



*Your LINK for improving health
and social care
Supporting the development
of Local HealthWatch*



a LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK

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LINK into Local HealthWatch Newsletter

National update

The Health and Social Care Bill

The Health and Social Care Bill is currently still in Committee stage at the House of Lords, therefore there has not been any significant developments this month. You can find out how the Bill is progressing on the Parliament website:
www.tinyurl.com/HSCareBill

HealthWatch England

HealthWatch England will be set up as an independent arm of the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Using information from Local HealthWatch and from elsewhere, HealthWatch England will provide advice to other bodies (specified in the Bill) and to the Secretary of State about the provision of care services. It will have a specific remit to comment on how health and social care services are involving people and promoting choice for people. The CQC recently released a timeline for establishing HealthWatch England which is available on their website:
www.cqc.org.uk/healthwatch

HealthWatch Advisory Group

The latest bulletin from the HealthWatch Advisory Group is available on the Kent LINK website. The Advisory Group was created to establish the HealthWatch programme before its launch. The Advisory Group will provide expert, practical advice and make recommendations to the Programme Board about implementation of the Government's proposals for HealthWatch. As soon as they release information, it will be put on the Kent LINK website at:
www.thekentlink.co.uk/HealthWatch

Patient and public engagement in the new commissioning system

Achieving effective patient and public engagement (PPE) has been a part of NHS policy for many years. Successive governments have worked to embed the principles of engagement in health service design and delivery, most recently with the 2011 Health and Social Care Bill, which seeks to increase patient voice in the NHS.

This paper draws on a round-table discussion held by the NHS Confederation in August 2011 to consider the critical issues which Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) will need to address in developing approaches to effective engagement. To read the report, visit the website:

<http://tinyurl.com/kentPPE>

Local News**Health and Wellbeing Board**

The Kent Health and Wellbeing Board (currently in shadow form) is a forum for those who buy services across the NHS, public health, social care and children's services. Elected representatives and representatives from LINKs / HealthWatch come together to talk about how they can work with each other to better the health and wellbeing of people in their area. Our representation means that we can directly provide a voice for Kent residents at this level.

Clinical Commissioning Groups

From April 2013, groups of GPs and other key healthcare professionals will be responsible for around 80% of the healthcare budget in their area and will plan and pay for services for the local population. These groups will be called Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) (formerly known as GP Consortia) and will buy services from the hospitals, ambulance service and community service providers. In Kent, there are nine emerging CCGs which are required to include public representation. The LINK is actively seeking a place on each CCG to ensure that the public voice is heard.

You can view these items on the Kent LINK website on the HealthWatch page:
www.thekentlink.co.uk/HealthWatch.html

If you have any questions, queries or concerns about the information contained in this Newsletter, please contact:

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