



News

1. What's going on in the LINK?

i) Access to patients' records: LINK participants' views to be investigated

In the last Bulletin the LINK carried a story of a new scheme in Medway to allow a patient's summary records to be shared between various NHS Departments. A participant raised concerns that according to the NHS website, Medway had not been listed as an "early adopter" site for such a scheme and that the proposed new Parliamentary Bill has not yet been agreed on this type of access. The concern was that a patient's health record will end up in the wrong hands and compromise privacy. We will publish Medway's response in the Bulletin.

If you have a comment that you wish to make on this, contact the LINK at:
<http://www.themedwaylink.org.uk/index.php?q=17> or email info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or telephone 01634 821135.

ii) Training of LINK participants

The first training event for LINK participants was held last week in Rochester. Further training opportunities for LINK participants will occur throughout the year.

iii) Selection of LINK visitors and members of the LINK's Moderating Panel

Over 20 LINK participants have expressed an interest in getting more involved in the LINK as either:

- LINK "authorised representatives" for visiting health or social care premises as required as part of a LINK project;
- Members of the panel that will assist the LINK by advising on actions to be taken on issues raised with the LINK between its quarterly meetings;
- Representatives of the LINK on outside organisations

The closing date for applications has been set for the 30 March, with a selection event taking place early in April.

iv) Health Check: reaching out

Progress is being made in collecting evidence from LINK participants (individuals and organisations) as part of this year's Healthcare Commission Annual Health Check of standards in Medway's NHS. Part of the role of the LINK is to involve previously hard to reach groups in such exercises to get their voices heard. As part of this the LINK has

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commissioned a voluntary group, working with people with a learning disability, to produce an “easy to read” questionnaire and to assist individuals to complete them.

If you have any comments to make on the above you can make them via our website at: <http://www.themedwaylink.org.uk/index.php?q=17> or by email info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or telephone 01303 297050.

2. SOS Bus

The Council for Voluntary Service in Medway are looking for an enthusiastic person with excellent organisational skills to run a new service that will be staffed by a team of volunteers.

The SOS Bus, a bespoke single-decker bus, will serve the Medway community by providing a safe haven in the night-time economy and a mobile outreach resource by day.

For further information contact Alan Browne, SOS Bus Project Manager by email alan.browne@medway.gov.uk or telephone 01634 335469.

3. Cancer patients urged to apply for free prescriptions

Cancer patients are being urged by NHS Medway to apply now for free prescriptions, ready for when charges are scrapped nationally on 1 April.

Charges for all medicines needed by people with cancer, including drugs not relating to the actual disease, are being abolished. Patients will apply for a five-year exemption certificate which can be renewed as many times as necessary.

Application forms are available from GP surgeries and oncology clinics and must be countersigned by the patient's GP, hospital doctor or service doctor. All applications received by 24 March will be processed in time to be used for 1 April. Patients may save £100 each per year in prescription charges, according to the Department of Health.

A review for the Government later this year will look at abolishing charges for everyone with a long-term condition.

For further information contact Emma Burns, NHS Medway, 7-8 Ambley Green, Gillingham Business Park, Gillingham, ME8 0NJ, email emma.burns@nhs.net or telephone 01634 382705



4. Progress towards being World Class!

The results of the first world class commissioning assurance have now been published. Medway Primary Care Trust have said "Our results show we have made a good start to our journey to becoming world class commissioners and are in a strong position to improve further. We were rated from 1 to 4, with 1 representing a starting point, and 4 representing world class, on each of 10 of the 11 world class commissioning competencies. (The 11th is evaluated by a different mechanism). The competencies were drawn up by the Department of Health after research into best practice from this country and around the world. They bring together the skills we need to have and the actions we need to take to ensure that our commissioning is as effective as it can be at improving health and healthcare. The Department of Health made it clear that because it is such an ambitious programme no primary care trust is expected to achieve high ratings in this first year. However, on eight of the ten competencies rated, we were assessed as already being at stage two. On the remaining two, where we were assessed as being at stage one, it was made clear that we have put processes in place which will help us progress to stage two...."

The results can be viewed on Medway PCT's website: www.medwaypct.nhs.uk

For further information contact Marion Dinwoodie, Medway Primary Care Trust Headquarters, 7-8 Ambley Green, Bailey Drive, Gillingham Business Park, Gillingham, ME8 0NJ or telephone 01634 382777.

4. Lottery Success

A local partnership has successfully secured funding from the Big Lottery Fund. North Kent Training Service at the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) Medway in partnership with North West Kent CVS and Swale CVS have received a grant of £461,100 to deliver a three year training project to volunteers and staff in the voluntary and community sector of North Kent. The aim is to build capacity within the organisations of this sector strengthening the infrastructure and supporting improvements in the provision of services to the local community.

A minimum of 160 training events and self-teach toolkits will be devised to cover all aspects of running a community organisation. This may include subjects such as fundraising, roles of a trustee, employment law / HR good practice, negotiation skills, quality systems, Charity Commission requirements, first aid, basic sign language, equality and diversity, disability awareness / DDA to give just a taste.

The programme of training is due to start in September 2009 and further details of this can be obtained by contacting:

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North Kent Training Service at CVS Medway:

Email: trainingdept@cvsmedway.org.uk or telephone 01634 818036

North West Kent CVS

Email: main@nwkcvs.org or telephone 01474 354479

Swale CVS

Email: office@swalecvs.co.uk or telephone 01795 473828

For further information contact Alison Dyke, Manager of North Kent Training Service by telephone 01634 818036 or visit the web site: www.NKTS.co.uk

Events

1. Sure Sight Exhibition 2009

An exhibition of ideas and equipment to help people with sight impairment: magnifiers, computer software, CCTVs etc will be held on Friday, 17 April 2009 from 10.00am to 3.00pm at Meopham Secondary School, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend, DA13 0AH. Admission is free and refreshments available. Wheelchair access and parking is available.

Advice and information from the Gravesend Rehabilitation Team. Contact the Duty Officer, Kent Association for the Blind (KAB) by email rehab.gravesend@kab.org.uk or telephone 01474 544440. Further information is available at: www.kab.org.uk

2. Celebrating Cultural Diversity at Peppercorns

A day of arts, crafts, and presentations to be held at Peppercorns, 3 Orchard Street, Dartford, Kent DA1 2DF on Friday, 20 March 2009 from 10.30am to 3.30pm featuring: personal account on diversity; Bollywood Dance Display; African Dance Display Gravesham; Young Girls Group; Indian Head Massage; Hand Massage; Henna painting; Accessing the internet and displays from local BME organisations. Lunch £2 per person and sample world foods.

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For further information contact Sandeep Saib, DGS Mencap by email Sandeep.Saib@dgsmentcap.org.uk or telephone 01322 425990.

3. Funding for the voluntary sector

CASE Kent is hosting a key event for the voluntary and community sector on Tuesday, 31 March 2009, 9.30am to 2.30pm at Aylesham Community Centre, Ackholt Road, Aylesham, Kent CT3 3AJ. The purpose of this event is to inform voluntary and community groups of the funding available to them in the local area.

For further information contact Liz Shihabi, CASE Kent, Berwick House, 8 Elwick Road Ashford, TN23 1PF, email ashford@casekent.org.uk or telephone 01233 610171

Consultations

1. Consultation away-day: mental health research and the contribution that service users can make

Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Service User Involvement and Empowerment Project (Older People) will be holding a consultation event to highlight mental health research and the contributions that service users can make.

The event will be held on Monday, 23 March at the Post Graduate Study Centre, St. Martins Hospital, Canterbury, CT1 1TD from 10.30am to 3.30pm.

For further information contact Nick Dent, PALS Manager (East), Kent & Medway Partnership Trust, PPCI Department, St Martins Hospital, Littlebourne Road, Canterbury, CT1 1TD, email Nicholas.Dent@kmpt.nhs.uk or telephone 01227 812020.

2. Consultation on improving access to taxis

This consultation seeks views on how to improve access to taxis by disabled people ensuring that they have greater access and equality of opportunity.

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The Department will be holding two workshops to discuss the recently published 'Improving Access to Taxis' consultation document. More information about the event can be found at: www.info4local.gov.uk/documents/consultations/1136417

For further information contact Paul Lawry by telephone on 020 7944 05876.

3. Young people and governance

The British Youth Council (BYC), on behalf of Participation Works, is carrying out a short survey for organisations about young people and governance. The BYC are keen to see what has or hasn't changed in this area and what the current levels of involvement are. The BYC are also surveying young people for their views on this topic. Please register your views and the survey will only take 5 minutes of your time.

The link to the survey is below:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=pE6JTJLTbi862gP1QmT1Fg_3d_3d

For further information contact David Clark, Programmes and Training Manager, British Youth Council, CAN Mezzanine, 1 London Bridge, London, SE1 9BG, telephone 0845 458 1489 / 020 7785 6461 or mobile: 07809 507 357

Contact Information

The Medway LINK may be contacted via the Host Organisation as below:

KMN, Avenue Business Centre, 17 New Road Avenue, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6BA.

Email: info@kmn-ltd.co.uk

Tel: 01634 821135

SMS Text: 07976 594541

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm (Answerphone available out of office hours)