



Draft memorandum of understanding between NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent and Kent LINK

Background

NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent and the Kent LINK recognise a mutually beneficial working relationship and as such set out this memorandum of understanding to support effective joint working.

The Kent LINK

Kent LINK is an independent body set up in statute through the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Its remit is to:

- Promote and support the involvement of people in the commissioning, provision scrutiny of NHS and social care services
- Enable people to monitor and review such services for the purposes of commissioning and quality of provision
- Ask local people what they think about local healthcare services and provide a chance to suggest ideas to help improve services
- Investigate specific issues of concern to the community
- Use its powers to hold services to account and get results
- Ask for information and get an answer in a specified amount of time
- Be able to carry out spot-checks to see if services are working well (carried out under safeguards)
- Make reports and recommendations and receive a response
- Refer issues to the local 'Overview and Scrutiny Committee'.

LINK Representatives on the NHS Eastern and Coastal Board

NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent welcome the opportunity to work closely with the LINK and to support its remit as set out above. To fully support this aim the LINK will be provided with two co-opted places at the NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent Board. The places will enable the LINK representatives to enter into informed debate with the Board. In addition and to ensure the PCT Board engages with the LINK proactively the LINK will be invited to be represented on appropriate sub-committees of the Board as agreed with the LINK.

The LINK will adhere to its own processes in determining who should represent it. A role specification and outline of expectations will be developed and made available to support the representatives in their positions on the Board and a full induction and support programme will be available.

Joint Working and Service Level Agreement Protocol

As the profile of the LINK increases within NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent it is anticipated that demands to work closely and to utilise the resource and expertise will go up. To manage this demand on the LINK and to ensure that any joint working is carried out as effectively as possible the following process will be observed.

Contact with the LINK from NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent will be channelled through the Patient and Public Engagement team who will liaise with a nominated LINK representative. Requests to work jointly or to receive services or support from the LINK will specify:

- The scope of the joint working opportunity, service or support required
- Expectations from the LINK and how it will add value
- Description of the relevant PCT commissioning priority or core business plan aim to which the joint working will relate
- Projected resource implications for the LINK (time, people and financial)

The LINK will consider the request and propose how they might be able to meet the need specified.

The Patient and Public Engagement team will liaise with the nominated LINK representative to form a joint working agreement or service level agreement whichever is appropriate.