

Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee

2nd October 2006



The Future of Public and Patient Involvement Forums – Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)

Report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny

Purpose of Report

1. To up-date members on the Governments plans to change the system for involving patients and the public in influencing local health services.
2. CharlesTremeer (Durham Rural Community Council) and Ross Cowan (Regional Commission for Public and Patient Involvement -CPPIH) will be in attendance to update members on this emerging agenda. Gerald Tompkins, the County Councils Head of Strategic Planning and Health Improvement, will also be in attendance.

Background/Information

3. The recently published Department of Health document (for information and comment), 'A stronger local voice: a framework for creating a stronger local voice in the development of health and social care services" (July 2006) reported that Public and Patient Involvement Forums (PPIF) are to be replaced by Local Involvement Networks (LINKs).
4. The key elements of the new arrangements are:-
 - The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) will be abolished.
 - Patient forums will be replaced by Local Involvement Networks.
 - Local involvement networks (LINKs) will be established for every local authority area with social services responsibilities.
 - LINKs will provide flexible ways for individuals, organisations and communities to engage with health and social care organisations in ways that best suit the communities and the people in them. They will build on the best work of patient forums creating a strengthened system of user involvement and will promote public accountability in health and social care through open and transparent communication with commissioners and providers.

