



9 December 2009

Developing the Network

On registering as a LINK Participant individuals indicate the extent to which they wish to get involved in LINK activities and their areas of interest. They also say whether they are prepared to share their contact details with other participants with similar interests. Developing the network is now an activity the Host is beginning to explore.

One aspect of the above is that from time to time NHS / social care organisations ask the LINK to provide representatives to sit on various commissioning / planning / service improvement groups. Whilst the Governors' Group has agreed a process for appointing so-called higher level representation on outside bodies (see Appendix 'A' for list of such appointments to date) there isn't a mechanism for appointing supporting other such groups. These are likely to be groups concerned with specific diseases / service areas – which do not require an overview or understanding of LINK policies and strategies, which the higher level groups require. Governors are asked to consider adopting the following procedure for appointing and supporting such representatives:

1. Requests for LINK representatives to be considered by a Governor, nominated for this purpose, to see if the request meets one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. relevance to LINK's aim and objectives
 - b. whether LINK can add value
 - c. is a matter which is in accord with the LINK work programme
 - d. is likely to be a matter of significant interest to the LINK group concerned.
2. If representation is agreed:
 - a. the Host conduct a database search to identify LINK participants who may have an interest in the topic/geography under consideration
 - b. expressions of interest are invited from those LINK participants
 - c. those expressing an interest be invited to provide a paragraph on why they should represent the LINK
 - d. if only one expression of interest is received, the nominated Governor decide on representation
 - e. if more than one expression of interest is received the relevant LINK group decide who should represent them by ballot (of those participants within LINK group).
3. The obligations placed on the appointed representative (s) shall be:
 - a. To provide reports back to the LINK group concerned
 - b. To represent the views of the group to the NHS / social service committee concerned
 - c. To adhere to the LINK's code of conduct.
4. The obligations on the Host shall be to provide appropriate administrative support to the LINK representative concerned.

Graham Hills
Operational Director, Kent LINK