



Have your say on the future for public health

Residents and organisations interested in health and social care are invited by North Tyneside LINK to have their say on the future for public health services on Monday 28 February from 10.30am to 2pm at the Linskill Centre, North Shields.

At the event the LINK team will ask people what they think about the government's plans for tackling public health challenges and what this could mean for North Tyneside. They will hear how responsibility for public health will be transferred to local councils to encourage consideration of health issues alongside housing, transport and education. The views of people at the event will be used by North Tyneside LINK for their response to 'Healthy lives, healthy people', the government's plans for public health.

Johanne Mears, Manager of North Tyneside LINK said "We need to make sure our public health services tackle important issues such as obesity and smoking so that we see real improvements to the health of local people. Inequalities in health lead to lower life expectancy of people in poorer areas, currently people from richer areas can expect to live up to seven years longer. Good local public health services are essential for the protection of residents' health and the promotion of health living. We urge residents to come along on 28 February to find out more and give their views."

LINK is a network of local people and groups who are interested in improving health and social care services across the borough. You do not have to be a member to attend this event.

For more information or to book a place at this event, telephone 0191 200 1429 or email link@voda.org.uk or visit www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk.

If you would like to become a member of LINK or are interested in learning more about its work, contact the team on 0191 200 1429, email link@voda.org.uk or visit the website www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk. It is free to join and anyone with an interest in health and social care services in North Tyneside can become a member.

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Press contact: for further information or photographs contact Communications Worker Meg Woollam on 0191 200 8563 or email meg.woollam@voda.org.uk

Editor's notes

1. **Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)** were introduced by the Department of Health in April 2008 and aim to give communities a stronger voice in how their health and social care services are delivered. Run by local individuals and groups and independently supported - the role of LINKs is to find out what people want, monitor local services and to use their powers to hold them account. Visit www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk for more information.

2. **Healthy lives, healthy people** is the government White Paper outlining the future for public health services in England. A new service called Public Health England will be created and responsibility for this area at a local level switches to councils. Healthy Lives, Healthy People also sets out how funding from the overall NHS budget will be protected for spending on public health. Directors of public health will be employed by local authorities and act as ambassadors for the people of the area. They will be able to encourage cooperation so health issues are considered alongside housing, transport, and education. Consultation on the White Paper itself closes on 8 March 2011. Consultations on the funding and commissioning of public health service and public health outcomes close on 31 March 2011.
3. North Tyneside LINK is hosted by North Tyneside VODA (Voluntary Organisation's Development Agency). VODA, the voluntary and community sector infrastructure body in North Tyneside, provides independent specialised support for voluntary and community groups and volunteers in the borough. This includes advice on setting up and developing community and voluntary groups, training, information, developing networks and partnerships, ICT and recruiting, placing and supporting volunteers. For more information visit www.voda.org.uk.