



LINk members' annual review



March 2011

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Background and Introduction

On 22 March 2011 LINK held its bi-annual event 'LINK members' annual review at the Langdale Centre in North Tyneside.

The aims of the event were:

- to give an update to members on LINK's activity over the last six months;
- to hear from North Tyneside Council and NHS North of Tyne how LINK has influenced these partner organisations; and
- to look ahead to what members would like LINK to focus on in 2011.

LINK advertised the event through Stronger Voice, the e-bulletin and posters at community venues throughout North Tyneside. One new advertising venue was the community noticeboard at Monkseaton Metro station. Over 45 LINK members and members of the public applied to attend.

North Tyneside LINK were delighted that Paul Hanson (Strategic Director of Community Service, North Tyneside Council) and Rachel Chapman (Director of Public Engagement and Communities NHS North of Tyne) and Phil Clow (Assistant Director Commissioning, North Tyneside, NHS North of Tyne) agreed to attend and present their respective organisation's views on LINKs contribution to service improvement and development.

LINK board members took the lead in introducing the day, presenting some of the highlights of the past year and leading workshops on looking at the year ahead.

The Future

Before LINK reflected back on the year board members set the context for discussions by reviewing the changes to health services proposed by the Coalition government in the Liberating the NHS bill. These include:

- Creation of HealthWatch – LINK changing to HealthWatch with extra areas of responsibilities.

- Creation of Health and Wellbeing Boards – North Tyneside already have a shadow board and is a pathfinder. LINK members have two representatives on this board and are supported by the LINK manager.
- GP commissioning – North Tyneside has two consortia in place, Care First and Engage. LINK has a relationship with both.
- Directors of Public Health and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The Director of Public Health will now be employed by the local authority and LINK has involved members in developing the local JSNA.
- Personal budgets – a new way of funding adult social care allowing greater choice and control.
- Changes in our local commissioning structure and reorganisation of local adult social care department.

North Tyneside LINK hope the voice of the user and carer are not lost in all the changes. The LINK team will strive to enable LINK members to continue to influence the improvement and development of health and adult social care services in North Tyneside through transition to HealthWatch in 2012 and beyond.

Paul Hanson, North Tyneside Council

Paul talked about the relationship between North Tyneside Council and LINK. He felt that there was a good relationship, which was not always true in other areas of the country. He described the achievements of LINK in improving services and mentioned the work that the Enter and View volunteers were about to begin with North Tyneside Council as Independent Observers in care homes. Paul discussed how he saw the future role of HealthWatch with the North Tyneside Council as integral.

Rachel Chapman and Phil Clow, NHS North of Tyne

Rachel Chapman shared information about the day to day involvement with North Tyneside LINK with particular mention of the medicines management meetings which include all three local North of Tyne LINKs. She discussed how NHS North of Tyne responded to LINKs reports and used the opportunity to feedback

on how they were implementing some of the recommendations from the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies. She also mentioned some of the future organisational challenges but that it was essential in the face of these to 'keep the day job going'.

Speakers then took questions from LINK members in the audience.

Review of LINK reports and projects 2010/11

Board members, Neil Tapster and June Davies talked about the achievements of LINK in the financial year 2010 to 2011.

These included:

- 6 commissioned reports
- 7 project
- 10 consultation events

Areas of Work Carried Out in 2010/11

- Hospital discharge
- Young people
- Access to GPs
- Respite care
- Health and adult social care needs of the transgender community
- The treatment of common mental health problems
- Health and adult social care needs of the lesbian, gay and bisexual community
- Generic medicines
- Implementation of the dementia strategy
- Personalisation
- The experience of transition from child to adult services
- Health and adult social care needs of the Black and minority ethnic community
- Patient experiences at North Tyneside General Hospital project

Workshops

Four workshops were held by LINK Board members looked at LINK's ongoing commitments for 2011/12, other issues raised by members in 2011 and afforded opportunity for members to raise future areas of possible interest to North Tyneside LINK.

Workshop Group 1

- Personalisation
- Closer working with GP Commissioning Groups and GP Forums
- Ageism in health care

Workshop Group 2

- Personalisation
- Closer working with GP Commissioning Groups
- Development of North Tyneside General Hospital and Emergency Care Hospital

Workshop Group 3

- Personalisation
- Closer work with GP Forums
- Making sure LINK has a voice in partnership boards

Workshop Group 4

- Delays in occupational therapy assessments
- Personalisation
- Lack of information about and engagement with the third sector for GPs
- Preventative agenda, long-term conditions, podiatry

Evaluation

All attendees enjoyed the meeting which met their expectations. Many commented that it was a good chance to meet with other members and network. They appreciated hearing the speakers and learning about changes in health and social care. They enjoyed the 'lively' discussions and debates although some members did comment they would have liked more time for discussion.

What happens now?

North Tyneside LINK team will present this report and its findings to the LINK Board to inform discussions and decisions about the work programme for the next six months.

North Tyneside LINK would like to thank all those who attended for their valuable contributions.



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