



Kent LINK Projects

The Kent LINK Development Workers (LDWs) have been working on various projects following on from recent issues put to the LINK by participants and members of the public. Here is a quick update on how these projects are going!

Hygiene and Cleanliness

Article written by Cate Boland, LINK Development Worker, Mid Kent

Earlier this year LINK participants contributed to the LINK's commentary on health care standards in the County. It was evident from the responses that hygiene and cleanliness in hospital was still high in the public consciousness. Participants also expressed fear of contracting an infection whilst in hospital.

(Below) Authorised Visitors with the swabbing equipment



At its Annual Meeting in May 2009, the LINK agreed that a project on hospital hygiene would be undertaken to reassure the community that Kent Hospitals were clean and hygienic. The project would include visits to all acute hospital sites in Kent (and Medway) using the LINK's 'enter and view' powers.

From 7 December 2009 to 8 January 2010, all the acute hospital sites in Kent and Medway will receive a visit from the LINK. 12 of the LINK's Authorised Visitors will go to eight sites throughout the County. All the trusts have been keen to help us to support their high standard of cleanliness.

All Authorised Visitors have attended training to prepare for the visits and have been supported by the Project Leader, John Fletcher, who heads a

group of four other participants who have expressed an interest in hospital hygiene. The group are overseeing and reviewing the project as it moves forward.

Stage one of this project is now complete. We have identified the hand hygiene policies of each Trust so that the LINK could establish a compliance standard. While the Authorised Visitors are in the hospitals they will be making unobtrusive observations of the use of selected alcohol hand wash dispensers to see how these policies are upheld. Stage two will be to investigate frequency of deep cleaning procedures, carried out in hospitals. Authorised Visitors will look at the concentration of chlorine used when cleaning the wards, what methods are used for making up the chlorine disinfectant and the frequency the water is changed. Also surfaces for MRSA and other bacteria will be monitored. Stage three will be to carry out a survey of all LINK participants to ask their experiences of hospital cleanliness in Kent hospitals. The survey will be sent out in January.

The findings of the Authorised Visitors will be analysed by an independent laboratory and the Project Report will be available by the end of February 2010.

