:

- Thursday, 20 January 2011 – Disability awareness (10.00am – 4.00pm)
- Monday, 31 January 2011:
  - 10.00am – Focus on visual impairments
  - 1.30pm – Focus on hidden disabilities
- Tuesday, 8 February 2011:
  - 10.00am – How the family works
  - 1.30pm – Focus on Autism
- Monday, 21 February 2011 – Disability awareness (10.00am – 4.00pm)
- Friday, 4 March 2011:
  - 10.00am – How to plan an inclusive event
  - 1.30pm – Focus on limited mobility.

For more information contact Steph Kailou, Pie Factory Music Group, 67a Chapel Road, Ramsgate, CT11 0BS, telephone 01843 596777 or visit the websites: [www.piefactorymusic.com](http://www.piefactorymusic.com) or [www.engagingdisabilities.org.uk/training](http://www.engagingdisabilities.org.uk/training)

## 9 Caring Confidently in Kent – Support Workshops for Carers

### **Action: Free workshops**

Free workshops have been planned throughout Kent in 2011. All sessions will start at 10.00am and finish at 1.00pm (3 hours).

Caring Confidently in Kent is a new three week programme aimed at helping carers improve their lives and the person they care for. The course aims to raise confidence in your caring role and help you take better care of yourself. It also aims to put people in contact with other carers who like you would like to share their knowledge and experiences and maybe build a new network of friends.

Dates and locations for the Caring Confidently in Kent Support Workshops are as follows:

- Maidstone: 18 and 25 January
- Tonbridge: 19 and 26 January
- Gravesend: 20, 27 January and 3 February
- Medway: 21 and 28 January
- Sittingbourne: 1, 8 and 15 February
- Dover: 2, 9 and 16 February
- Dartford: 10, 17 and 24 February
- Ashford: 4, 11 and 18 February
- Maidstone: 24 February, 3 and 10 March
- Tonbridge Wells: 1, 8 and 15 March
- Canterbury: 2, 9 and 16 March
- Thanet: 3, 10 and 17 March
- Folkestone: 4, 11 and 18 March
- Gravesend: 15, 22 and 29 March
- Medway: 16, 23 and 30 March.

For more information contact Helen Appleton, telephone 01474 330350 or email [caringconfidently@btinternet.com](mailto:caringconfidently@btinternet.com)

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## 10 VoiceAbility for People with Learning Disabilities

### **Information: Name change**

From 1 December 2010, Advocacy Partners Speaking Up became VoiceAbility.

The group are very proud of their new name and will work on issues that are really important to them, working towards a society where:

- everyone's voice and views can be heard loudly and clearly
- people's rights are understood and respected
- each of us has the ability to lead a full and enjoyable life.

If you would like easy read information or to know more, contact Chérie Reid, 39 - 48 Marsham Street, Maidstone, ME14 1HH, telephone 0203 355 7141, email [cherie.reid@voiceability.org](mailto:cherie.reid@voiceability.org) or visit the website: [www.voiceability.org/](http://www.voiceability.org/)

## **11 Dementia Declaration Launched**

### **Information**

The Department of Health (DH) with the Alzheimer's Society has launched the National Dementia Declaration, which outlines seven outcomes people with dementia and their carers say they would like to see in their lives. This includes having personal choice, having support to help them live their life and living in an enabling and supportive environment.

It brings together a group of 44 organisations to form the largest ever united front against dementia.

The DH has identified four objectives for driving forward and securing improvements in dementia care, which are:

- good-quality early diagnosis and intervention for all
- improved quality of care in general hospitals
- living well with dementia in care homes
- reduced use of anti-psychotic medication.

For more information contact Wendy Alleway, NHS Medway, Fifty Pembroke Court, Chatham Maritime, Chatham, ME4 4EL or email [Wendy.Alleway@medwaypct.nhs.uk](mailto:Wendy.Alleway@medwaypct.nhs.uk)

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## **12 Government Publishes New Compact with 'Civil Society Organisations'**

### **Information**

The Cabinet Office has published a revised Compact that sets out the framework for the relationship between Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Government. CSOs include voluntary and community organisations, charities and social enterprises. The Government seeks to establish a 'vibrant and robust' relationship with CSOs – and seeks to support and encourage CSOs in their roles of empowering local people, social action, building capability and the design and delivery of public services.

The Compact lists five Commitments that aim to achieve:

- a strong, diverse and independent civil society
- effective and transparent design and development of policies
- responsive and high quality services
- clear arrangements for managing changes to programmes and services
- an equal and fair society.

For more information contact Compact Voice, Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street, London, N1 9RL, telephone 0207 520 2451, email [compact@compactvoice.org.uk](mailto:compact@compactvoice.org.uk) or visit the website: [www.compactvoice.org.uk](http://www.compactvoice.org.uk)

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# Consultations – have your say

## 1 The Future of Health and Social Care – Dover Events

### **Action: Events**

If you have an interest in the future of health and social care, then Kent Adult Social Services and the NHS want to hear your views.

You are invited to attend an event at St Mary's Parish Centre, Dieu Stone Lane, Dover, CT16 1BY from 10.00am to 1.00pm on:

- Friday, 28 January 2011, or
- Thursday, 3 March 2011.

Refreshments and a light lunch will be provided.

For more information contact Kirstie Willerton, Customer Care Manager – East Kent, Kent Adult Social Services, Brook House, Reeves Way, John Wilson Business Park, Whitstable, CT5 3SS, email [cstempek@kent.gov.uk](mailto:cstempek@kent.gov.uk) or telephone 0300 3335920.

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## 2 NHS West Kent – White Paper Discussion Events

### **Action: Events**

NHS West Kent will be holding two meetings to discuss the White Paper and what is changing in West Kent. The meeting dates are:

- Tuesday, 25 January 2011 from 5.00pm to 7.00pm at Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE
- Wednesday, 2 February 2011 from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE.

For more information contact Emma Cain, NHS West Kent, Wharf House, Medway Wharf Road, Tonbridge, TN9 1RE, email [emma.cain@wkpct.nhs.uk](mailto:emma.cain@wkpct.nhs.uk) or telephone 01732 375287.

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## 3 Public Engagement Strategy for East Kent – Comments Welcomed

### **Action: Consultation – respond by 4 February 2011**

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust (EKHUFT) is aiming to surpass its statutory obligations in engaging with patients and local communities. Their draft patient, public engagement and experience strategy is designed to help them achieve this aim and ensure they 'put patients first' in everything they do. They welcome your comments on any aspect of this draft strategy. Your comments will help them to consider things they may have missed or rethink some of their plans.

A copy of the strategy can be found on the website at: [www.thekentlink.co.uk/assets/files/Publications/814a\\_Patient\\_Experience\\_PPE\\_Strategy.pdf](http://www.thekentlink.co.uk/assets/files/Publications/814a_Patient_Experience_PPE_Strategy.pdf)

Every comment will be considered but must be received before Friday, 4 February 2011.

For hard copy documents or to respond, contact Kunle Thomas, Trust Offices (1st Floor),

East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust, Kent & Canterbury Hospital,  
Ethelbert Road, Canterbury, CT1 3NG, telephone 01227 766877, email  
Kunle.Thomas@ekht.nhs.uk or visit the website: [www.ekhft.nhs.uk](http://www.ekhft.nhs.uk)

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## **Expenses**

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

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## **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@kentlink.org](mailto:info@kentlink.org)

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm

(Answerphone available out of hours)