



MINUTES OF MEETING

Meeting:	North East Local Involvement Network Ambulance Committee	
Details:	Wednesday 8 June 2011 at The Durham Centre	
Present:	Mike Dalton, County Durham LINK (Chair) Ken Patterson, Northumberland LINK Audrey Clarke, Redcar & Cleveland Violet Rook, Newcastle LINK Pat Hunter, Newcastle LINK Audrey Woore, Hartlepool LINK LINK Ray Stephenson, Stockton LINK	Mike Hemingway, County Durham LINK Carolyn Roberts, Northumberland John Simpson, Redcar and Cleveland LINK Alison Blackburn, Newcastle LINK Pat Bottrill, North Tyneside LINK Steven Thomas, Hartlepool LINK
In attendance:	Mark Cotton, Assistant Director of Communications & Engagement (NEAS) Sahdia Hassen, Public Relations Officer (NEAS) Paul Fell, Head of Clinical Care Patient Safety (NEAS) Jane Miller, Equality and Diversity Manager (NEAS) Gayle White, Customer Care Manager (NEAS) Neil Stevenson, NHS North Tees Lynne Egglestone, NHS North Tees	

No.		Action by
1	Apologies	
	Apologies were received from: Mike McNulty of Sunderland LINK, Ruby Marshall of Hartlepool LINK and from Gateshead LINK.	
2	Minutes of meeting held on 8 June 2011	
	Page three of the minutes – Mark said snow socks were used on vehicles in winter but this year we are looking to use snow tyres instead. NEAS will outline the plan for winter after summer. Page four of the minutes – Ken asked if NEAS had been consulted by KPMG on transportation of patients. If not how NEAS proactively tried to get involved. Paul Fell replied that NEAS has not been, this may be because we have a list of travel times for various hospitals so that may be why it did not come to NEAS.	
3	Matters Arising	
	No matters arising	
4	Election of LINKs Chair and Vice Chair for the Ambulance Forum	
	Mike Dalton was the only candidate standing for Chair. Violet Rook and Pat Hunter stood for Vice Chair and votes were in favour of Violet.	
	Mike asked that his email be made available to all members of the Forum.	
	Pat Bottrill questioned the representation from Newcastle LINK as three members attend. Alison Blackburn explained that originally their membership was supposed to rotate and two members attend each time however due to circumstances it would not cost any more for all three to attend. Due to Alison's visual impairment and Pat's mobility difficulty it is also easier for the group. Mike asked that any issues should be communicated to him.	

5	PTS subgroup	
	North Tees were late for the meeting and a discussion ensued on PTS and the subgroup. Stephen Thomas explained Hartlepool LINK is carrying out research on PTS in the area. The first meeting of the PTS subgroup has taken place as an introduction to the service; however the assistant director of operations has left NEAS to go on secondment. Future meetings will be arranged to take place quarterly.	
6	Electronic Patient Report Form (ePRF)	
	Pat Bottrill asked how much longer ePRF took than paper? Paul Fell – It will take the same time once everyone is trained. Carolyn Roberts - Is there a back up? Paul Fell - We go back to paper. Mike Hemingway - Is it via satellite? Paul Fell - Yes Violet Rook – Is there a dedicated person for ePRF at the receiving hospital? Paul Fell- Every hospital is different. Any staff with a smartcard can access it. John Simpson- Is the handover different? Paul Fell- We get the signature in the same way so you can see all the information. Mike Dalton- Does the ToughBook have a battery life? Paul Fell- It charges in the vehicle. Ken Patterson- How many ambulance services are operating the system? Paul Fell- We are one of the last to connect to Pathways but second/third to go for the full area we cover. Pat Bottrill- How do you transfer between ambulance services? Paul Fell- Software used is the same across the country.	
7	NHS Tees on patient transport	
	Neil Stevenson works in contracting and Lynne Egglestone works in the call centre for NHS Tees that books transport, 'Transport Information Service'.	
	Neil and Lynne chose to hold a discussion rather than a presentation. They began with some background on the service. Hospitals arrange transport with the service who took over when gps revolted in 2007. The service uses an eligibility questionnaire. They book NEAS and also private transport.	
	MH- Would like more on the criteria you use for non NEAS ambulance. LE- Usually as it's a late booking and NEAS can't do it. NEAS needs 48 hours. [This information was checked after the meeting. This statement is incorrect as NEAS only need 24 hours notice to make a booking]. JS- we have had a number of patients complaining about your service including me. Before you were taken over I had no complaints from our LINK. The questionnaires are frustrating, for example I drive to hospital sometimes but if I'm having certain treatments I can't drive back. LE- 'Car user' would bring you up as ineligible but if you're on medication that would be all you need. You would be eligible to get transport back home. JS- But I was told not as I drive LE- We're looking at how to simplify the questions JS- But you don't allow us to get to the end of the questions NS- DH sets out our requirement that there should be eligible criteria. Individuals should have a medical need and we need to interpret that for our questionnaire. We've had over 133,000 patient journeys last year and also have to deal with hoax calls and fraudsters. AB- Has the criteria been run past focus groups? If so who? NS- Yes, don't remember who. AB- So if you are in a wheelchair you can get patient transport but otherwise you can't. You have people with learning difficulties, visual impairments or dementia. Can you come back to this meeting with the questionnaire?	

	<p>NS- The DH set three standards which we use as guidance.</p> <p>MD- NEAS patient and public involvement forum were involved in looking at questions and we did make suggestions for change. So perhaps it would be an idea to involve a group like this and Hartlepool LINK.</p> <p>AB- Has NEAS a disability equality duty Mark? MC- Yes</p> <p>Well perhaps Tees need to be careful but you are picking on mobility.</p> <p>NS- Criteria is medical need. There are other ways of accessing support for transport.</p> <p>PB- A regular users log might be a good idea.</p> <p>ST- Consistency is a good point. A patient with same conditions as another has been given transport in the past whilst the other has not received it. The questionnaire was found to be very difficult and off-putting. There's a perception that it's becoming more difficult to access PTS. Our working group on PTS would like to look at questionnaire and see if we can feed anything in.</p> <p>LE- It depends on how patient interprets questions but there's an appeal process. We listen to the call etc.</p> <p>NS- An individual's health changes so it is not possible to create a regular users log.</p> <p>AB- Is it a free number? LE- No it's local call rate</p> <p>KP- Can you drive? Is it really as strict as that? Is there no opportunity for follow up questions?</p> <p>LE- No because the first question is about medical need. If you said you could drive later then your reasons could be given and accepted.</p> <p>JS- But I have been told I would have to get a taxi.</p> <p>MD- Lots of questions and it strikes me there's an opportunity to have a follow up meeting on this item alone.</p>	
8	Maternity transport guide for patients	
	<p>VR- You don't make a distinction between women who are having their first babies and those who are having second or third. The difference is that if it's your first you are rushing to the hospital. Someone with experience will wait a while longer. So you should put this on the form.</p> <p>GW- I'll feed that back.</p> <p>AB- what about women who are scheduled to have home deliveries?</p> <p>GW- Leaflet is given to all pregnant women so if problems arise then we can take her into hospital quickly.</p>	
9	Draft Equality Strategy	
	<p>Jane Miller asked for views in particular on section 5.2 of the strategy. NEAS want to map out all points where we collect patient demographic data.</p> <p>MC – Can the group consider what questions to ask/not ask? Comments as soon as possible to jane.miller@neas.nhs.uk, 0191 430 2000.</p>	
10	AOB	
	<p>Pat Bottrill had feedback that the Complaints and Compliments section was not included in the Quality Account. Mark replied that this was an omission and it has now been included.</p>	
11	NEXT MEETING	
	<p>The next meeting will take place from 11am-1pm on Wednesday 17 August in Conference Room A, Morton Park Business Training Centre, Morton Park, Yarm Road, Darlington, DL1 4PJ.</p>	