

President's welcome...

Welcome to the late spring edition of the Cambridgeshire LINK newsletter.

Welcome to our late spring newsletter. In this you will find more about the proposed new health bill and about our new way of working; there is a strong link between the two. You said our LINK wasn't good at reaching local people. HealthWatches will have to know more about what local people think than LINKs currently do, so your Management Group combined these issues together into a new way of working.

The plan is to spend less time in meetings, as you asked, and more time on projects. To make more impact we will work on only five or six projects a year; do less but do it well. The other part of the plan is more engagement with local communities and hard to reach groups. This is essential preparation for HealthWatch and it will tell us which projects to choose. Read more in the following pages.

A week is a long in politics so what I say next may be wrong before you read it! The Government has "paused" the health bill to listen to people. You can find ways to make your own voice heard on-line or in advertised local events. What I hear is that concerns centre around private providers of health care and the proposed Health & Wellbeing Boards. GP Commissioning and HealthWatch are very unlikely to be dropped and work continues at a fast pace. I am the East of England representative on the CQC/DH HealthWatch Advisory Group and our work continues without "pause". I am also working with NHS Cambridgeshire, County Council, GPs and others to submit a HealthWatch Pathfinder bid by the 12th May. You can read about both of these in our next newsletter; for now catch up with the health bill and other matters in the following pages.

Mike Hewins

LINK Contact Details

You can **write** to us at FREEPOST ANG 10698, ELY, CB6 1YA (no stamp required).

You can **call** us on 0300 365 1245 (lo-call rate).

You can **email** us at office@cambridgeshirelink.org.uk

Our **website**, www.cambridgeshirelink.org.uk, is also a source of useful information about LINK.



Cambridgeshire Local Involvement Network (or LINK) is an independent network, made up of local people and organisations, whose role is to give local people more influence over how their local health and social care services are planned and delivered.

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NATIONAL NEWS

The Health and Social Care Bill 2011

In January this year the government published its vision for the future of Health and Social Services in the Health and Social Care Bill 2011. In response to public opinion and commentary from a number of leading Health and Social Care organisations, the government announced a 'pause' in the progress of the Bill for three months, to consider the concerns that have been raised. The 'pause' will end in July.

The following is a brief summary of the bill's key proposals:

- Groups of General Practitioners [GPs] will be formed [known as Consortia] and they will become responsible for commissioning health care for their patients and they will control the budget for this. This role is currently undertaken by Primary Care Trusts which will disappear along with Strategic Health Authorities. GP Consortia will be responsible to a new body, the NHS Commissioning Board.
- The bill, if passed, will make it possible for 'any willing provider' to provide healthcare services.
- A new body will be established called HealthWatch. This will operate at a national and local level. Local HealthWatch will replace LINKs. Local HealthWatch is to be the consumer voice for people who use and need health and social care services, to be empowered to improve and influence the commissioning decisions made about those services. Local HealthWatch will be commissioned by Local Authorities – in our case Cambridgeshire County Council. Local HealthWatch will also have a role in providing information and signposting to people about health and social care services.
- All hospitals in England will become foundation trust hospitals if they haven't done so already. This will enable hospitals to become more independent of Whitehall with the freedom to generate income.
- There will be a new body called Public Health England which will have the aim of improving public health and reducing health inequalities. The responsibility for the provision of Public Health services will transfer to Local Authorities.
- Health and Wellbeing Boards will be established in each Local Authority area. These Boards will draw membership from GP consortia, the Local Authority, including elected members, and a representative from Local HealthWatch. There may be other representatives as each Board has some discretion regarding its membership. This Board will have the job of ensuring that the population of Cambridgeshire is healthy and has the appropriate health and social care services to meet its needs. There will be an expectation that commissioning and the provision of services will be 'joined up' across the various agencies.

LOCAL NEWS

Health and Wellbeing Boards

Cambridgeshire LINK was invited to send representatives to an event on the 31st March which was organised by Cambridgeshire Together. This event drew a wide range of organisations together to consider how the new Health and Wellbeing Boards will work in Cambridgeshire.

Cambridgeshire LINK had already participated in a consultation exercise that was set up to inform this event.

Cambridgeshire is already been designated as an 'Early Implementer', that is it will set up its Health and Wellbeing Board ahead of the planned start date next year.

Health and Wellbeing Boards bring together key people from social services [adult and children's services], Public Health, GP consortia and elected Council members. They will also include a representative from Local HealthWatch [Cambridgeshire LINK will provide the representative before HealthWatch comes into being].

The Boards will have a number of functions which will include:

- Developing a shared view about how health and social care services should be provided
- Fully understanding the needs of the people of Cambridgeshire
- Working together as a group of organisations to ensure the health and social care needs of the population of Cambridgeshire are met
- Looking at how the resources of each organisation can be used to deliver what is needed.

Mike Hewins, President of LINK, welcomed the inclusion of LINK in the consultation and the fact that LINK and later HealthWatch will be represented on the Board. Mike said 'This gives us an opportunity to ensure that the views of the people of Cambridgeshire on health and social care issues are included at the highest level and that they inform decision making'.

Local HealthWatch

The government has now published a HealthWatch Transition Plan that sets out how LINKs will evolve to become local HealthWatch. This change will now take place by July 2012. The details of what HealthWatch will do and how they will do it are still being worked on, and may change following the 'pause'. The government is also asking for LINKs to come forward to become 'Pathfinders' of HealthWatch. Mike Hewins, President of Cambridgeshire LINK, will write about what we are doing in Cambridgeshire elsewhere in his opening remarks in this news letter.

However the summary below gives a flavour of the reforms.

HealthWatch will have an important role supporting everyone in the community, but particularly those who are vulnerable or often unheard. Local HealthWatch will provide information about health and social care services and about the choices people can make. LINKs will evolve to

become HealthWatch and they will have extra functions to those that LINK currently have

Local HealthWatch will be statutory organisation. It could be a commercial or social enterprise company which can employ staff and manage its own budget. Currently the work of LINK is supported by a Host.

HealthWatch may provide complaints advocacy in the future. It will have a crucial role in finding out what people think about health and social care and bringing those concerns to the attention of decision makers and providers.

The Local Authority, in our case Cambridgeshire County Council will commission HealthWatch as they will receive the funding from government to do this.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LINK NEWS

Annual Report Published

Cambridgeshire LINK has produced its Annual Report for 2010/11. This can be downloaded from our website www.cambridgeshirelink.org.uk. If you would like a hard copy of the summary please contact the Host Team [details are on the front page].

The Annual Report illustrates how Cambridgeshire LINK can help improve health and social care services. Excellent outcomes have been achieved in a number of areas. Here are three examples:

Paramedic Possession of Certain Drugs

As a result of lobbying by Cambridgeshire LINK, local Members of Parliament approached the Home Office to allow paramedics to lawfully administer certain pain relief or sedative drugs to critically injured patients. The Home Office has responded by saying it intends to amend the Misuse of Drugs Act to enable paramedics to offer the best possible care to their patients.

Addenbrookes Hospital Discharge Lounge

Following public concerns about the hospital's discharge process and the

patient experience within the main Discharge Lounge, Cambridgeshire LINK undertook an investigation. A report was submitted to the hospital concerning observations on the physical environment, availability of reading materials, and the pharmacy service. Addenbrookes responded positively to the report and has made a number of changes including a designated Pharmacist being responsible for dispensing medication to discharge lounge patients.

Quality of Life in Cambridgeshire Care Homes

Cambridgeshire LINK decided to use its power to 'enter and view' services to go into a number of care homes to talk to residents and staff. The Link team were keen to find out if residents felt they receive personalised and dignified care and that they had a good quality of life.

The LINK representatives were impressed and pleased with the level of care given in the homes that were visited. This work is a good example of how LINK involvement can provide an independent view and, in this case, re-assurance to families and friends of people in Care Homes that we have good quality care services in Cambridgeshire.

New Way of Working for Cambridgeshire LINK

In early 2011 Cambridgeshire LINK participants were asked to give their views about how well they thought their LINK worked. 70% of respondents were dissatisfied with our LINK's activity, only 20% thought it effective and very few participants thought we communicated LINK's purpose. These clear messages and the changes that are coming about because of the proposed reform of the NHS - including the introduction of HealthWatch- led the LINK Management Group to propose a new way of working for Cambridgeshire LINK.

This was described at an open meeting on 24 March by our President, Mike Hewins. The view at this meeting was to go ahead with the changes which will be ratified at our General Assembly on 8 June. The key changes to the way we work are as follows:

- The Work Groups will evolve into Liaison Groups which will meet quarterly instead of monthly. The purpose of the Liaison Groups is to foster good partnership working with key Providers and Commissioners. The groups will continue to provide a key interface between our LINK and organisations such as Addenbrookes, Hinchingsbrooke, Adult Social Care, Mental Health

Services, Papworth Hospital, Cambridgeshire Community Services and NHS Cambridgeshire [or GP consortia as they develop].

- The reduced time spent in meetings will enable the LINK to undertake a number of projects focussing on issues of concern. These may arise from the consultation we do with the public, reports from national organisations such as the Care Quality Commission, reports about health or social care services in our local media or issues raised by partner organisations where joint work with the LINK could be beneficial.
- The LINK Management Group will give the go ahead for all projects, known as Task and Finish groups. The Groups will have a project management approach and will aim to deliver results within three to six months.
- Cambridgeshire LINK will continue to have a major focus on engagement with all sections of Cambridgeshire's diverse communities and the Involvement Group will continue to meet regularly to explore and agree how to be more effective in this important task for LINK and Local HealthWatch.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LINK NEWS

Cambridgeshire LINK will be holding its Annual General Assembly on 8 June 2011. Everyone is invited to attend. However, as places at the venue are limited please make sure you book your place as indicated on the invitation below.



YOU ARE INVITED
to the Annual General Assembly of the Cambridgeshire
Local Involvement Network on
8 June 2011 7pm to 9pm

**Dr Sushil Jathanna CEO of NHS Cambridgeshire
will give the opening address on how the proposed
Health and Social Care Bill will affect the people of
Cambridgeshire**

Venue: the Aquarius Suite, The Burgess Hall, One
Leisure St Ives, Westwood Road, St Ives, PE27 6WU

Tea/coffee will be available from 6.30pm

R.S.V.P. Cambridgeshire LINK, 0300 365 1245 or
office@cambridgeshirelink.org.uk

**Cambridgeshire LINK gives people the opportunity to influence local
health and social care services. This event is open to everyone.**

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LINK NEWS

How can we represent you better?

Why not fill in our new survey?

A key job for any LINK is to gather the views of people about health and social care services. We know that we need to find ways of ensuring everyone can give their view if they want to do so and this includes finding different ways of gathering information.

We have therefore devised a questionnaire to help people report their experiences to us. This can be found on our website at <http://www.smart-survey.co.uk/v.asp?i=34742srxct> and it can be completed on line. Alternatively it can be printed off and completed and posted to us. If you don't have access to the internet we would be happy to post a form to you, or you may attend one of community engagement events where you can pick up a form and complete it on the spot. In the questionnaire we do not ask for details of your name and address. You can therefore be confident that your views about health and social care services can be given in confidence.

If you are part of a community organisation or group we would be pleased to discuss how your members or the people who use your services could give their views about health and social care services to us. Please contact one of the Host Team to discuss this [details of how to do this are on the front page].

We now ask everyone who fills in our questionnaire to complete information that helps us ensure we are engaging with all the people that live in Cambridgeshire. This includes information on age, gender and ethnicity. We use this information to demonstrate that we are reaching all sections of our community, and to target new engagement work if this is necessary.





This is an example of one of our displays which we took to an event on Self Directed Support.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LINK NEWS

The Host Team

We are currently recruiting to the vacancy left by Emma Stubbs' departure in early April. The team members and their individual contact details are as follows:

| | |
|---|--|
|  | <p>Joan Harding LINK Team Leader</p> <p>Direct Line: 01353 865045 Email: joan.harding@cambridgeshirelink.org.uk</p> |
|  | <p>Kate Hales LINK Facilitator</p> <p>Direct Line: 01353 865028 Mobile: 07586 895127 Email: kate.hales@cambridgeshirelink.org.uk</p> |
|  | <p>Angie Ridley LINK Facilitator</p> <p>Direct Line: 01353 865022 Mobile: 07738 736732 Email: angie.ridley@cambridgeshirelink.org.uk</p> |
|  | <p>Bev Woolmer LINK Facilitator</p> <p>Direct Line: 01353 865044 Mobile: 07738 736768 Email: beverley.woolmer@cambridgeshirelink.org.uk</p> |