

Pages 2-3	Updates on home care, reablement and personalisation
Pages 4-5	LINK health and wellbeing forum
Page 6-7	Involvement and consultation
Page 8	Local health and social care news

FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

‘First impressions?’ is a film by young people that challenges others to think more about the impact of attitudes and behaviour on people with mental health issues.

We worked with a group of young carers from North Tyneside Carers’ Centre to look at how society views mental health – from the everyday language people use to tabloid stories about celebrities.

Through drama workshops we made a short film featuring stories about how society sees people with mental health issues. The young people looked at how we all carry around baggage that can weigh us down and define us. This baggage became the central theme of their film.



Yvonne Collins from Young Minds, and Claire Easton, LINK Board member and Chief Officer at North Tyneside Carers’ Centre, presented awards to the young film stars at our film premiere at the Y studio. First impressions? will be used by schools and youth groups to encourage others to talk about what mental health means for them and their friends and family.

Pictured with their awards are Sarah, Rosie, Anthony and Adam.

**For more information and a copy of the dvd and facilitator’s notes phone Alison Chalmers on 0191 643 2623 or email link@voda.org.uk
Read about our work with young people at www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk**

This newsletter is available in large print, other languages and on CD or audio cassette. To request any of these formats, contact LINK on 0191 643 2623 or email link@voda.org.uk

“I loved it, brilliant”

This was the view of one of the people we talked to about home support reablement services in North Tyneside.

We asked what people thought of the reablement services and what could make the service better. We heard from people who had used the service through written questionnaires, interviews and a focus group.

Home support reablement is a service for adults who need care or support after a hospital stay or to prevent admission into hospital or long term care. We were told how quickly the service was arranged:

“I broke my shoulder in the morning and was seen by the service in my home that same evening”

People spoke highly of the service and the ‘you can do it’ approach by staff. They said the service offered emotional support and genuine affection was felt towards the staff. Focus group members could not praise the team highly enough, with the phrase ‘loved it’ being repeated again and again.

“Once they started coming in I felt so much better”

“They lifted my spirits”

Views on information about the service varied, one person was given information at every stage. However, some felt there was a lack of written information:

“They need leaflets or booklets”

“No information at the RVI”

North Tyneside Council told us information was available and that they would look at how it was being distributed.



We recommended the positive findings of our report should be celebrated and shared with staff by North Tyneside Council. The council will respond to our recommendations in December.

**Read the report on our reablement project page at www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk
For a copy of the report call 0191 643 2623 or email link@voda.org.uk**

Do you use home care services?

We want to hear what you think of your home care services:

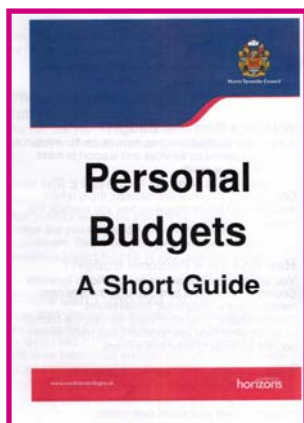
- ▶ Do your carers have enough time to do everything in your care plan?
- ▶ Do you feel your carers have the right training to care you?
- ▶ Do you have regular carers who know you and your needs?
- ▶ What are the good things about your home care service?

We want to hear what works well and what could be better. If you work in home care services in North Tyneside we would like to hear from you too.

Contact Alison Chalmers and tell her your story on 0191 643 2623, email link@voda.org.uk or write to Alison at ‘Freepost NTLINK’.

Personalisation

Making a difference - better information on personal budgets



At the LINK Board meeting in November Haley Hudson, North Tyneside Council, told us the council had written new leaflets on personalisation with the help of small focus groups. She showed the board the short guide to personal budgets which gives a simple explanation of personalisation and who is eligible.

The board suggested improvements to the leaflet and Haley later confirmed she had been able to make these changes before the leaflet was printed.

Working with councillors to review the personalisation process

Councillors from the Adult Social Care, Health and Wellbeing Sub-committee are reviewing the personalisation process. They are gathering evidence from service users, carers, managers and staff involved in delivering services. At their first meeting Haley Hudson and Nicola Munn from North Tyneside Council went through the process of getting a personal budget from a service user's point of view.

The group wants to gain an understanding of the personalisation process from the service user perspective and, if necessary, will make recommendations about how the personalisation process could be improved for the service user.

They invited our third sector personalisation group members to meet with them on 8 December to share experiences of personalisation and personal stories from service users and carers.

Alison Chalmers, LINK Development Worker, will act as a link between the councillors and our third sector group throughout the review.

For more information call Alison on 0191 643 2624, email link@voda.org.uk or go to our personalisation project page at www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk

Alison asks all about autism

Our LINK Development Worker, Alison Chalmers, ran an information sharing event with years one and two of the autism specific course at Tyne Met College. Students learnt more about the autism strategy and shared their views on what was working well for them in North Tyneside.

The young people spoke about getting out and about independently or with support in their local community. They had aspirations for the future around the world of work but worried about their future after college.

Students appeared to have a positive experience when accessing health services and said that, in health, reasonable adjustments are being made. Both classes said they would like to be involved in future discussions around services and support for people with autism in North Tyneside.

LINK's first health and wellbeing forum

We set up our new forum in response to the creation of the North Tyneside Health and Wellbeing Board and changes to local partnership boards. More than 45 LINK members, councillors and health and social care professionals came to our first forum on 22 November.



Making your voices heard at the health and wellbeing board

Anne Graney, health and wellbeing co-ordinator, (pictured left with John Robson, LINK chair) told us about the expectations and plans for the health and wellbeing board. LINK board members, John Robson and June Davies, represent LINK on the board and Claire Easton is on stand-by to make sure LINK is always represented. The LINK forum will give LINK members the opportunity to talk to John, June and Claire before each board meeting.

Some members felt the board may be too large but said that not all groups were represented, for example older people, and that prevention did not appear to be a priority. John Robson and Claire Easton said the issues raised by LINK members were the same as many of the priorities for the health and wellbeing board.

What you said

“Bringing together people from various areas was useful”

“It brought to my attention what is happening and highlighted LINK's work”

You said the forum was a good way for members to feed into the health and wellbeing board.

You said that although the forum will be about talking and sharing it needs to have ‘teeth’ to be able to go to authorities on behalf of members.

You said you appreciated the opportunities to be informed and to input into local and national plans.

You said that LINK also needs effective ways to engage with local people and groups, keeping in contact outside forum meetings and arranging meetings on specific issues.

What happens now?

We will hold the health and wellbeing forum four times a year before the health and wellbeing board to promote dialogue between LINK members and the board.

LINK health and wellbeing forum

At our next forum you can hear more about the transformation of North Tyneside Council's adult social care services.

▶ Tuesday 31 January from 1.30 to 4pm, venue to be confirmed

Phone 0191 643 2623 or email link@voda.org.uk to book your place

Making sure everyone has their say

As well as the LINK health and wellbeing forum, we will support local groups and individuals to have a greater voice in health and social care by supporting existing topic-based forums and the creation of new ones. These will feed into the health and wellbeing forum and through to the shadow health and wellbeing board. In the new year we will be developing a forum on ageing and a young people's forum. Please let us know if you are interested in getting involved.

Carers' Centre Forum - Johanne Mears, LINK Manager, will talk about how carers can feed their views into the LINK health and wellbeing forum at the next forum on Tuesday 10 January at North Tyneside Carers' Centre.

If you would like to attend or want more information please contact the Carers' Centre on 0191 643 2290

A stronger voice for mental health

We are talking to a group of people who have used community mental health services about setting up a LINK wellbeing and mental health forum.

LINK member, Jane Noble, supports mental health self-help groups, 'social out and about' groups and a mental health forum in her role as mental health development worker. Together, we are planning a forum for everyone who has an interest in mental health: service users; carers; and mental health professionals and volunteers.

Our first wellbeing and mental health forum is on Tuesday 17 January from 1 to 3pm, venue to be confirmed. For more information and to book your place call LINK on 0191 643 2623 or email link@voda.org.uk

News from the LINK Board



Welcome to Colin Thomson who joined the LINK board as an individual member in December 2011. Colin (pictured left) is also an enter and view volunteer and has been out and about visiting care homes over recent months.

Good luck and thanks go to Melanie Adams who has resigned as an organisational member of the LINK Board as she has left the YMCA for a new job in County Durham.

We have two vacancies for organisational board members. If you are interested in joining the board as an organisational member please call Johanne Mears, LINK Manager, on 0191 643 2623 or email link@voda.org.uk

Next LINK Board meeting

The next meeting of the LINK Board is on Tuesday 24 January from 12 to 2pm at the Shiremoor Centre. You can read the agenda on our website from Tuesday 17 January. Members are welcome to attend, please call us on 0191 643 2623 to let us know you will be coming.

Caring for our future

What you said about government plans for social care

At LINK's health and wellbeing forum on 22 November we talked about the government's suggestions for making funding for adult social care fairer, which include:

- ▶ People who need care before the age of 40 should not have to pay anything during their life
- ▶ No one should have to pay more than £35,000 in total
- ▶ Anyone with savings less than £100,000 should not have to pay

Members wanted to know how the age of 40 had been arrived at and if it was fair to set an age in this way. This led to discussions about age limits within the benefits system, for example Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance ending at 65. Members were concerned about people being 'forced into work' even if they had a long term condition.

Although most people felt the principle behind the proposal was sound, they did not think the amounts were right. It was unclear if the amount for savings included assets or if these amounts would be index-linked. It was questioned whether having financial limits would discourage people from saving for the future.

What next?

We looked at all your comments when sending a response to the 'Caring for our future' proposals. Your views will feed directly into a government White Paper to be published in April 2012.

You can read our LINK response to the 'Caring for our future' consultation on our website or call LINK on 0191 643 2623 for a copy.

Volunteer for enter and view



Lisa Watson, enter and view volunteer

Our enter and view volunteers are continuing their visits to care homes across North Tyneside. We are sharing their reports with North Tyneside Council and the care homes will have the chance to respond to our comments before we send the reports to the Care Quality Commission.

Are you interested in joining the team? We will be recruiting more enter and view volunteers in January.

If you want to know more about what is involved go to the enter and view page at www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk or contact Alison Chalmers on 0191 643 2624 or email link@voda.org.uk

Been waiting a long time for a routine op?

The Patients Association wants to hear from you. Contact Peter Wasson on 020 8423 9111 or email peter@patients-association.com

Introducing Marietta Evans



Marietta Evans is the new Director of Public Health for North Tyneside, a joint appointment by North Tyneside Council and North Tyneside Primary Care Trust.

Marietta worked in public health in South Tyneside and Sunderland for over 20 years before crossing back over the river to work in her home borough of North Tyneside.

Our LINK Chair, John Robson, and the LINK team met recently with Marietta. We told her about LINK members' involvement in the government consultation 'Healthy lives, healthy people' and in setting priorities for the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

We also talked about how commissioning boards had replaced partnership boards and how community and service user representatives can continue their involvement.

Marietta said she wanted to look at different ways of getting people's views on health priorities and health improvement. Many things can influence people's views such where they live, age, background and experience of health services and we need to use this knowledge when planning how to get them involved in the future.

We look forward to working with Marietta through the Health and Wellbeing Board and commissioning boards and through local involvement with LINK members.

National concern about home care services

- ▶ In January we asked you to tell the Equality and Human Rights Commission about your experiences of home care services. Their report 'Close to home' highlighted cases of physical abuse, theft, neglect and disregard for privacy and dignity. To read the report go to www.equalityhumanrights.com
- ▶ Starting in April 2012, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will carry out a themed inspection programme covering about 250 providers of home care services. The programme will help the CQC develop new ways to make sure services meet the essential standards people have a right to expect and that people are being treated with dignity and respect.

Read more about our LINK investigation of home care services on page 2

Have your say on prostate cancer care

The Prostate Cancer Charity wants to build a picture of what quality care looks like for men with prostate cancer. They want to hear from men who have had prostate cancer and their family and carers.

To take part in the survey and read more about the quality care project, go to www.prostate-cancer.org.uk/qualitycare. If you would like a paper copy of the survey please phone 0208 222 7182.



Happy Christmas to all our members from North Tyneside LINK Board and the LINK team



Want to know more about LINK?



We've been talking to groups supporting black and minority ethnic communities about how their members can get more involved and have their say on health and social care. We are making plans to get more directly involved in their activities in the new year rather than holding an open event.

If you are involved with a local group and would like to talk about how we can work together to support your members to have their say contact Alison Chalmers on 0191 643 2623 or email link@voda.org.uk

Local health and social care news

▶ International Day of Disabled People - a celebration

An evening of performances by disabled people and inclusive groups from around the region featuring song, dance, music, drama and film.

**Thursday 15 December at The Sage Gateshead, entertainment from 7pm
Tickets £4. For more information and tickets contact The Sage Gateshead Ticket Office, phone 0191 443 4661 or fax 0191 443 4551.**

▶ Are you feeling isolated?

Come along to the mental health forum in North Tyneside on the first Tuesday of the month at the Linskill Centre.

For more information contact Jane Noble on 07912991391 or email jane.linda.noble@googlemail.com

▶ Twisting ducks gig night

'Me and others' perform live at The Urban Café, Dance City, Newcastle NE1 4BR

Thursday 15 December from 7 to 10pm

Tickets £5, carers get in free with your ticket. Phone 07925 167775 or email thetwistingducks@googlemail.com to book.

Phone: 0191 643 2623 Email: link@voda.org.uk

Website: www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk

Address: North Tyneside LINK, c/o VODA, The Shiremoor Centre, Earsdon Road, Shiremoor, NE27 0HJ (FREEPOST NT LINK)