

LINK Up!

The newsletter for participants in the Cambridgeshire Local Involvement Network

Autumn 2011



Cambridgeshire
Local Involvement Network

Welcome to the Autumn Newsletter

My apologies to you all that this letter from me is shorter than usual because, completely unintentionally, I am testing the local NHS services first hand starting with my admission by ambulance to A&E. So far I can report excellent care and attention but I have some suggestions to pass on via our comments form. Can I take this opportunity to encourage anyone who has similar opportunity to send in a comments form? Feedback about firsthand experience is really helpful to health and social care services as well as to us in LINK. You can access the comments form [here](#), via our website www.cambridgeshirelink.org.uk or we can send you a hard copy which you can return by post – just call the office.

This newsletter concentrates on current LINK matters rather than national changes, although the latter continues at a pace. From comments you sent us you wanted us to focus on what our LINK is doing now, so that is what we have done in this issue. I hope you find it useful and please do send your views and comments on the newsletter to the office so that we can reflect what you want.

This issue talks about consultations that are taking place on changes to local services, such as stroke care in the Huntingdon area and changes to mental health services. There is the usual list of our LINK engagement activities and I would also like to draw your attention to the article on the Equality and Diversity Scheme which I think is a very important tool in ensuring that care is provided equitably.

Mike Hewins - President of Cambridgeshire LINK



Follow us on Facebook

Cambridgeshire LINK now has its own Facebook page. We are keeping it up to date with LINK engagement activities and other events of interest.

 [Become a fan on facebook...](#)

NATIONAL NEWS

The Health and Social Care Bill 2011

The Health and Social Care Bill has now passed to the House of Lords. The first reading took place on the 8 September, the second in October. Peers voted to pass the Bill which will now move to the committee stage for more detailed scrutiny over the next few months. How long this will take is crucial to whether Local HealthWatch will begin as planned in October 2012.

LOCAL NEWS

Cambridgeshire's shadow Health and Wellbeing Board begins work

Cambridgeshire is leading the way in introducing Health and Wellbeing Boards. These are part of the reforms of health and social care services that are currently being debated. The purpose of the shadow board is to promote the health and wellbeing of Cambridgeshire's communities to secure the best possible health outcomes for all residents. A key aim is to promote joint commissioning and integrated provision between the health service, public health and social care services.

Membership of the Board includes elected members from the County Council and a District Council, senior officers from the County Council, the Director of Public Health, representatives from the clinical commissioning groups and the NHS commissioning board. It will also include LINK as the Health and Wellbeing Boards will include a representative from Local HealthWatch, the organisation that will replace LINK.

Mike Hewins, our President, will represent LINK on the shadow board which met for the first time in October.

Cambridgeshire LINK is a Pathfinder HealthWatch

Cambridgeshire LINK is one of over 70 LINKs across the country that has become a Pathfinder HealthWatch. Bids to become a Pathfinder HealthWatch were made to the Department of Health over the summer by LINKs and their partners in Local Authorities and the NHS. This work will help to pave the way for the introduction of HealthWatch England and Local HealthWatch next year [subject to the transition of the Health and Social Care Bill through Parliament].

The learning from Pathfinder HealthWatch LINKs will be shared through action learning sets that will be set up through the Department of Health.

Cambridgeshire LINK's Pathfinder work has three elements:

- Exploring ways to improve community engagement to ensure all sections of Cambridgeshire's diverse communities can have their say about health and social care services.
- Exploring how LINK can work in partnership with the new GP commissioning structures to improve public and patient involvement.
- Consideration of how the functions currently carried out by NHS Cambridgeshire's Patient Advice and Liaison Service will be incorporated into Local HealthWatch in 2012.

LOCAL NEWS – PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

Stroke Services

NHS Cambridgeshire is inviting people to have their say on the future of hyperacute and acute stroke services in Huntingdonshire. Hyperacute (the first 72 hours after stroke) and acute stroke services is the care that a patient receives in hospital immediately after a stroke, until they are ready to be discharged from hospital or referred on for rehabilitation. Click on the link below to complete the survey online:

<http://www.cambridgeshire.nhs.uk/snapsurveys/acutestroke.htm>

Full details of the consultation, which ends on the 4 December, can be found on the NHS Cambridgeshire website at www.cambridgeshire.nhs.uk

Bus Services

Cambridgeshire residents and bus users are being asked to have their say on proposed reductions to subsidised services and the introduction of more locally targeted initiatives. LINK members often raise concerns about the availability of bus services to and from hospitals so this consultation is an opportunity to make your views known. There is a questionnaire that can be accessed via www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/busreview or a hard copy can be requested by calling the Council's contact centre on 0345 045 0675. The consultation ends on the 9 December.

Mental Health Services

Public Consultation – Proposed Redesign of Mental Health Services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

NHS Cambridgeshire, NHS Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust are consulting with the public on proposals to redesign Mental Health Services in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. The consultation runs from 17 October 2011 to midnight 16 January 2012.

The consultation document can be viewed by clicking on the following link:

www.cambridgeshire.nhs.uk/Have-your-say

There will be three open public meetings:

Time	Date	Month	Location
12.00-14.00	11	November	Room 3, Meadows Community Centre, 1 St Catharine's Road, Cambridge CB4 3XJ
18.00-20.00	7	December	Room G.93, Oak Tree Centre, 1 Oak Drive Huntingdon PE29 7HN
14.00-16.00	8	December	Conference Room The Cavell Centre, Edith Cavell Healthcare Campus, Bretton Gate, Peterborough PE3 9GZ

LOCAL NEWS – THE PATIENT PORTAL

Howareyou.com – a Social Network for Health in Action

The NHS East of England is developing a new way for people who have long term health conditions to get support and relevant trustworthy information to help them manage their health and stay in control. A website called Howareyou.com has been developed.

Here are 10 good reasons why you should take a look at www.howareyou.com:

- Easy to use and **FREE**.
- Access to information about the principles of self care.
- Allows people to feel in control and more confident in managing their own health
- Easy to store information.
- Lets you talk to others in a similar situation.
- Allows you to share information.
- Vital information such as medication/conditions and allergies is all in one place and kept up to date by you.
- You can access information about your condition from trusted sources such as NHS Choices.
- Supports you to develop your own personal health plan.
- Helps you to feel like a person and not a collection of conditions.

Future developments include

- Video conferencing with anyone in your network.
- Supporting patient groups including feedback on healthcare services.
- GP directory.
- Application framework to support medical devices and applications.
- Workforce development tools including supporting workforce healthcare.



LOCAL NEWS – PETERBOROUGH AND STAMFORD HOSPITAL

Cambridgeshire people living in parts of Fenland receive NHS services at Peterborough hospital. On 29 September Cambridgeshire LINK representatives attended a 'Turnaround Workshop' organised by Peterborough and Lincolnshire LINKs to discuss the deficit facing the Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Senior representatives from the Trust presented their four year turnaround programme which aims to address the £21m deficit whilst safeguarding the quality of patient care. The Trust is working with the Department of Health and other stakeholders throughout this process. A key priority is to safeguard the quality of patient care whilst delivering the programme.

If you have any comments about Peterborough Hospital please contact Peterborough LINK on 01733 758500.

LOCAL AND NATIONAL NEWS – EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCHEME

The NHS Equality and Diversity Scheme (EDS) was launched in July 2011. This is a voluntary self-assessment scheme for NHS organisations to help them deliver services that are personal, fair and diverse.

The EDS goals are:

1. Better health outcomes for all.
2. Improved patient access and experience.
3. Empowered, engaged and included staff.
4. Inclusive leadership at all levels.

There are plans for LINKs to play an important role in this work locally. LINKs can also report any concerns about equality issues to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as the CQC inspectors can ask to see EDS evidence when monitoring compliance with the essential standards.

Cambridgeshire LINK has been invited to attend two local workshop events to discuss how the scheme will be implemented locally.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LINK ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Cambridgeshire LINK Active Participants and the staff from the Host team undertake a number of public engagement events around the county throughout the year. We use these events to ask members of the public what they think about health and social care using our questionnaire. Although it would be good to see you when we are out and about you can also let us know your views by filling in the form online by clicking [here](#).

Here are some of the events we have organised or attended in the last few months. Other dates are added as opportunities arise. Check out our Facebook page to find out more.

Month	Engagement Event
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open day at Littleport office - Ely library: static display for two weeks plus a drop in
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Static display in Cambourne library - St Neots market PALS road show - The Learning Disability parliament - The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Trust AGM - Cambridgeshire ACRE AGM
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Age UK autumn meeting - Chatteris Library: static display
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cambridge Central library: static display
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - St Neots library: static display



Two LINK participants at the CPFT AGM



Open day at the Littleport office

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LINK - FOCUS ON CARE HOMES

Cambridgeshire LINK is responding to concerns raised by national bodies such as the Care Quality Commission about the standards of care in some care homes across the country.

Elsewhere in this newsletter we talk about the work our Authorised Representatives undertake to visit care homes and hospitals to look into the care and support people receive. On these visits we do try to talk to relatives and friends who are present at the time, but often the opportunity does not arise.

Cambridgeshire LINK has created an easy way for family and friends of people in care homes to give us their views about the care their family member or friend is receiving, or has received in the last year to eighteen months (if they are no longer living at the care home). We have created a questionnaire that can be completed on line [here](#). Hard copies of the questionnaire can be obtained by calling the LINK office on 0300 365 1245, or you can complete it over the 'phone with a member of the LINK staff team.

Cambridgeshire LINK does not take up individual complaints – but we can advise you how to make a complaint if you wish to do so. However, the information we collect from the questionnaire is shared with the Care Quality Commission and the County Council to help drive up standards.

Sometimes people tell us that they don't like to tell us about poor practice for fear that this will somehow impact on the care their family or friend receives. Our questionnaire does not ask you for any identifying details of the person being cared for. We also know that some people only feel able to raise concerns once their loved one is no longer living at a care home which is why it is possible to complete the questionnaire in retrospect.

Finally it is important to recognise that many people have a very positive experience in registered care homes and we would like to hear about that too.

We look forward to receiving your comments.



OUR HEALTH OUR CARE OUR SAY – SECOND REPORT FROM OUR QUESTIONNAIRE



'I am delighted with the attentive care and long term benefits of the physiotherapy I receive'.

'I am a full time carer, I feel isolated and like a second class citizen'

'My tablets were the cause of the delay – lack of communication between the ward and the pharmacist'

'You have to ring before 8am to get an appointment – sometimes you have to wait a long time to get an answer'

These are some of the many comments we have received from our survey. 333 completed questionnaires have been returned in the last six months.

The views and comments expressed by people completing the questionnaire are passed to decision makers and managers in health and social care services. Your voice matters – so if you have a recent experience of health or social care services, good or bad, let us know by [completing our questionnaire](#).

Visit our website to find the latest reports from our survey.

PATIENT EXPERIENCE ACTION TEAM [PEAT] INSPECTIONS

LINK supports extra PEAT inspections at CCS NHS Trust sites



Image Provided by CCS

Cambridgeshire LINK is currently supporting Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust to undertake extra PEAT inspections at all their community hospital sites and the Children's unit at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital.

Patient Environment Action Team (PEAT) is a self assessment framework for inpatient healthcare sites in England with 10 or more inpatient beds. It scores standards in key areas including: food, cleanliness, infection control, the patient environment and privacy and dignity.

PEAT inspections are normally undertaken annually but CCS NHS Trust asked LINK participants to join them on extra inspections at North Cambs Hospital, Princess of Wales Hospital, the Children's Unit at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital, Brookfields Hospital and Arthur Rank Hospice. In addition they also decided to inspect Doddington Hospital, which does not fit the criteria for regular PEAT assessments.

Graham Nice, Chief Nurse, Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust said:

"We are delighted that Cambridgeshire LINK is participating fully in our programme of PEAT inspections which will support our aim to provide the highest quality of care. The LINK's representatives bring an additional perspective to the visits, acting as a 'critical friend' and their input is greatly valued."

LINK Participants that have undertaken inspections so far have reported back that they were equal participants in a team that included the Matron, an Estate Manager and other NHS staff. At the end of the inspection, the team discussed their scoring of the different areas to come up with a joint assessment. CCS NHS Trust will be sharing the outcome of these inspections with LINK, which will be reported back through the CCS NHS Trust LINK Liaison Group meeting.

TRAINING FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS

The LINK has welcomed a number of new participants in the last few months. Two induction sessions were organised in August. We have also provided training to our participants who wish to act as Authorised Representatives. This includes a session on the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

Would you like to join the LINK? There are three different types of membership, depending on how involved and active you would like to be in the LINK. Full information is on our website or you can contact the LINK office to find out more. Contact details are at the bottom of this page.

AUTHORISED REPRESENTATIVES

One of the important roles our volunteers undertake is acting as Authorised Representatives. LINK Authorised Representatives have the right to visit registered care homes and various NHS facilities to make sure people receive the care and treatment they are entitled to. The information we gather from these visits is shared with the services we visit to help them identify if improvements are needed. It is also passed to the regulatory body [the Care Quality Commission], the County Council [for social care services] and the NHS commissioners.

Cambridgeshire LINK is currently undertaking visits to some of the registered care homes in Cambridgeshire. We are also visiting the wards in our local hospitals to find out how well they support the dignity and privacy of older people.

CAMBRIDGESHIRE LINK NEWS - EVENTS

The Next General Assembly is on the 2 November at 1.30pm

There will be a General Assembly which is open to all on the 2 November from 1.30pm to 4.30pm. This will be held at the Milton Community Centre. If you would like to attend please contact the office. Our main speaker will be Claire Bruin, Service Director for Adult Social Care, Cambridgeshire County Council. Claire will be speaking about the development of Local HealthWatch which will replace LINKs in October 2012 if the Health Bill proceeds through parliament as planned.

Cambridgeshire LINK will be holding a networking event for its Active Participants on the 6 December. This will be held at the St Ivo Centre, St Ives in the morning followed by lunch. If you are an Active Participant and wish to attend, please let the office know.

THE HOST TEAM



From left to right: Angie Ridley, Kate Hales, Bev Woolmer, Joan Harding and Sarah Prentice

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