



# Annual Report 2010 - 2011

## Cumbria Local Involvement Network (LINK)



Cumbria CVS supports the Cumbria LINK to Succeed

# Contents

<b>Forward from the Chair</b>	3
<b>Governance Arrangements</b>	5
Authorised Cumbria LiNk Representatives	5
Membership	5
<b>LiNk Activity</b>	6
NHS Dentistry	6
Accident and Emergency at Furness General Hospital	6
Ravensfield Residential Care Home	7
Breast Screening	8
West Cumberland Hospital Task Group	9
<b>Working in Partnership</b>	10
Community Health Champions	10
Listening to Communities	10
Representing the views of Care Home Residents	11
<b>Developing Relationships</b>	12
Working with Emerging GP Consortia	12
Carlisle Locality Board and Stakeholder Group	13
Eden Locality Board	13
Information Requested 2010/11	14
Enter and View Visits	15
Patient Environment Action Team (PEAT) visits	15
Reports	15
Income and Expenditure	15
<b>Contact Details</b>	Back cover

# Foreword from the Chair

This is the third year of the work of the Cumbria LINK. Over the last year, 2010/2011, we have become more focused on what we need to do to be effective. This might sound self evident but in these early years of a new organisation it takes time to establish contacts with providers of services, potential third sector partners and to get a clear picture of who would most benefit from our activities. The expected addition of new members to the LINK governing body will add to our knowledge base and expertise.

The body of this report shows in greater detail the range of areas that we are involved in. Our Enter and View teams continue to make important observations on the service delivered by care homes and their well structured reports make an important contribution to the welfare of residents. Our two projects to "listen and speak" within our communities are gaining momentum. LINK members regularly attend and report back from meetings of health and social care bodies such as the County Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), NHS Cumbria (PCT), the Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (Mental Health and Community services) and the North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust.

Over the year we have been in continual contact with amongst others the OSC chair, the North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust's senior management and the head of the Strategic Health Authority to establish the cause of the failure in mammography interpretation and the resultant suspension of the service. As a result we were asked to contribute to the terms of reference of the clinical governance review which will examine the status of departments through the hospital trust.

We have increased our formal contacts with the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust, the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust and the Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust as well as with leads at NHS Cumbria and in social care at Cumbria County Council. We have also had regular contact on behalf of patients and the public with departments within the hospital trusts, Cumbria County Council Social Services department and the North West Ambulance Service. We are currently represented on stakeholder groups involved in the building of the new West Cumberland Hospital, and the merger of the North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust with an appropriate Foundation Trust. We have also started to develop (in partnership with NHS Cumbria) stakeholder groups in order to influence the decision making of the 6 localities comprising the new GP commissioning group.

We are currently operating in an environment which will continue to offer challenges to patient and public involvement. The health "economy" is evolving in a way not seen before. The development of "Closer to Home" four years ago has enabled increasing numbers of services to be delivered at a doctor's surgery or a minor injuries clinic but this results in a decrease in the number of hospital appointments. This in turn results in the acute trust having a lower income which together with GP commissioning has thrown the spotlight on the "cost" of our local health care. This is not something any of us have had to think about seriously before. On top of this the 2010 health Bill "Liberating the NHS" will force the North Cumbria University Hospital NHS Trust to merge with another trust because of its financial state.

## Foreword from the Chair continued

If this was not enough the 2010 Bill currently going through Parliament, albeit with a three-month pause, makes it clear that LINKs all over the country will be evolve into Local HealthWatch but with extra duties and responsibilities. We are currently, together with our partners from Cumbria County Council and the Third Sector, examining the possibility of being a Pathfinder or early starter HealthWatch.



The transformation of the Cumbria LINK into HealthWatch and the changing background in the delivery of health and social care against which this will take place will create significant extra responsibilities for us. I am confident that the LINK governing body and its wider network of members of the public and patients will discharge these responsibilities and ensure that their voices are heard.

Perhaps we should take the Health Bill itself at face value and use its theme as our own,

**“No decision about me without me”**

Alan Alexander  
**Cumbria LINK Governing Body Member**

# Governance Arrangements

Current Governing Body Members are listed below together with Governing Body Members who resigned. We would like to express our grateful thanks to those members for their hard work in developing our network.

## Current Governing Body Members

- Alan Alexander
- Jim Bradley
- Neil Hughes
- Janet Pitman
- Liz Clegg
- Jane Thompson

## Former Governing Body Members

- Paul Brown
- David Singleton Edwards
- Chris Abbot

## Authorised Cumbria LINK Representatives

We have increased our authorised representatives from 15 to 20 all of whom have completed specific training and CRB checks to enable them to conduct enter and view visits.

These members are:

- Evelyn Bitcon
- Anna Brooks
- Anne Glazebrook
- Janet Pitman
- Margaret Graham
- Don Joscelyne
- Peter Bartlett
- Stephen Smart
- Neil Hughes
- Meryl Parry
- Jane Thompson
- Ailsa Benson
- Liz Clegg
- Ruth Peter
- Ella Cullen
- Richard Johnstone
- Alan Alexander
- Chris Abbot
- David Ralph
- Viv Stucke

**It is with much sadness that we report the death of Stephen Smart who was an active member of Cumbria LINK and the LINK Visiting Team. He was a much valued member and had worked within his community for many years. He will be sadly missed.**

## Membership

Our wider membership stands at 1,052, of this there are 419 individuals and 633 organisations.

# LINK Activities

## NHS Dentistry

This year we have continued to monitor the provision of NHS dentistry in the County and were concerned to hear how confused people are about how to register with a dentist.

To find out more about what was going wrong we carried out a mystery shopper exercise across the county during July and August. Our members went to GP Practices, Dentists, Pharmacies and Libraries and asked how to register with an NHS Dentist.

We found that our members were given a wide range of information. On the whole the staff spoken to were helpful, but very few gave the correct information. Our findings were given to commissioners who have acted on our recommendations to improve information and communications.

We are pleased that a review has taken place.

- Posters are being developed for all GP surgeries, Dentists. Libraries, Citizen Advice Bureau and Pharmacies in Cumbria
- Web access to the registration form has been improved making the process easier.
- Administration time has been reduced through the integration of the web based registration form and the registration database. This information had previously been manually transferred so time and effort has been saved.

*“The role of Cumbria Link in monitoring this is very much appreciated.”*

**Lead Dental Commissioner Cumbria PCT**

## Improvements at Accident and Emergency Furness General Hospital

In April 2010 Cumbria LINK received reports about the lack of information given to patients on arrival and the lack of information around patient waiting times at the Accident and Emergency Department of Furness General Hospital. A representative of Cumbria LINK was invited to look around the Accident and Emergency Department and after the visit a report was submitted to the hospital setting out the findings and suggested improvements.

In January 2011 Cumbria LINK were invited back to the Accident and Emergency Department to see what improvements had been made following the recommendations in their report and more importantly to see that the recommendations made were now in place.

On the return visit we were pleased to find a vast improvement in the information given to patients and the production of leaflets. The improvements had all been carried out despite a very busy time for Accident and Emergency staff due to the severe weather conditions experienced before Christmas.

The following recommendations have been put in place:

- Patients are now given more information, through leaflets and verbally by the staff about expected waiting times.
- Leaflets have been produced explaining how Triage works.

- Staff now hold monthly Emergency Department meetings to discuss various topics e.g. staff attitude towards patients, hand hygiene, surface decontamination.
- Provision of new seating in the waiting area (although this was not in-situ on the return visit).
- Information on the notice board regarding current NHS topics relating to patients.
- On arrival at the Accident and Emergency Department, patients are given a friendly welcome by reception staff.

As a result of the above a press statement was issued by Cumbria LINK stating that patients are now better informed at Furness General Hospital Accident and Emergency Department.

## Ravensfield Residential Care Home

Cumbria LINK was made aware of the strength of feeling in and around Keswick over the proposed closure of Ravensfield Residential Care Home and in response arranged a drop in session in Keswick for people to express their views.

The drop in session was held on 16th September 2010 in the Moot Hall, Keswick and was advertised through posters in the town, local press and through our own networks. Cumbria LINK representatives also talked to local people on the street, local market traders and those at a local drop-in centre for older people.

In addition to the LINK attendance, representatives from Adult Social Care, West Cumbria Carers, Age UK West Cumbria and MIND West Cumbria were invited to provide information to those who attended the drop in session.

A total of 30 people attended the drop in session with a further 15 who gave their views on the street. People also contacted us by phone, letter and email to express their views.

None of the people we spoke to on the day supported the council's reasons for the proposed closure. We are also aware that a petition of 3000 signatures opposing the closure had been handed into the council. Cumbria LINK submitted a report including

everyone's comments, recommending a review of the proposed closure of the Care Home.

Unfortunately despite the substantial amount of public support for Ravensfield the County Councils decision was to close the home. We are assured that there will be opportunities for local people to get involved in developing alternative care solutions in the Keswick area.



## Breast Screening

Three-yearly mammogram examinations carried out by North Cumbria University Hospitals Trust were suspended in July 2010 pending a review of patient records. The results of that review were published in November. It found that radiologists at the hospital trust did not carry out needle biopsy tests in enough cases and a review of 1,695 records was undertaken. Following the review, sixteen women have now been told they have breast cancer after being called back for further assessment.

As a result, NHS Cumbria has asked Newcastle Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust to re-establish screening from Whitehaven and Carlisle in partnership with North Cumbria University Hospitals Trust. The Newcastle Trust will be responsible for supervising all results.

The review also recommended that a larger screening programme should provide breast screening in north Cumbria in the future.

Routine breast cancer screening restarted in north Cumbria in January 2011 after the review was undertaken into the routine breast screening programme.

The arrangement will enable women to undergo routine screening again. Women whose routine screens were delayed by the suspension will be prioritised.

The service operates on the basis of women being called to screening on a three year cycle, approximately 15,000 per year. As the service recommenced, it picked up the cycle from the point it had been paused. This means women are receiving their routine screens at 3.5 years, rather than three years.

To improve this position the opportunity has been taken to obtain a mobile breast screening unit for the month of April. At this point it can only be available for the one month, but it worked 5 days per week and 45 women a day are being screened. This is in addition to those women being seen through the existing hospital-based screening service.

Over the year the Cumbria LINK have been in continual contact with amongst others the OSC chair, the North Cumbria University Hospitals NHS Trust's senior management and the head of the Strategic Health Authority to establish the cause of the failure in mammography interpretation and the resultant suspension of the service. As a result we were asked to contribute to the terms of reference of the clinical governance review which will examine the status of departments throughout the hospital trust.

The Cumbria LINK expects to receive a copy of the detailed update on the service in North Cumbria from NHS Cumbria in July 2011.

The North Cumbria Breast Screening Report carried out by NHS Cumbria and the North West Quality Assurance Team is available at

<http://www.ncuh.nhs.uk/about-us/trust-board/2011/january/papers/breast-screening-report.pdf>

It recommended

1. A safe and effective breast screening programme should be re-established in North Cumbria as soon as practicable. In re-establishing this programme, a larger screening programme which demonstrates centre-of-excellence qualities should be commissioned to provide screening and assessment services locally.

2. The new service should include plans for catch up so that women whose screens have been delayed are seen as soon as possible. The new screening programme should reflect national plans for Digital mammography and age expansion.
3. Screening, diagnosis and treatment services should continue to be delivered locally within North Cumbria.
4. A review of clinical governance procedures should be carried out by North Cumbria University Hospitals Trust in other services provided by the hospitals trust to ensure proper processes are in place. The results of this review should be presented to the NCUHT and NHS Cumbria Trust Boards.
5. No North Cumbria University Hospitals Trust consultant radiologists involved in this incident should be involved in breast imaging until they have completed additional training delivered by a recognised NHS Breast Screening Programme.

Cumbria LINK will continue to ask for regular updates on this service.

## **West Cumberland Hospital Task Group**

The Cumbria LINK task group was set up to monitor the progress of the redevelopment work taking place at the hospital over a three/four year period and to look at the way in which the North Cumbria University Hospital Trust engage with the public about any changes taking place.

The group has representation on the hospital Steering Group that is responsible for overseeing the developments of the refurbishment and making recommendations to the board.

It receives regular updates from the Trust through newsletters and various members of staff attending its meetings.

In May 2010 the group organised a short questionnaire at the hospital to find out people's views of the changes and what they actually knew about what was happening. From the findings they were able to make some recommendations and ask questions of the Trust Board.

The group became increasingly concerned about the Yewdale Ward through out the year as it became clear there was some confusion between the North Cumbria University Hospital NHS Trust and the Cumbria Partnership NHS Trust over the provision of mental health services within the plans for the rebuild. We worked in partnership with Cumbria Mental Health Group to try and resolve the matter but eventually Cumbria LINK felt it necessary to send a referral to the Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and Yewdale ward has now been incorporated into the new Full Business Case stating that provision will be provided at the new hospital.

Many individual things have led to delays in the rebuild/refurbishment of the hospital with the main one being the loss of £10million from the abolition of the North West Development Agency. This resulted in plans being changed and a new Full Business Case having to be written.

The expected timescale is now to start the rebuild towards the end of this year and finish in the early part of 2014 instead of 2013 as planned. So there is still a lot of work for this group to do by keeping an eye on what is happening and asking questions of both the trust and the patients/public.

# Working in Partnership



## Community Health Champions

In April 2010, NHS Cumbria, Cumbria CVS and Cumbria LINK entered into a partnership to deliver the Community Health Champions project. The aim of the project is to create a positive health impact in areas of high social and economic deprivation by working with both existing and new volunteer Community Health Champions in their local communities. In addition, through the course of their voluntary role, Community Health Champions will be able to provide vital intelligence on the needs of communities to inform service development that are patient and community focussed.

One of the project objectives was to devise and offer an accredited volunteer training programme that will enable participants to gain skills and knowledge in health promotion, illness prevention and promotion of life long learning. This we are achieving with the assistance of Lakes College, Workington and Furness College in Barrow, who are delivering the City & Guilds Health Trainer training for our volunteers.

Our Community Health Champions will be based in venues such as community centres, local voluntary and community groups and some GP surgeries. They will motivate and help people to set goals by developing personal health plans, give practical support to carry out those plans and identify with the individuals their barriers to change.

We have a number of volunteers who are nearing the end of their training and will be working in the North of the County. The volunteers in the Furness area will be finishing their training in late June.

*“The Health Trainer role is an excellent idea and should get people kick started with life style changes that hopefully will benefit them and reduce NHS costs through avoidable illnesses.”*

**Community Health Champion Volunteer.**

## Listening to Communities

Cumbria LINK is working in partnership with Cumbria Mental Health Group, Howgill Family Centre, Cumbria Youth Alliance, Barnardo’s and Cumbria CVS, to encourage as many people as possible to tell us what they think about the services they use.

Listening to Communities builds on the concept of a system collecting positive responses and issues of concern from service users and carers, developed by Cumbria Mental Health Group to provide data for NHS Cumbria. Cumbria LINK is now working with Third Sector Organisations in a wider pilot which offers a mechanism for people to raise concerns with Cumbria LINK, allowing the Governing Body to instigate LINK activity where trends are identified.

## Outcomes

The project has a number of potential outcomes:

- Existing networks and groups engage better with the LINK and an increase partnership working
- Raised profile of the LINK
- Increased membership and involvement in LINK and partner organisations
- Increased involvement in local democracy
- The work of Cumbria LINK is truly driven by communities
- Tried and tested methods of community engagement for Cumbrian health and care services

It is still in its early stages but we hope it will be a popular mechanism for people to use if they have any concerns.

## Working with Adult Social Care to Represent the Views of Care Home Residents

Cumbria LINK Visiting team was established to conduct Enter and View visits in places where Health and Care Services are provided. Visits are undertaken as part of Cumbria LINK's Work Plan.

Members of the Visiting Team are all volunteers. All have undertaken Core Visiting training and CRB checks, further ongoing training opportunities are also made available and dementia awareness training will be provided to support their work.

Cumbria LINK has been working in a joint venture with Adult Social Care to visit a number of residential care homes in Cumbria over a period of 12 months starting in November 2010. The purpose being to give an independent residents view of the care they receive.

The LINK Visiting team have completed 11 visits so far and will continue to develop and deliver a programme of care home visits over the next six months.

*'The Adult Social Care Directorate of Cumbria County Council has worked closely with Cumbria LINK in order to help them plan scheduled monitoring visits to some of Cumbria's residential care homes. These visits by LINK representatives have focused on gaining the views of the people living in the homes and have provided the Council's Contracting and Compliance team, together with prospective new residents and their family's, with useful up-to-date information about the homes.'*

*Over the past year Cumbria LINK has become an important member of the County's multi-agency Dignity group. Kay McGregor (LINK Support Officer) sits on the group providing regular feedback about LINK work, as well as contributing to discussions and taking away dignity good practice suggestions, that she can share with her team*

*The Adult Social Care Directorate greatly values the positive relationship it has formed with Cumbria LINK and looks forward to this continuing in the future.*

**Linda Mason** County Manager, Care Governance, Adult & Local Services,  
Cumbria County Council.

# Developing relationships

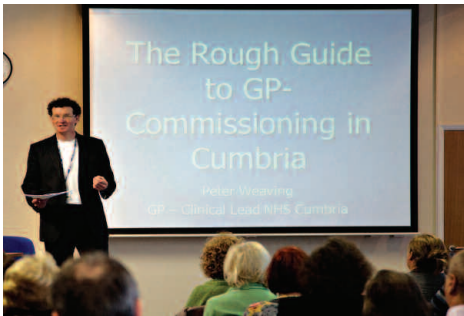
## Working with the Emerging GP Consortia

NHS Cumbria continues to prepare for the transfer of many of its commissioning responsibilities to the GP consortium.

Cumbria has been chosen by the Department of Health to spearhead the development of the GP consortium arrangements by being a 'pathfinder area'. The new arrangements will start being modelled in county during 2011.

The development of the GP consortium and transfer of commissioning responsibility build on the existing approach. GPs in Cumbria already have major responsibility through the Clinical Senate and Locality Boards for deciding how two thirds of Cumbria's £850 million annual health budget is spent.

In January we asked our membership what, if any, concerns they had about GP Commissioning. We received over 40 responses with a wide range of comments and identified the following common themes:



- Transition
- Commitment and Skill within GP consortia
- Time
- Regulation and Accountability
- Budget Concerns
- Strategic Planning
- Future Viability of Acute Hospitals
- Commissioning Specialist Services



The report was welcomed by Cumbria's Lead GP and we will be discussing the findings of our report with lead GPs and NHS Cumbria early in the new financial year.

Cumbria LINK has taken some early steps to engage with the emerging consortia through the Clinical Senate and to date two of the six Locality Boards. Each Locality Board is developing its own mechanism for patient and public involvement.



In February we invited our GP leads to speak to LINK Members and the Action for Health Network. The conference focussed on changes to commissioning of health services, and the role of communities, associations and organisations in developing health and wellbeing support and activities. Dr Peter Weaving (Lead GP for the Carlisle Locality) and Professor John Ashton (Director of

Public Health, NHS Cumbria and Cumbria CC) highlighted health inequalities that exist in Cumbria, and how emerging GP Commissioning will address them.

## **Carlisle Locality Board and Stakeholder Group**

Carlisle Locality Stakeholder Group held it's first meeting in the summer of 2010. It was set up to question, inform and provide an external perspective on locality decisions and community intentions for the GP Lead Locality Boards.

The two elected representatives from the Stakeholder group are both Cumbria LINK members and attend the Carlisle Locality Board to effectively communicate the group's views and questions, then report back to the group and the wider LINK membership about the Boards business, so that when the Board makes an important decision, it knows what stakeholders think about the issue and stakeholders know why the decision was made.

The representatives have attend two Board meetings so far and have been instructed by the Stakeholder group to ask the Board if there are any issues they wish the group to look at. Early days so far but the group is very enthusiastic and are working on how to expand the membership of the group.

## **Eden Locality Board**

The Eden Locality Group was set up at around the same time as the Carlisle one. Cumbria LINK was invited to elect a representative for the Eden Locality Board. Elections have taken place and one of our Governing Body members has been duly elected. They will be able to communicate with the wider LINK membership and with the Eden Stakeholder Group to make sure that the Board are aware of the views of patients and the public.

We are in communication with NHS Cumbria to look at creating Stakeholder groups for the other 4 localities in the County and hope they will be in place by the end of the year.

## Details of Information Requested During the Financial Year 2010-2011

### Trust

Information requested Response within 20 working days

- **Adult Social Care**  
Request for update on residential care home YES

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- **NHS Cumbria**
- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**
- **Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**  
Expressed concerns over lack of involvement at Yewdale Ward YES

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- **Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**  
Request for confirmation of accuracy of article YES

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- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**  
Request for Status of Staffing levels - Mammography YES

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- **Adult Social Care**  
Information on Fairer Charging Access to Care YES

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- **Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**  
Request confirmation of status quo YES

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- **Adult Social Care**  
Request for figures on Ravensfield YES

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- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**  
Information about appointments Late due to annual leave

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- **Regional Quality Assurance Team**  
Information on the length of time to pick up mismatch with national average NO

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- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**  
Request for DNA statistics NO

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- **NHS Cumbria**  
Request for copy of questions asked by Patient Transport Service booking staff NO

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- **NHS Cumbria**  
Information on Governance YES

### Trust

Information requested Response within 20 working days

- **Regional Quality Assurance Team**  
Request for further details NO

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- **Regional Director of Public Health**  
Request for further details YES

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- **NHS Cumbria**  
Request for comments on Mystery Shopper Report circulated NO

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- **NHS Cumbria**  
Request for comments on Fairer Access to Equipment report circulated NO

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- **Adult Social Care**  
Request for comments on Fairer Access to Equipment report circulated NO

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- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**  
Request for information on Pathology NO

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- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**  
Request for response to May Survey at West Cumberland Hospital NO

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- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**  
Question – do they have a fundraising policy NO

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- **Adult Social Care**  
Request for update on personalisation YES

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- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**  
Request for information on Breast Screening Services YES

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- **Adult Social Care**  
Information on the Ravensfield Closure YES

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- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**  
Request for update on Governance Review YES

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- **North Cumbria University Hospital Trust**  
Information on Palliative Care provision in West Cumbria NO

## Enter and View Visits made during the financial year 2010-2011

- Five Oaks Retirement Home
- Grange Bank Residential Home
- Silloth Nursing Home
- Stobers Hall Residential Home
- Chichester Hall Residential Home
- Harker Grange Residential Home
- Clarendon Grange Residential Home
- Twin Oaks Residential Home
- Virginia Lodge Residential Home
- Lunsdale House Residential Home
- The Pines Residential Home

## In partnership with NHS Cumbria Patient Environment Action Team (PEAT) visits to:

- Alston Community Hospital
- Penrith Community Hospital
- Wigton Community Hospital
- Workington Community Hospital
- Maryport Community Hospital
- Brampton Community Hospital
- Keswick Community Hospital
- Cockermouth Community Hospital
- Millom Community Hospital

## Reports and Recommendations

Cumbria LINK has submitted the following reports, with recommendations, for the financial year 2010/11:

- 11 reports on the Residential Care Home visits
- Report on the Mystery Shopper exercise looking at how information is given on how to access a dentist
- Report on the Fairer Access to Equipment survey

- Report on the West Cumberland Hospital Survey
- Report on Views and Concerns of Cumbria LINK Membership and Associated Networks over NHS reforms and GP Consortia
- Report of the closure of Ravensfield Residential Care Home

All reports produced by the Cumbria LINK can be found on our website:

[www.cumbrialink.org.uk](http://www.cumbrialink.org.uk)

## Cumbria LINK Income and Expenditure April 2010–March 2011

	Income £	Expenditure£
Cumbria County Council	220,000	
Brought forward 2010/11	92,643	
Staffing		£101,176
Staff Travel		£6,663
Staff Training		£2,304
Management Fee		£22,614
Organisational Overheads		£29,551
Publicity		£2,300
Volunteer Expenses		£4,569
Volunteer Training		£3,242
General Running Costs		£18,183
Project Activity/Events		£25,463
<b>Total</b>	<b>£312,643</b>	<b>£216,065</b>

A surplus sum of £96,578 is to be carried forward, with £55,000 to be used to cover costs for the first three months of the 2011/2012 financial year. The remaining £41,578 is for Cumbria LINK projects and activity.

# Contact details

Cumbria LINK can be contacted via the  
Host Organisation, Cumbria CVS

## **Cumbria CVS Carlisle**

27 Spencer Street  
Carlisle  
Cumbria  
CA1 1BE

01228 512513  
link@cumbriacvs.org.uk  
www.cumbrialink.org.uk



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