



News Update
April – May 2011

‘Keeping you informed on health and social care issues’

- Can you suggest any other ways to participate?
- Do you feel you are kept informed on current LINK activities and work plans?
- And how do you think this could be improved?
- A new role for Local HealthWatch is to support people to make choices, have you any thought on how this service could be offered in our county?

If you would like to comment on any of the above points please contact Jane Macfarlane so that your views can be included in this work.

Janem@cumbriacvs.org.uk

There will be other opportunities to help shape HealthWatch locally in the months to come and we will keep you informed about these.

Community Health Champions

Community Health Champions are now available to work with you to improve your health and wellbeing. You decide the changes you want to make to your lifestyle and our Community Health Champions will work with you to make an action plan that suits your needs.

Training for our volunteers in the Barrow area has now started. Once they pass their first practical assessment in mid April, many will be looking for a base to work from. We would welcome any enquiries from venues/organisations who would be interested in hosting one of our volunteers.

For the West and Carlisle, our volunteers are on the final part of their training. They will all be receiving their Certificates at a special ceremony on 9th June, at the Market Hall, Wigton. So look for one of our posters in your local Community Centre or GP surgery, to see when a Community Health Champion will be available in your area. Following completion of the training, there will be much more opportunity to access our service.

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Cumbria LINK Work Update

Preparing for HealthWatch Pathfinders

Later this month the Cumbria LINK Governing Body will be meeting with our partners from the NHS and County Council to develop a joint proposal for HealthWatch Pathfinders. The application needs to be prepared in partnership with the Local Authority and we would like to hear your views in a number of areas, these include:

- What do you think of the current governance structure?
- What suggestion do you have to change/improve the governance structure?
- Do you feel there are enough ways for you to participate in current LINK activity?

If you are able to offer a space for one of our volunteers or would like further information please contact Marie Blackburn, Project Co-ordinator on 01228 512513 or email: link@cumbriacvs.org.uk .

Your Concerns on NHS Reforms

In February we asked you what concerns if any you had around GP Commissioning. The response from our networks was excellent! The Draft Interim Report was presented to GP Leads in the County before the joint LINK and Action for Health Meeting in February who welcomed your comments.

The main areas of concerns raised were:

- Commitment and Skills of GP Consortia
- Regulation and Accountability
- Budget Concerns
- Strategic Planning
- Speed of Change
- Commissioning Specialist Services

A copy of the full report has been sent with this newsletter and is available on our web site.

Cumbria Action for Health & Cumbria LINK Joint Network Event

On the 24th February a joint network event was held at Newton Rigg. In the morning the event focused on how individuals and organisations can work with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to provide feedback on health and social care services from the perspective of people who use these services.

After lunch the event focused on changes to the commissioning of health services and the role of communities, associations and organisations in developing health and wellbeing support and activities in local communities. Dr Peter Weaving (Lead GP) and Professor John Ashton (NHS Cumbria and Cumbria County Council) highlighted health inequalities that exist in Cumbria and

how emerging GP Commissioning will address them.

Mary Bradley from Age UK West Cumbria spoke about the Centre for the Third Age Project in Cockermouth and how improved connections in the area has led to better services and information for older people.

A copy of the report from the event has been sent with this newsletter and is available on our website.

Local News and Events

Arts for Health Event at Rheged

Creative Futures Cumbria would like to invite you to a collaborative MANIFESTO event focusing on Arts for Health in Cumbria. The event will take place on Monday 9th May from 10am – 1pm.

This is a joint initiative with the NHS Public Health Network. It will be led by Clive Parkinson, Director of Arts for Health at Manchester Metropolitan University.

For more information or to book a place contact Viv West on 01768 893810 or email viv@creativefuturescumbria.org.

It's your service, have your say!

North West Ambulance Service NHS Trust is applying to become an NHS Foundation Trust and they would like as many people as possible across the North West to join their membership and help them to shape the future of the service. Foundation Trusts will give members of the public 'a voice', which can influence change and help ensure that the service continues to meet the needs of all the members of our communities.

NWAS is the largest ambulance service in the UK covering the area from Carlisle to Crewe and encompassing five counties.

Membership of the Nwas NHS Foundation Trust is free and you can be a member of more than one foundation trust. As a member you can become involved as much or as little as you choose.

Interested? To discover more please visit www.nwas.nhs.uk; you can also join the membership online. Alternatively you can contact Nwas for more information on 0845 1120999.

Get involved in local NHS decision making.

Patients want safe, reliable health services closer to where they live.

In Carlisle, local GPs now make the decisions on how the lion's share of the local NHS budget is used to pay for everything from hospital treatment to NHS dentists. Your views can help them make the right choices.

The Carlisle Locality Stakeholder Group exists to help GPs hear the views of local communities. So that when GPs make an important decision, they know what local people think about the issues, and local people know why the decision was made.

To find out more, please contact Jean Stewart on 01228 608152 or Anna Scamans on 07785 518520.

County Council's Adult Social Care News

English National Concessionary Travel Scheme

Cumbria County Council is now responsible for administering the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS). This move follows a decision made by Central Government to transfer concessionary travel responsibility from district councils to county councils and is

being adopted all around the country. The scheme will provide free off peak travel on scheduled bus services for people of pensionable age and people with disabilities.

For the 94,000 Cumbrian residents who currently have a NoWcard – they will be entitled to free bus travel between 9.30am and 11.00pm, Monday to Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday and Bank Holidays throughout England on local bus services. Existing NoWcard holders do not need to re-apply until their card expires.

How do I get my pass?

You can visit any one of the county council's six main libraries in Barrow, Carlisle, Kendal, Penrith, Whitehaven or Workington which are open seven days a week and certain days from 9.30am – 7pm. You won't need to fill in a lengthy application form or take in a passport photo either as library staff will do this for you. You can also fill in an application form with staff in Kirkby Stephen Council Centre, Ulverston Local Links Centre and Alston Local Links Centre. For details of library opening times visit www.cumbria.gov.uk.

What do I need to bring with me?

If you're applying for a bus pass for the first time then you'll need to bring with you a copy of one item in list A and one item in list B (below):

List A – Proof of age:

- Birth Certificate
- Proof of state pension
- Passport
- Driving Licence

List B – Proof of address:

- Council tax bill
- Utility bill
- Rent book / statement
- Bank Statement

People with disabilities

People with disabilities are automatically entitled to concessionary travel if you are entitled to the Disability Living Allowance (Mobility Component) at the higher rate. If

you have not been awarded the DLA mobility component at the higher rate and think that you are eligible, you should bring one of the following in list A and one of the following in list B (below) to the library. Cumbria County Council will make an assessment based on your individual circumstances.

List A – Proof of disability:

- Letter / certificate from Medical Specialist / Hospital
- Letter from Social Services (learning disability)
- Disability confirmed visually Letter from DVLA
- Completion Declaration of Authority
- DLA Mobility Component at the higher rate
- War pension mobility supplement
- Blue badge

List B – Proof of address:

- Council tax bill
- Utility bill
- Rent book / statement
- Bank Statement

People with disabilities who cannot travel without assistance will also be able to travel with a companion free of charge. This is a discretionary concession which the county council has decided to offer

For more information and to check whether you are eligible to apply for a NoWcard, visit www.cumbria.gov.uk or call the NoWcard helpline on 0845 058 1096.

NHS Cumbria News

Prescription charges

How it works now

The elderly, children and those being treated for conditions such as cancer are the most likely to need prescriptions. In England currently, all these groups get their medicines without paying.

Nine in 10 prescriptions in England are

handed out free as those exempt include the under 16s, over 60s, pregnant women and those on low incomes. Of the rest, most are discounted through a pre-payment scheme which means that people needing regular prescriptions, such as those with long-term conditions like arthritis, only have to pay just over £2 a week.

But even people who do pay for the £7.20 charge are often hardly scratching the surface in terms of the real cost, which can run into hundreds of pounds per prescription.

What everyone can do better?

The cost of prescription medicines to the NHS in Cumbria each year is around £85 million. A sizeable amount of prescription medicines is wasted. Last year Cumbrians took 13.6 metric tonnes of medicine back to community pharmacies for incineration. That's around £2.8million literally going up in smoke.

There are a few things we can all do to make sure we get the best out of our medicines.

If you have a long term condition and you've been prescribed medication and advised to take it regularly then please don't stop. If you do not understand why you are taking the medication, or you think you may no longer need it, please speak to your doctor or pharmacist, don't stockpile it.

If you're not well and you think you have something minor like a cold, a sore throat or a stomach upset you should get an over the counter remedy from your local chemist. There is no need to go to your doctor to get a prescription.

More Cumbrians do home test for bowel cancer, than others in North West

From April to September 2010, nearly 18,000 people aged 60 to 75 years old were invited to take part in the NHS bowel cancer screening programme in Cumbria. Of these,

68 per cent, (over 12,000 people) carried out the test. The North West average for take up is 56 per cent of those invited.

Bowel cancer is the UK's second biggest cancer killer claiming on average over 35 lives every day across England. Early detection can increase survival rates by reducing the risk of the cancer spreading.

Around 98 out of every 100 people who carry out a bowel cancer home test will receive a normal result. Those who have an abnormal result will be contacted and given an appointment to discuss further investigations with a specialist nurse.

If you have any further questions about the Bowel Cancer Screening Programme, call Free phone 0800 707 60 60 or visit: www.cancerscreening.nhs.uk/bowel

Equal service for all non-emergency ambulance patients across the North West

Patients across Cumbria and the North West will soon start to see a more efficient and improved patient transport service (PTS). From this month a more standardised method of booking PTS will be in place across the North West region. This follows a review of the service and will ensure that patients receive the right service and that the same quality of service is available no matter where a patient lives.

The standardised criteria has already been trialled in five areas including north Cumbria since October 2010 and will be expanded across south Cumbria and the rest of the North West region from this month.

A doctors' plan for sustainable hospital services in Carlisle and Whitehaven

Working together over the last six months, hospital and family doctors have produced a clinical strategy which sets out how the rest of the changes agreed in the 2008

closer to home consultation will be delivered over the coming years.

The strategy describes the opportunity to develop more specialised services at the Cumberland Infirmary which people currently have to travel outside Cumbria to receive, like a new life-saving heart treatment which will start to be provided in Carlisle for the first time later this year.

It also includes a commitment to a new West Cumberland Hospital which clinicians want to develop into a hospital of choice for patients undergoing planned operations from across Cumbria and other parts of the region.

Around the Localities

North and East Cumbria

Breast screening trailer comes to Carlisle

A mobile breast screening unit will be in Carlisle throughout April.

The unit, which will be located in the Sands Centre car-park, is part of a fleet run by Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. It will be able to screen around 45 extra women a day who are undergoing their routine three-yearly mammograms.

Following a recent review, breast screening in North Cumbria has now become part of the Newcastle Breast Screening Programme. Women will continue to be screened in Carlisle and Whitehaven.

The arrival of the mobile unit in Carlisle will enable women whose routine appointments were affected by the suspension of the service last year to be seen more quickly.

Women invited to the trailer will be receiving their appointment letters shortly.

Eden introduces food scheme for people with Coeliac

NHS Cumbria is introducing a new scheme so that people with coeliac disease living in Eden will be able to pick up their gluten free foods from their local community pharmacy without the need for a prescription.

Usually people with coeliac disease are given a prescription from their GP for the gluten free products which can be incorporated into their diet. There is no cure for coeliac disease, but the symptoms can be kept under control by eating a strict gluten free diet.

From April 2011 people with coeliac disease in Eden will be able to go to their local community pharmacy or dispensing practice to collect these specialist foods rather than having to order a prescription from their GP surgery.

Coeliac patients in the area will be contacted by their GP Practice to sign up to the scheme and nominate a local pharmacy to pick up their foods from.

Your local lead for Public Engagement in Eden and Carlisle is Anna Scamans. Anna can be reached on 0778 551 8520 or e-mail: Anna.scamans@cumbriapct.nhs.uk

South Cumbria

Building work starts on new health centre for Sedbergh

Building work on the new £1.8 million health centre for Sedbergh begins this month. The new health centre will include new services to benefit staff and patients; treatment rooms, a dispensary, dedicated space to provide medical services for Sedbergh School and a training and research suite. Once complete the existing Sedbergh Medical Practice based on Loftus Hill and its staff will move to the new location.

A new NHS community service for patients with heart failure in Furness.

NHS Cumbria's Furness locality has been awarded £97,000 over two years by the British Heart Foundation following a successful bid to help set up a new community based healthcare team to support patients with the condition. The rest of the funding will come from the locality's NHS budget.

There are approximately 724 people living with heart failure in Furness and it's one of the biggest killers in the UK after cancer and has a worse prognosis.

The team of nurses will work with GPs and also provide; community based clinics and home visits for patients with heart failure, education, support within GP practices and advice for patient's newly diagnosed with the condition and palliative care to patients at the end stage of the condition.

Your local lead for Public Engagement in Furness and South Lakeland is Jayne Thorp. Jayne can be reached on 07796 993 802 or e-mail: Jayne.Thorp@cumbriapct.nhs.uk

West Cumbria

West Cumbria group buys equipment to help patient's with lung problems

West Cumbria Breathe Easy Group presented NHS Cumbria's West Cumbria Respiratory Team with more special respiratory devices to help people with lung conditions at their AGM last month. The equipment was brought with charitable funds raised by the Breathe Easy group locally.

The group, which is part of the support network of the British Lung Foundation, will hand over flutter devices to help remove mucus from the chest and hand weights to help with pulmonary rehabilitation, which the team provide.

Sub Locality Patient Panels for Cockermouth and Keswick

We need the views of patients who are registered with a GP in each of these areas and who currently access services to tell us – what is good about it, what isn't so good and what would make it better. If you are interested in getting involved or would like more information please contact NHS Cumbria's Public Engagement Unit on 01900 324244.

Health Talks

Every Wednesday from 4th May to 27th July (except 1st June) there will be a Health Talk at the Wave in Maryport. Topics will cover Anxiety & Depression, Respiratory, COPD, Dermatology, Hypertension, Sexual Health & Contraception, Diabetes, End of Life Planning, Childhood Illnesses, Medicines Management, Heart Health, Lung cancer and Mental Illness.

Each talk will last about 20 – 30 minutes followed by an opportunity to chat and visit information stands. If you are interested in providing a stand for any of the events then please contact Christine Harrison.

Your local lead for Public Engagement in Allerdale and Copeland in Christine Harrison. Christine can be reached on 0778 557 8574 or e-mail: Christine.harrison@cumbriapct.nhs.uk

National Health and Wellbeing News

Men's Health Week 2011: Get A Man Online.

The dates are 13-19th June 2011 and this time the focus will be on how new technologies can be used to improve men's health.

Read more on:
<http://www.menshealthforum.org.uk/21706-mens-health-week-2011>

Patient and Public Involvement Policy

The NHS National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has recently revised and updated their policy on how they involve patients, carers and members of the public. The policy has a clear 'mission statement' about why NICE values and supports patient and public involvement, includes details of how patients, carers and members of the public can work with them and the support available to them.

To view a copy of the policy, visit:
http://www.nice.org.uk/getinvolved/patientandpublicinvolvement/patientandpublicinvolvementpolicy/patient_and_public_involvement_policy.jsp.

Giving us a Voice

The three major UK Learning Disability Charities, Mencap, Bild and ARC have recently completed the joint "Giving us a Voice" project and are pleased to inform you that the National Charter for Inclusion was launched at the Department of Health on March 21st 2011.

"Giving us a Voice" was an 18 month England-wide to involve people from minority ethnic communities with learning disabilities, their families and carers in shaping what they need and expect from services. The National Charter for Inclusion is the result of information gathered at nine regional meetings held from November 2010 to February 2011 which involved people with learning disabilities, carers and professionals from both Health and Social care.

More information and how to sign up can be found on the Giving us a Voice website at: <http://givingusavoice.org.uk/charter-for-inclusion/>

State of care in England (2009/10) highlights improvements to health and social care services

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) has published its second annual report to Parliament on the state of health care and adult social care in England. CQC highlights improvements in the care system but says there are still some areas which have not improved fast enough and stresses that it is vital that the advances already made become a key component of the newly emerging care system.

To view the full report visit:
<http://www.cqc.org.uk/stateofcare2009-10.cfm>

An Independent Living Exhibition with a Difference – 20th Anniversary Event

“A magnificent event that really makes a difference” that was the expression used by one visitor to last year’s Northwest Disability Awareness Day (DAD).

DAD 2011 will be supported by a week of complementary events, leading up to the exhibition on Sunday 10th July.

The event boasts something for everyone, with over 300 exhibition stands promoting independent living. DAD covers all disabilities, ages, carers and families and if you work in the field of health, social care or disability there will be plenty to interest you.

For more information contact the DAD admin team on 01925 240064 or visit:
www.disabilityawarenessday.org.uk

Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust Quality Accounts

Hillingdon LINK are currently preparing their response to the Quality Accounts for The Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Foundation Trust.

As you may know Harefield Hospital is one of the largest and most experienced centres in the world for heart and lung transplants and renowned for its pioneering surgery.

Due to the fact that patients come from all over the UK, they are asking all fellow LINK members whether they have any feedback on the Harefield Hospital.

For more information visit:
<http://hillingdonlink.org.uk/index.php/2011/02/help-royal-brompton-harefield-nhs-foundation-trust-get-their-priorities-right/>

NHS consultation on the Future of Children’s Congenital Heart Services

In March 2011 the NHS launched a major four month public consultation on the way children’s congenital heart services should be provided in the future.

The NHS is urging everyone with an interest in children’s congenital heart services to take part in the consultation and have their say on these vital services.

Full details are available on their website:
<http://www.specialisedservices.nhs.uk/safeandsustainable>

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