

News

1. What's going on in the LINK?

i) New Coordinating Team appointed

The LINK Coordinating Team is that part of the LINK that deals with the governance of the LINK. Following recent selection events the following new Team has been formed with identified areas of responsibility:

- Giuseppe Cannavina Project Management / Performance Management
- Hans Eigenwillig Project Management
- David Harris Facilitator
- Terry Horobin Communication and PR
- Kamila Manik Equality and Diversity
- Edwina Morris Community Engagement
- Richard Tripp Strategic Planning / Finance

The following Team members were reselected:

- Shirley Griffiths Liaison with Moderating Panel
- Claire Murray Finance / Governance

ii) Big Care Debate

The LINK's response to the Green Paper, Shaping the Future of Care Together, can be found at:

http://www.themedwaylink.co.uk/assets/files/Publications/FINAL_Medway_LINK's_Big_Care_Debate_131109.pdf

ii) Care Quality Commission and LINK meet

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the key regulator for health and social care services in this Country – it took over earlier this year from the Health Care Commission and the Council for Social Care Inspection. The LINK's relationship with the CQC is a vital one if the LINK is to be effective in enabling the community of Medway to have an effective way of articulating, through the LINK, its views on the quality of health and social care services in the area. The LINK will play an important role in being one of the ways of keeping the CQC in touch with the users of services.

On the 27 November the CQC met with LINK participants. The meeting had a number of purposes:

- for the CQC to tell the LINK what action they had taken on the evidence the LINK had given as part of last year's Annual Health Check – this was the system whereby the NHS assured itself that standards and quality of services was up to the mark



- to discuss how the LINK can contribute to quality checks as part of a new system of registration for NHS and social care organisations. This will require the LINK to submit evidence by the end of January 2010
- to establish an effective working relationship between the LINK and the new CQC.

iii) Update on projects

a. Hygiene and cleanliness in hospital – the first two stages of this project are about to commence. They will involve a series of unannounced visits to major hospitals throughout Kent and Medway to assess adherence to hand hygiene policies, standards of cleanliness and disinfection. The LINK ‘authorised’ visitors will use their powers of observation and use some simple sampling techniques to check for certain organisms and to also check chlorine levels in the cleaning water used to disinfect areas close to where patients are being nursed. This stage of the project will be finished by 8 January 2010. The third stage of the project will involve a survey of LINK participants to find out, from recent experiences, their views on standards.

b. Review of transport services - information is currently being gathered on transport and travel plans held by all NHS Trusts across Kent and Medway. Approximately 18 participants have expressed an interest in being involved with this project, although at this stage they are just being kept informed of progress.

c. Mystery shopping Council contracted services – this project involves two important areas of social care. They are:

- the Living Well in Medway Council service – this is an information service for adults with low to moderate social care needs and their carers
- advice provided to people seeking to find a residential or nursing home place in Medway.

If you are interested in getting a bit more involved in the LINK, particularly as a LINK mystery shopper, contact us at info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or telephone 01634 821135.

iv) LINK’s current programme of work

This can be found on the LINK’s website at:

http://www.themedwaylink.co.uk/assets/files/Publications/Consolidated_Work_Programme_09_10.pdf

If you have an issue that you think the LINK should be made aware of, contact us by email info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or by telephone 01634 821135. Please remember that the LINK does not deal with complaints – these should be directed to the appropriate NHS Trust in respect of NHS services and to Medway Council for social care concerns. However, the LINK is keen to learn of those issues that are likely to affect the community of Medway – this could be the results of a single complaint after it has been investigated.



2. Now that you have joined the LINK do you wish to become more involved and be part of one of the following?

i) Medway Foundation Trust Infection Control / Hygiene Committee

Medway NHS Foundation Trust is looking for a Medway LINK representative to contribute to their Infection Control / Hygiene Committee. The Committee meets quarterly at the Medway Maritime Hospital. The chosen LINK representative will be fully briefed and supported and have their travel expenses reimbursed. They will be required to feed back to the LINK but again, will be supported.

If you have an interest in infection control / hygiene at the Medway Maritime Hospital, a couple of hours to spare and feel that you would be able to contribute then please contact your LINK Development Worker, Jane Williamson email jane@medwaylink.org or telephone 01634 821135 / 07968 056285.

ii) Promoting the LINK and helping it to deal with the issues

Do you think with the appropriate training and support you would be able to promote the LINK, recruit new participants and seek peoples views on NHS and social care services in Medway at various events throughout Medway?

Do you think you could be part of the invaluable Medway LINK Moderating Panel – the group that evaluates an issue brought to the LINK to ascertain whether it is something the LINK should act upon? The Panel meets monthly in Medway and plays an important part in the LINK's work.

If you would like to be involved, or you want further information, on either of the above then please contact Jane Williamson your LINK Development Worker. No experience necessary as full training and support will be provided and all out of pocket expenses reimbursed.

If yes, please contact your Development Worker, Jane Williamson on 07968 056285 or 01634 821135 to find out more.

iii) Diabetes Services

Do you or a family member use any of the diabetes services provided throughout Medway? If the answer is yes, please let us know your experiences. Contact Jane Williamson by telephone 07968 056285, email jane@medwaylink.org or by completing the contact form on the Medway website:
www.themedwaylink.co.uk

3. Students get better access to sexual health clinics

Medway's students are now able to access sexual health advice and information at their school or college.



This month Mid Kent College, Gillingham and the Hundred of Hoo secondary school, became the first in Medway to offer the pilot service for young people.

Nurses, Teenage Pregnancy Prevention workers and other trained professionals will offer a range of health services including contraception, Chlamydia screening, advice and guidance as well as information on other health topics and services.

Each school or college will offer the new service at least one day a week, and young people will be able to choose between booking an appointment or an informal drop-in session.

Almost a third of schools or colleges offer the service nationally.

At Medway's recent Youth Parliament conference young people said there needed to be more places offering confidential sexual health advice and information locally, including schools and youth centres.

The new scheme will offer students the opportunity to access a variety of health services along with sexual health advice and contraception.

For more information contact NHS Medway, 50 Pembroke Court, Chatham Maritime, Chatham, ME4 4EL, telephone 01634 335020 or visit the website: www.medwaypct.nhs.uk

4. Mental Health Matters Helpline

Mental Health Matters is an innovative organisation to promote health and wellbeing. It has a dedicated team to deliver a comprehensive range of services to meet people's needs. The Helpline has a team of highly trained and experienced support workers who use counselling skills to provide emotional support, guidance and information to support mental wellbeing. The telephone helpline is available 5.00pm to 9.00am Monday - Friday and 24 hours at weekends and Bank Holidays on 0800 107 0160.

If you have difficulty talking on the phone about your problems, an online chat service called 'Time on Line' is available. This service is similar to MSN and details are given below.

For more information contact Alan Heyes, c/o MCCH, Raglan House, St Peters Street, Maidstone, ME16 OSN, email AHeyes@mentalhealthmatters.co.uk, telephone 07590 950241 or visit the website: www.mentalhealthmatters.com
Helpline telephone number: 0800 107 0160



5. The Department of Health (DH) has launched a Quality Mark

The DH has launched a Quality Mark for providers of information and advice to users of health and social care services.

The Information Standard is designed to help people identify trustworthy sources of advice among the 50,000 organisations producing health and social care information in England.

For more information visit the website:
www.dh.gov.uk/theinformationstandard

6. Help the Aged and Age Concern unveil their new identity – Age UK

On 1 April 2009 Age Concern England and Help the Aged joined together to create a new charity dedicated to improving the lives of older people. Operating under the name 'Age Concern and Help the Aged' they wanted to be one voice on behalf of all older people.

They are working with partners to ensure that together they can improve the lives of older people. Also, on 1 April 2009 the national Age Concerns of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland joined together with Help the Aged to create new charities, like Age Concern England. Age UK works closely with 342 local Age Concerns across England helping them provide high quality service for older people in the area where they live.

The new name 'Age UK' will be used officially from Spring 2010. For more information visit;
www.age.uk.org/

Events

Please note that in accordance with the LINK's Governance, expenses are not reimbursable for attendance at the events shown below.

1. Medway BAME Women's Network

Medway BAME Women's Network is organising an end of year event for ladies on Friday, 11 December 2009 at New Brompton College from 7.00pm – 10.00pm. They hope you will support them by attending the event.

There will be music, dance and food and plenty of opportunities to network.

Tickets are going fast so be sure to book now.

For more information contact Kamila Manik, Medway Ethnic Minority Forum, Gun Wharf – Level 3, Dock Road, Chatham, ME4 4TR, email kamila.manik@medway.gov.uk or telephone 01634 306000.



2. Small Grants Scheme

NHS Medway has invited a Medway LINK participant to become a panel member for their Small Grants Scheme.

The Small Grants Scheme forms part of the 2010 Medway Public Health Campaign. The campaign is a year-long social marketing campaign in 2010 to raise awareness of the many ways people in Medway can improve or maintain their health and wellbeing. The campaign values are that:

- anyone can find time to be healthier
- being healthy can be simple.

The Small Grants Scheme is being administered by Kent Community Foundation and will make grants to voluntary and community organisations working to support the citizens of Medway to live healthier lifestyles. Applications may be for events, trips, training and practical schemes that encourage individual communities within Medway to eat better, exercise more and live longer.

Throughout 2010 applicants can apply for funding towards the cost of publicity, printing, hire of venues, hire of specialist equipment, transport, interpreting - the list is endless. Projects that have a longer lasting benefit, like setting up a community group or projects that have a life beyond 2010 can also be funded. Groups with an income of less than £20,000 will be prioritised for funding.

There will be three deadlines for applications - 1 March, 1 June and 1 September. The panel will meet three weeks after the deadline on 22 March, 22 June, and 22 September at 9.30am, Medway Council, Gun Wharf. Amanda Kenney, NHS Medway, Nicky Ling, Public Health, and Kathryn Evans, 2010 Campaign Manager, are confirmed as panel members and it would be great to have you on board. If you wish to become part of this exciting panel and are available to commit to the latter three dates in 2010 then please let me know as soon as possible.

Any participant contributing to this panel will be fully briefed and have out of pocket expenses reimbursed.

For more information contact Jane Williamson by email jane@medwaylink.org or telephone 01634 821135 or 07968 056285.

2. Attention all carers – Caring with Confidence

Caring with Confidence is aimed at unpaid carers aged 18 and over and can help to empower and build confidence.

What is Caring with Confidence:

It is a facilitated group session, run by local providers who have experience and knowledge



of working with carers to explore the essentials of looking after someone on a daily basis. The programme begins with the Induction Session, Finding Your Way, followed by Caring day-to-day, Caring and Communicating, Caring and Resources, Caring and Coping, Caring and Me, Caring and Life.

Each session lasts 3 hours, and are held one day per week. Carers have the opportunity to meet others, share experiences and build on skills. There is help with travel and caring costs.

Caring with Confidence is an opportunity to help carers by:

Building on their strengths as a carer.

Giving them an opportunity to share experiences and learn from others in similar situations.

Giving useful information, ideas and tips about looking after someone.

Helping them decide what they might like to change about their caring role.

What are the benefits:

Carers who look after their own health and wellbeing are more likely to be able to continue caring for longer therefore those they care for may be less likely to need long-term care.

They become better informed and more confident and come into contact with relevant information.

Individual carers report practical benefits as a result of being involved in Carers with Confidence – such as using relaxation techniques, awareness of additional resources and entitlements and moving into new education and training opportunities.

For more information, or to register for a course, contact Helen Appleton – Course Co-ordinator by email cwc@carerskent.org or telephone 01474 369159.

2. Help us to help you breathe more easily

The Department of Health (DH) is developing a national strategy for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) in England, working with the British Lung Foundation and Asthma UK.

The strategy is due to be launched next year and is designed to help improve patients' health and well-being. The strategy covers better prevention and changing behaviour for those at risk to aid diagnosis and treatment through to better care for people with COPD at the end of life. It will also highlight the similarities and differences between the diagnosis and care of COPD and asthma.

The views, insight, and experiences of people with COPD and asthma and their carers are needed to ensure that the plans in the strategy meet their needs.

Join others at one of their five events in England to help them get it right: The venues are:



- 30 November 2009 Thorpe Park Hotel, Leeds
- 4 December 2009 Walsall Football Club Walsall
- 9 December 2009 Cleve Hotel, Wellington, Somerset
- 12 December 2009 Aintree Racecourse, Liverpool
- 17 December 2009 Hilton Stansted Airport, Stansted

Lunch and refreshments will be provided and reasonable travel expenses will be paid. To register for this free event or to obtain a registration form, telephone 0113 398 4052 (Monday – Friday, 9.00am – 5.00pm) or visit the website for more information: www.pcc.nhs.uk/events/respiratory

Consultations

1. Survey for organisations supporting carers

Voluntary Action Maidstone is carrying out a survey for those who offer support to carers in Kent. The independent survey has been commissioned by the Kent Carers Advisory Group. If you would like to take part, the online survey is available at: <http://www.kent.gov.uk/publications/social-care-and-health/carers-independent-consultation.htm>

If you would like to complete the survey in hard copy format, contact Barbara Hagan, Maidstone Carers Project, 39 - 48 Marsham Street, Maidstone, ME14 1HH, email barbara.hagan@vam-online.org.uk or telephone 01622 685276.

2. Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust consultation – Single Equality Scheme

The Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust has launched its Single Equality Scheme consultation document and would like to hear your views about the future of equality, diversity and human rights. The Single Equality Scheme consultation has questions about race, gender, sexual orientation, religion and belief, age, disability and human rights.

Those interested in participating in this survey may feed back their views about equality, diversity and human rights to the Equality and Diversity Team by completing an online questionnaire or sending views direct by email.

If you would like a copy of the questionnaire sent to you, contact Benjamin Aishnine, Equality and Diversity Team, Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust, 35 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, ME19 4AX, telephone 01732 523353, email equalities@kmpt.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.kmpt.nhs.uk/equalitydiversity



3. Invitation to respond: Age Equality in Health and Social Care Consultation – commencing 23 November 2009 – 15 February 2010

In April 2009 the then Secretary of State for Health asked Sir Ian Carruthers OBE, Chief Executive of NHS South West and Jan Ormondroyd, Chief Executive of Bristol City Council to undertake a review of age discrimination and age equality in the health and social care sector.

The review was set up to help health and social care meet the ban on age discrimination, and the new public sector equality duty in the Equality Bill.

The review published its report to the Secretary of State, on the 22 October 2009. The consultation paper now invites views on the recommendations and conclusions made that are not directly tied to the legislation.

To accompany this consultation a number of stakeholder engagement events will also be held. Details of these will be published on the website given below in due course. There will also be a further consultation on a draft Order in 2010.

For more information contact Age Consultation, Room 602, Department of Health, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2NS, email ageequality@dh.gsi.gov.uk or visit the website:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_108887

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 596913

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm

(Answerphone available out of office hours)