

Cumbria LINK

News Bulletin

Dec 08 / Jan 09



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Welcome

To the first edition of the Cumbria LINK bulletin. We will be producing a bulletin every two months to keep you informed on Cumbria LINK Activity as well as local and national news.

If you would like to contribute to the next bulletin or would like to see a regular feature in the bulletin please let us know. You can contact the LINK Support Team on 01228 512513 or link@cumbriacvs.org.uk

Cumbria LINK developing on-line communications

We are in the process of developing our website if you have any ideas for useful information items or even formats you would like to see let us know.

Cumbria LINK Gets Underway!

Cumbria Local Involvement Network (LINK) gives you the opportunity to influence your local health and social care services. Cumbria LINK has been set up to make sure that people in your area get the health and social services they need. We want to hear about your experiences of health and social services and your ideas for improvements or changes. Cumbria LINK has the power to implement small changes and influence big ones. The Cumbria LINK is relevant to you and your family, as we all use health and care services.

The Cumbria LINK held its first public event on 22nd October in Penrith to mark its launch. A varied audience attended with representatives from the third sector, private sector, statutory organisations and interested members of the public.

The day set the scene by presenting the challenges facing both Health & Social Care in the months and years to come, pointing out the inequalities in health in our area. Tim Gilling from the National Centre for Involvement spoke more widely of the Local Involvement Networks being established in England, and the unique opportunity they represent to make real change happen for local communities.

Government policy supports the newly established LINKs with the legal powers that are in place and a growing duty on the statutory sector to involve and engage with service users and communities.

Conference participants were asked for their views on health and social care issues in Cumbria in a series of workshops. What we heard will help the Cumbria LINK develop its work priorities for 2009.

Local Involvement Networks are being set up in different ways to meet the needs of local communities, so no two networks will be the same. In Cumbria, our consultation on the Structure and Terms of Reference closed in September and has influenced how the Cumbria LINK will look and function.

What is vital to its success is the need for as many people as possible engage with it. We are offering a number of ways that people can get involved with the work of the LINK so that it is as accessible and convenient as possible.

We are inviting you to join by registering your interest with the Cumbria LINK support team. Membership is free and you will receive regular information, in a way that suits you - on health and social care news, updates on what the LINK is doing and what progress it has made. Opportunities for greater involvement with the LINK will be available to those who are interested.

Our hope is that our local communities will take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen their voices and bring about positive change that will make a difference to them.

Local News

In Control Total

Cumbria County Council's Adult Social Care service is taking part in 'in Control Total', a national project which started in 2007 and seeks to change the way support is arranged for people who use services.

Cumbria has been one of a number of 'in Control' pilots across the country. Put simply, 'in Control' and 'in Control Total' aim to put people in control of the support they need. You can view regular news updates on 'In Control Total' at

<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/adultsocialcare/iCT/default.asp>

What is Closer to Home?

Closer to Home is a unique chance for local people and the NHS in Cumbria to work together to create health services to be proud of.

NHS Cumbria wants to improve the health and well-being of the people of Cumbria by providing access to high-quality care and treatment in the most appropriate place.

Their vision is for people who need health care to get the best possible treatment and support as close as possible to their own homes. When people do need specialist care, hospitals would offer faster access to first-class services.

NHS Cumbria can only do this by making changes to the way care is delivered both in hospital and in the community and by making sure that these improvements make the best of their staff, equipment and money.

Given the scale of the changes, they are undertaking the planning and consultation for the changes in two parts:

- in the North of Cumbria – that's Allerdale, Carlisle, Copeland and Eden districts – they published their initial proposals in September 2007. The consultation on these finished in February 2008.
- in the South of Cumbria – that's Barrow and South Lakeland districts – they are currently developing their proposals with a view to consulting on these sometime in 2009.

For more information on closer to home please visit <http://closertohome.org.uk>. Cumbria LINK is interested in hearing from people living in South Cumbria to listen to your views.

A Word From NHS Cumbria

NHS Cumbria exists to improve the health and wellbeing of the half a million residents of Cumbria.

They do this by:

- * Working with others to improve health
- * Making the best use of all available resources
- * Achieving core standards and targets

NHS Cumbria is a listening organisation. They are committed to working with local people, finding out what they think and involving them in planning local health services. In your area, there is a Locality Public Engagement Lead who works with GPs and other NHS staff to make sure Cumbrian residents have a chance to get involved. They help plan good engagement so that it is accessible to everyone, clear honest, realistic and is focused on improvement.

You can contact your Local Public Engagement Lead for more information, if you have comments to make, or if you want to get involved in improving services.

South Lakeland & Barrow – Judith Deft 01539 797806
judith.deft@cumbriapct.nhs.uk

Allerdale & Copeland – Christine Harrison 01900 324244
christine.harrison@cumbriapct.nhs.uk

Carlisle & Eden – Anna Scamans 0778 5518520
anna.scamans@cumbriapct.nhs.uk

Adult Social Care

My name's Peter Knock and I'm Adult Social Care's Public Information Manager. Adult Social Care is a service within Cumbria County Council's Adult and Cultural Services Directorate. We are responsible for the council's social care services for adults and their carers - the 'adults' part of what used to be social services.

As Public Information Manager, I'm responsible for the service's public information which includes things like:

- publications, for example, leaflets, directories and brochures;
- our website;
- making information available in formats (like audio and large print) and other languages; and
- dealing with requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

I'm very pleased to be asked to contribute to this new LINK newsletter. The editor has asked me to produce a series of articles and I'm happy to do this if readers find these of interest. I'm very keen to hear from you on what you would like me to cover.

A big priority for us at the moment is the introduction of self directed support. Self directed support aims to give service users more choice and control over the support they receive. It is part of the Government's wider national agenda to transform adult social care by personalising services. I am part of the in Control Total programme which is working on this and I would like to tell you more about this in future articles.

For this article I wanted to introduce myself (I think I've done this) and to invite you to get in contact with me. I'm very keen to hear your views on the kinds of things I should deal with in these articles. I would also like to hear your views on the information we produce. You can contact me on telephone 01539 713379 or email peter.knock@cumbriacc.gov.uk.

Finally, for those of you who would like to find out more about our work, why not have a look at our website:

For self directed support: <http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/adultsocialcare/iCT/>

For our publications:

<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/adultsocialcare/information/listofpublications.asp>

What's on

Expert Patient Programme

The Expert Patients Programme (EPP) is all about self-management for those living with long-term health conditions, such as arthritis, heart problems, diabetes, etc and takes the participants through a range of skills and techniques designed to help people manage their symptoms better.

The courses are free and consist of 6 weekly sessions – each lasting two and a half hours – and can help people deal with pain and extreme tiredness, use relaxations techniques, eat healthily and communicate effectively with their families, friends and health professionals. The programme also looks at ways of improving daily activities and managing the changing emotions that can be brought about by living with a long-term health condition, in order to provide participants with a better quality of life. The small team of volunteer tutors, co-coordinated by Marie Blackburn all have one or more long-term conditions and want to help others in a similar situation.

There is also time for participants to share experiences and learn from each other, as well as learning new skills.

The courses will begin in January 2009 with Carlisle and Ulvertson. For more information on these or other course or to have a chat about the programme please contact Marie on 01768 868649 or email: Marieb@cumbriacvs.org.uk.

National News

Reform of health and social care complaints: Proposed changes to the legislative framework

- **Launch date:** 5th December 2008
- **Closing date:** 6th January 2009
- **Creator/s:** Department of Health

The complaints arrangements for health and social care are being reformed. Successive reports have found that some complaints take too long to resolve and services do not systematically try to learn from the important feedback that complaints offer. In addition, there is strong evidence that some people do not complain because they either do not know how to or believe doing so will not result in any action.

From 1 April 2009, a single complaints system will cover all health and adult social care services in England. The new arrangements will encourage an approach that aims to resolve complaints more effectively and ensure that opportunities for services to learn and improve are not lost.

There has been ongoing consultation about these plans since the launch of the 'Making Experiences Count' consultation in June 2007.

The document 'Reform of health and social care complaints: Proposed changes to the legislative framework' provides more details about the legislative framework that will be introduced to support these reforms.

People can feedback their views, either by using a response form at the back of the document or by attending one of a number of regional events.

This document should be read in conjunction with the consultation document 'Making Experiences Count, published in June 2007, and the Department's response to that consultation, published in February 2008.

Draft regulations are expected to be published in January 2009. You can find these publications at www.dh.gov.uk/en/consultations/liveconsultations

Approaching FAST...a national campaign to increase stroke awareness.

The FAST campaign offers a simple way of learning and remembering the signs of stroke so the 'stroke saver' can identify when someone is having a stroke and react immediately.

Stroke is the third biggest killer in England and the single largest cause of adult disability. But public awareness and recognition of the main signs of stroke are very low and, in response, the National Stroke Strategy sets out the need to improve awareness of stroke. From February 2009, a three-year campaign will aim to increase awareness. Created in partnership with the Stroke Association, other stroke organisations and expert professionals, the new campaign will use the acronym FAST (see below) to educate people on the signs of stroke. It will also encourage them to spot these signs and to call 999 immediately – and not to delay by calling NHS Direct or their GP.

Remember FAST:

Facial weakness – can the person smile?

has their mouth or eyes drooped?

Arm weakness – can the person raise both arms?

Speech problems – can the person speak clearly and understand what you say?

Time to call 999

Anyone seeing any of these signs should treat it as an emergency.

People need to be made aware now that stroke is a medical emergency whose outcome can potentially be improved by getting faster treatment. A FAST response to stroke reduces the risk of death or disability. People need to know the signs of stroke

– and what to do if they spot them – to get help as quickly as possible. Someone with stroke is unlikely to be able to help themselves, so it is vital that everyone is ready to intervene and become a ‘stroke saver’ if they spot the signs.

For more information please visit: www.nhs.uk/stroke or www.stroke.org.uk.

King’s Fund Research on NHS Care.

Patients’ experience of NHS care is more patchy and variable than suggested by national surveys, research by the King’s Fund has found. A new report by the think tank says most patients have a mixed experience while they are using services. It says information and evidence is limited and more data is needed to understand the variations. Seeing the Person in the Patient <<http://www.kingsfund.org.uk/current-projects/the-point-of-care/>> is based on interviews with staff and patients, as well as a review of surveys and literature. None of the interviewees’ experiences were “wholly good or wholly bad”, it says.

National Quality Board Takes Shape.

The first appointments to the new National Quality Boards (NQB) have been announced by Health Minister Lord Darzi. Establishing the NQB was a key commitment within High Quality Care for All, Lord Darzi’s review of the NHS. The board will play a pivotal role in providing strategic oversight and leadership in quality across the NHS. The board’s membership will comprise of a mix of skills and expertise. Lord Darzi has invited David Nicholson, NHS Chief Executive, to chair the board.