



*Your LINK for improving health
and social care
Your future Local HealthWatch*



a LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK

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LINK into Local HealthWatch Newsletter

National update

The Health and Social Care Bill, that will make the changes to the NHS and introduce Local HealthWatch instead of LINKs, was debated in the House of Lords on 11 October 2011. You can follow the progress of the Bill at:
www.parliament.uk/bills/2010-1/healthandsocialcare.html

The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) has carried out a national review of LINKs. They say: "We believe that the evidence we have gathered provides an extensive and credible picture of the development of LINKs and of the lessons from their first three years of existence – these could contribute to the development of Local Healthwatch." You can download a copy of the initial messages from the review, 'Smoothing the Way', at:
<http://bit.ly/qsHzbi>

The HealthWatch England Advisory Group, a national group set up to advise the Government on the implementation of their proposals for HealthWatch, have released their third Bulletin issue. This, along with the all previous issues, can be found on the Kent LINK website at: <http://www.thekentlink.co.uk/HealthWatch.html>

Get involved online

Members of the Care Quality Commission HealthWatch Team will be holding a live web chat with the HealthWatch online community on Tuesday, 25 October 2011 from 10.00am to 11.30am. To take part, email healthwatch@nunwood.com to receive an email asking you to register your details.

During October, the National HealthWatch Team will be publishing a set-up plan on HealthWatch England, which will feature details of the timeline for HealthWatch England. It will be available to the online community and on the HealthWatch England page of the Care Quality Commission's website: www.cqc.org.uk/healthwatch

Local News

At all public events, the Kent LINK has taken the opportunity to raise awareness of Local HealthWatch and seek the views of the Kent public. At the recent Kent LINK Youth Event, attendees were supplied background information into Local HealthWatch and then asked to give their views on three topics relating to how Local HealthWatch would be set up:

- What are the barriers to getting involved?
- How would you like to be communicated with?
- What are the issues affecting your health and social care needs?

The views expressed will be discussed at the next meeting of the Kent LINK Transition Group.

Kent Local HealthWatch Development Group

The Development Group held its third meeting on 13 October 2011 where the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) Executive Summary Report and recommendations were presented. The report was the result of a series of interviews, focus groups and workshops looking at the preparation needed and design for the new Kent Local HealthWatch.

The meeting discussed all 40 recommendations. The Group heard of the enthusiasm and commitment of those who took part in the work leading up to these recommendations and look forward to working with them in the future. It was agreed that a priority is to produce a vision statement of what Kent Local HealthWatch would look like.

The full report, Executive Summary and recommendations will be available on the Kent LINK website in due course.

Kent LINK Transition Group

In response to views expressed in the first meeting of LINK participants, the LINK is setting up two LINK locality groups – one in the Swale area and the other in the Dartford area. These will be pilots for the LINK to learn from local people and communities about how they would like to get involved.

At the second meeting of the LINKs Transition Group, participants will consider the Centre for Public Scrutiny's report on the Readiness Programme. This independent report will help to deliver 'No Decision about me, without me' in the design of a Local HealthWatch in Kent. The next meeting of the Kent LINK Transition Group will take place on Monday, 31 October 2011 at Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way, Lenham, ME17 2QT from 1.00pm to 4.00pm. Contact Rich if you wish to attend.

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

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