

Contact

Feedback about the newsletter, comments or queries about any aspect of LINK development please contact :

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If you need this information summarised in another language or format such as Braille or audio tape or CD, please email the address above or call:

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Making a difference where you live



Update

Issue 2

December 2007

The County Durham Local Involvement Network

How will the LINK work in practice?

The last edition of the newsletter explained what sort of organisations, groups and individuals would make up the LINK and set out some principles by which LINK organisations would operate. Those who could make up the LINK include:-

- ◆ Charities
- ◆ Patient groups
- ◆ Community networks
- ◆ Businesses
- ◆ Social enterprises
- ◆ Voluntary and community organisations
- ◆ Community groups
- ◆ Service user groups
- ◆ Individual citizens

Since the local consultations, a number of workshops have taken place with County Council Community Development staff, Primary Care Trust (PCT) staff, staff from the Commission for Public and Patient Involvement in Health (CPPIH) and One Voice Network to test out how the LINK would work in practice- **see case study Page 2.**

What is unique about LINKs?

- It includes social care as well as health
- It has to reconcile conflicting demands and needs of different communities, users, patients, carers and prioritise these to develop a 'bottom up' agenda for health and social care services
- The LINK uses community development principles and practice to empower, facilitate and develop community involvement
- Its focus is on promoting good health and well-being, not just on responding to ill-health
- The relationship between host and LINK is similar to that between Members and Officers in a local authority
- It is primarily focused upon adults and those in a transition age group but does not exclude children's health and well-being services with the exception of regulated social care services

Linking:

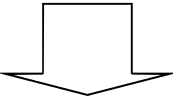
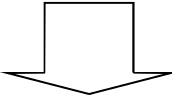
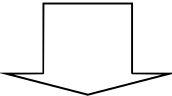
Charities
Patient Groups
Community Networks
Business and Social Enterprise
Individual Citizens
User Groups
Community Groups
Voluntary and Community Sector

Special points of interest:

- * Conference - page 7
- * Case Study : LINK in practice - page 2
- * Interim Consultant appointed - page 3
- * Website development - page 9
- * Perspectives from Project Group Members - pages 5, 6 & 8

A Case Study: Identifying Health and Social Care Issues in Stanley

This case example considers **how health and social care issues might be identified in Stanley** under the new LINK arrangements.

<p>Currently the mechanisms for consulting and engaging with communities in Stanley include</p>	<p>In response to issues raised the LINK could undertake the following processes for acting on the information it receives</p>	<p>The LINK in Stanley could then feed evidence, information, conclusions and recommendations for action to the following bodies, organisations and plans</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Youth Engagement Service Local community groups Patient and Public Involvement Forums Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Ward profiles / research Public health professionals Past consultations Community development staff Staff in organisations providing health and social care Derwentside Strategic Partnership Health Improvement Group Strong Communities Sub Group Stanley wards community partnerships and partnership liaison group Emerging Stanley Town Council Elected Members</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Map Stanley community structure and infrastructure Base a LINK Worker in a local agency or commission a local agency to identify appropriate local structures and processes Gather and analyse information from a community perspective through these mechanisms Combine Information with that from PALS / Public Health data to check out its validity and how widespread an issue it is Work with local commissioning and provider bodies to resolve issues locally Broker and facilitate relationships to influence commissioning / provisioning Where gaps in infrastructure are identified contract with local agencies to set something up Where issues cannot be resolved locally push them up the chain to 'higher' bodies for a strategic response</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"></p> <p>Transport services County Durham Strategic Partnership Care Service Improvement Partnership (CSIP) Patient Prospectus by the PCT Overview and Scrutiny Durham County Council Cabinet Social Care and health commissioning Leisure Services Local Delivery Plan by the PCT Derwentside Strategic Partnership Community Strategy Primary Care Trust Adult Care Services GPs Practice Based Commissioning Mental Health Services Stanley Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group Local Area Agreements</p>

The County Durham EAP Project Group

The Project Group, which was set up in January 2007, is chaired by Gerald Tompkins, Head of Social Inclusion at Durham County Council. If you want to comment on what has been said in this newsletter, whether about the LINK, the Host or the general process, you can contact people directly by email or via Liz Greer (details back page).

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Patient and Public Involvement Forums

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News & Resources



1. The national Early Adopter Projects (EAP) have drawn to a close and summary reports on their learning and experiences, including here in County Durham, can be found at

http://147.29.80.160/portal/topics/1166092293434_LINKsEarlyAdopters?topic_id=44400003

2. The NHS Centre for Involvement will be producing a Final Evaluation Report based on the EAP experience. Meanwhile they have 2 new reports on their website :

LINks relationships with Health Care Providers

<http://www.nhscentreforinvolvement.nhs.uk/docs/LINks%20-%20relationships%20with%20health%20providers.pdf>

and

LINks Early Adopter Programme Evaluation Methodology

<http://www.nhscentreforinvolvement.nhs.uk/docs/LINks%20-%20Early%20adopter%20programme%20evaluation%20methodo.pdf>

3. The November 2007 LINks Bulletin is now available from the Department of Health website and includes an update on transition arrangements following Royal Assent on 30th October and feedback from the 'Get ready for LINks' events held in October 2007. http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Policyandguidance/Organisationpolicy/PatientAndPublicinvolvement/DH_076482

4. Department of Health Leaflet 'Questions To ask' provides tips & ideas for questions patients might like to consider when attending an appointment with a Doctor. Available from http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_079531

5. New Website www.peopleandparticipation.net is a resource for those working in the field of public participation who wish broaden local involvement in their activities. The site provides information, advice, case studies and opportunities to share experiences with others in the field. **A review of the site would be very welcome for a future Newsletter. Contact liz@ruahine.org.uk if you are interested.**

6. Summary report on lessons learnt from the early adopter projects can be found at <http://www.nhscentreforinvolvement.nhs.uk/docs/CAPTURING%20LESSONS%20FROM%20THE%20EARLY%20ADOPTER%20PROGRAMME.pdf>

By working through this example of how the LINK might work in Stanley a number of lessons were learnt about how the LINK might work in practice:-

- The LINK should encourage providers / engagement agencies to become part of the LINKs by agreeing to and operating by LINKs principles
- The LINK should be 'solution'-based'. LINK will identify community-based solutions where possible
- The LINK should ensure local needs and issues are carried upwards (particularly if unitary government comes to fruition)
- The LINK should be more than the sum of the individual parts
- More work is planned with the voluntary and community sector, with PCT colleagues, PPI Forum members and commissioners and providers of health and social care to develop more case studies of how the LINK will work in practice. A local consultant, Liz Greer, has been appointed to carry out some of

this detailed work within the health, social care and community sectors.

Liz can be contacted at liz@ruahine.co.uk or on 07766 118890 for any queries about how LINKs can work in the County.



Aiming for successful solutions

Consultant Appointed

Liz Greer of Ruahine Training & Consultancy has been appointed to undertake interim development work to maintain the impetus achieved by the Early Adopter Project and to support the LINK Project Group in its preparations for commissioning a LINK Host. Liz is based locally and has substantial experience in the voluntary sector, health and social services. She will be working with the Project Group until the end of March 2008 and would be delighted to hear from you on any aspect of LINK development. Liz can be contacted at liz@ruahine.co.uk or on 07766 118890



Liz Greer

Appointing a host for the County Durham LINK

The County Council advertised as widely as possible through the online ProContract portal and other routes. A pre-qualification questionnaire resulted in 8 expressions of interest in taking on the Host role. A specification for the Host organisation has been developed by the LINK Project Group and has been sent out by the Council's Procurement Team to those successfully meeting the pre-qualification requirements along with an Invitation to Tender during the week of 26 November 2007. The closing date for Tenders is the 25th January 2008 and our hope is that we will be in a position to appoint a Host from the 1 March 2008.

The Tender Specification for the County Durham Host Organisation can be viewed on the North East LINKs page at

<http://www.cppih.org/>



Key Dates

Invitations to tender 26 November 07

Closing date 25 January 08

Appoint 1 March 08

What will the Host organisation do?

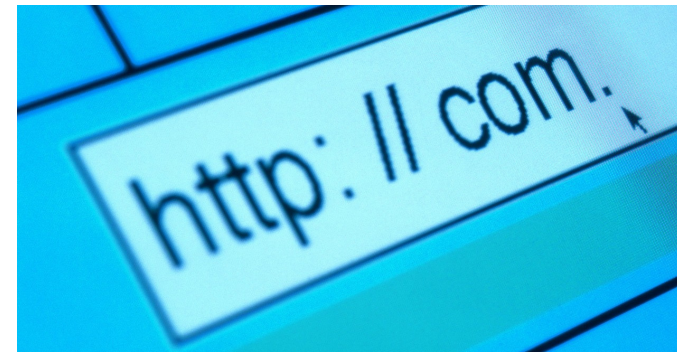


The hosts duties include facilitating, managing and supporting the LINK

A Host means :

- Being Custodian of Values and Relationships
- Facilitating governance and accountability
- Mentoring, training and capacity building
- Facilitating connections
- Action planning
- Brokerage
- Commissioning activities
- Co-ordinating resources
- Providing Financial and Administrative Support
- Performance management

Website Development



The LINK Project Group is keen to develop a website which can offer a full range of LINK news and information but which will also provide a lively, interactive forum for debate and consultation. Apart from the 'green' benefits of a website, it will also enable the Host to consult with those not easily able to get to public meetings and provide opportunities for networking and information sharing across the County.

Feedback from the consultations suggest that a website is likely to be a primary source of information about the LINK and our Interim Consultant, Liz Greer, is looking at the development of a temporary County Durham LINK website which can be handed over to the Host once they are established. If you have any ideas, feedback or comments on the development of a website, please get in touch with Liz at liz@ruahine.co.uk or on 07766 118890.

There will be an update in the next newsletter

Let us know how you like to get your LINK news

We are interested in hearing about how you like to get your LINK news and updates and ensuring that we reach as many people as possible, including those not part of organisations or established networks. We are also keen to be as green as possible and not print newsletters unnecessarily! Following feedback from the consultation, we are keen to test out the use of text messaging for LINK news alerts and polling and are asking for volunteers to help us test this idea, particularly in rural areas.

Please can you let our Consultant, Liz Greer know how you would like to receive information about the LINK by email at liz@ruahine.co.uk or by completing the **LINK Feedback Form** which you will find at www.ruahine.co.uk. If you'd like to help with a text messaging pilot,

please contact (or text!) Liz on 07766 118890 or email liz@ruahine.co.uk



Volunteers wanted for text messaging pilot

A view from the Patient & Public Involvement forums - Charles Tremear, Forum Support Organisation

County Durham's Patient & Public Involvement (PPI) Forums are looking forward to working with the LINK Host organisation once it is appointed and to ensure that the experience and skills Forum members have built up over the years are put to good use by the incoming LINK. While most members feel that getting rid of Forums is a mistake they recognise that, with the passage of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, this will happen on 31 March. They therefore believe that it is important to participate in the processes that are being undertaken to appoint the Host and develop the LINK in County Durham

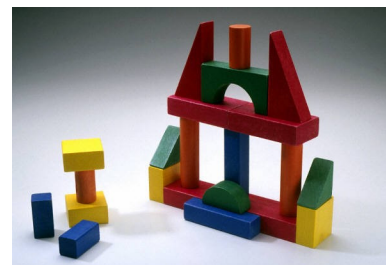
One particular priority for Forum members is the transfer of reports of work they have undertaken to the new LINK so that it is aware of what Forums have done and inform the actions of the LINK. The Forums' parent body, the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health, has recently told members that it will ensure that material is transferred to the Host once the Forums have ceased to exist. It will be up to the Forums Support Organisations to ensure that this happens and also make sure that the Host is aware of any last minute concerns that the Forums have identified.

The key decision for many members will be whether they wish to engage with LINKs or find another avenue to continue their input into the overview of the provision of health services in County Durham. Among the possibilities that members are considering is involvement with the Foundation Trusts and/or the Healthcare Commission.

However, it is expected that a majority of members will seek to become involved with LINKs and will hope to have a say in the way that LINKs go about their activities, as well as having a presence on

governance structures as they evolve. Most of all, members will want to avoid the hiatus which occurred between the demise of the Community Health Councils and the start of PPI Forums, which so hamstrung the initial work of the latter. Members will want to see the LINK hit the ground running, building on the development work they have done to date.

Charles can be contacted at forumsupport.inhouse29@cppih.org



Building the LINK with existing experience and skills

STOP PRESS

Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Bill given Royal Assent 30th October 2007

In particular the Host will:-

- Undertake the initial set up of the LINK, building on work already undertaken by the project group
- Work with LINK participants to facilitate the establishment of the LINKs arrangements for governing, managing and deciding on its activities
- Be accountable to the LINK
- Hold the finances of the LINK and administer them in line with the decisions of the LINK
- Facilitate the correspondence and communication activities of the LINK
- Ensure data management and record keeping of LINK information
- Ensure the LINK is COMPACT compliant
- Provide advice and support to the LINK including being the custodian of agreed values and relationships.
- Have a strong commitment to forming strategic partnerships and effective working relationships with other organisations, and support the LINK in developing such partnerships.
- Support the LINK in the development and promotion of its priorities, work plan and activities.
- Build networks to support recruitment to the LINK, ensuring empowering relationships are facilitated within and between the voluntary and community sector, community groups and networks, service users and carers, patients and provider agencies.
- Receive reports from the LINK and ensure a strategic response
- Help disseminate the findings and outcomes of the LINK.
- Provide an appropriate and non-discriminatory service.
- Operate within agreed contractual performance frameworks.
- Report back to the Local Authority on its activities and finances in a timescale to be agreed.
- Facilitate the relationship between the LINK and Overview and Scrutiny; to ensure matters that need to be referred on to Overview and Scrutiny are processed and actioned with appropriate follow up.
- Facilitate formal consultation via the LINK by statutory organisations with regard to health and social care.

Voluntary and Community Sector Involvement in the LINK - David Haw One Voice Network & Age Concern

Throughout the Early Adopter phase of setting up the County Durham LINK, the voluntary and community sector has been represented on the Project Group by One Voice Network.

In the medium term it is proposed that the Project Group will evolve into an Interim Steering Group for the LINK, with enhanced voluntary and community sector participation.

During the period when the LINK is establishing its own mature governance arrangements, the

Host organisation will have a role in working with voluntary and community sector networks to ensure broad participation by the Third Sector at all levels of the LINK.

The challenge for all those involved, but especially for those in the voluntary and community sector, will be to develop robust governance and accountability arrangements for the LINK which avoid falling into the trap of settling into an 'elite group' who are identified as 'the LINK' to the exclusion of all others.

Overview And Scrutiny And Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) - Feisal Jassatt, Head of Overview & Scrutiny

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 opens the door to implementing councils' proposals for unitary status and is an opportunity to create new flagship authorities, which will lead the way in meeting today's challenges of promoting prosperity, empowering citizens and communities and modernising local service delivery.

The Act replaces Public Patient Forums with new Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) which will be able to refer matters to Overview & Scrutiny committees covering both social care and health.

LINKs will become the "eyes and ears" for Overview and Scrutiny and will need to develop

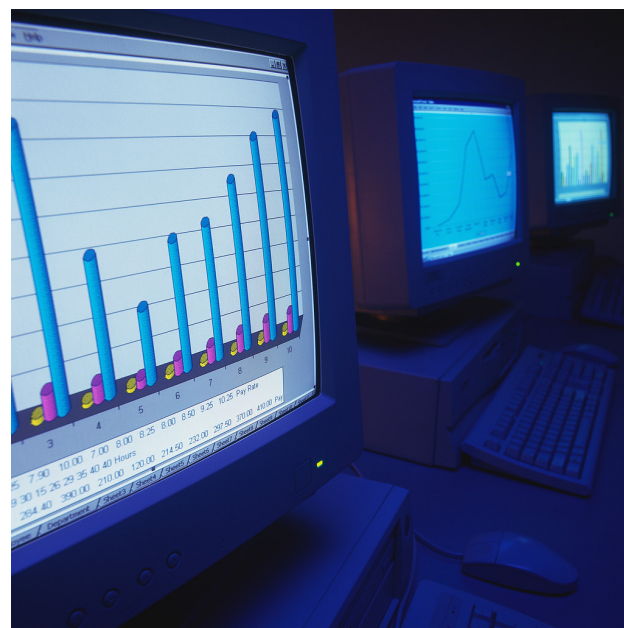
a robust relationship with the scrutiny function to ensure that collectively we get the best for the communities we serve.



Getting the best for our communities

What is the Overview and Scrutiny role and how could this relationship with LINKs develop?

Overview and Scrutiny is a key element of the Government's modernisation agenda for local government. It's about improving performance and providing better services by making our decision-making clearer and more responsive. Scrutiny isn't about applying blame if things go wrong but is a positive process to enable us all to do better. It's about continuous improvement. The Local Government Act 2000 required every Council to have an Overview and Scrutiny process in place. This process operates on a similar basis to parliamentary select committees. Overview and Scrutiny is a common-sense approach to examining particular issues of local concern, contributing to policy development and service improvement.



Working together to provide better services

LINKs, as the eyes and ears of Overview and Scrutiny, will need to take an active part in its work and vice versa. Regular liaison between the Host organisation, the LINK and Overview and Scrutiny is vital to ensuring we work together, plan together and share a common approach in challenging and holding to account.

As Overview and Scrutiny is about contributing to policy development and adding value by ensuring the best decision is taken first time, the work of the LINK in collaborating with this process is essential.

Early involvement with both LINKs and Overview and Scrutiny by health and social care providers and commissioners is a must and will enable the best possible health and social care outcomes for our communities. Partnership working to achieve this is the key. Overview and

Scrutiny and LINKs need to collaborate on a range of issues. A good start would be to align our work programmes so that we are maximising resources and focussing on the common challenges such as implementation of the Health Act 2006 Hygiene Code, Health Inequalities and reconfiguration of health and social care services.

Durham County Council Overview and Scrutiny function looks forward to working alongside the LINK and the appointed Host and enabling effective co-operation and collaboration on a range of issues which affect us all .

For more information about . Overview and Scrutiny contact Feisal Jassat on feisal.jassat@durham.gov.uk

County Durham early adopter project takes centre stage

Gerald Tompkins (pictured) and David Haw were key speakers at an event hosted by the Association of North East Councils to share information and learning about implementing LINKs with colleagues from across the region. The event took place on 3 December in the Assembly Rooms in Newcastle and included contributions from Stephanie Varah (pictured) who is Project Manager for the Early Adopter Projects and Sally Young from the CIPPH. Gerald and David, who are both members of the County Durham LINK Project Group, described the barriers, achievements and challenges arising from their experience of the Early Adopter Project and offered a helpful insight to colleagues in the North East who are just embarking on their LINKs journey. Following speaker contributions, there was a wide choice of workshops covering topics such as procurement, scrutiny, governance, non-traditional models for LINKs and community

engagement. Jayne Mills and Liz Greer from County Durham ran the workshop on developing non-traditional LINK models which further explored the community development approach taken by the Durham project. The level of interest in LINKs locally was evidenced by the large number of delegates numbering around 150 and the Association is producing a report of the event. For more information contact kasia.kurowska@northeastcouncils.gov.uk or on 0845 0760080 www.northeastcouncils.gov.uk



Gerald Tompkins



Stephanie Varah