



Stronger Voice

Your newsletter from North Tyneside LINK

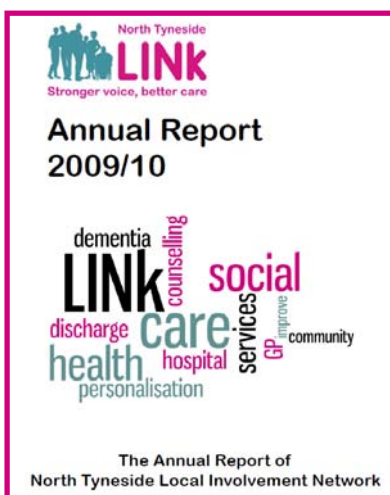
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Taking A Look At LINK

North Tyneside LINK is holding a members' event on **Thursday 24 June 2010** at the Langdale Centre in Howdon, Wallsend between 10am and 3pm. This comes as a follow-up to our successful Annual Review Event in January, and will give members the chance to hear about the progress LINK has made since then and to vote on their priorities. The afternoon session will give attendees the chance to take part in workshops and discussions around specific aspects of LINK's work, including Mental Health, the quality of care at North Tyneside General Hospital and North Tyneside's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. Lunch and networking opportunities will also be available.

If you haven't already booked your place contact LINK today on 0191 200 1429 or email link@voda.org.uk.

LINK's Annual Report 2009/10



The event will see the launch of LINK's Annual Report for 2009/10. This report covers the work of LINK over the past year, covering the structure, governance, membership development and actual workplan of LINK. The focus of the report is on the working relationships LINK has developed and the **impact** of its work. Copies will be available at the event and to download from our website www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk but if you would like to request a hard copy contact the LINK team on 0191 200 1429 or email link@voda.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 200 1429 or email link@voda.org.uk

Project Updates

Hospital Discharge Project: Almost There...



Since the last edition of Stronger Voice, meetings have taken place with the pharmacy department at North Tyneside General Hospital and the North West locality social work team to discuss issues identified at LINK's event in December.

LINK volunteer Dave Shaw has also been continuing his hard work producing the Directory of Community-Based Services, a database of services that may be of use to discharged patients, their families and carers. This will be ready to launch early in July, when it will be made available on hospital wards and shared with hospital and social work teams across North Tyneside. The existence of the database will also be advertised to patients in hospital discharge packs and on LINK's website among other channels.

A final Hospital Discharge Project report will also be produced in July to coincide with the launch of the directory. This will detail the work that LINK has undertaken and the changes that have been implemented by the social work team and North Tyneside General Hospital to improve patients' experience of discharge.

Following a successful recruitment process, it is expected that LINK Enter and View volunteers (see page 4), will be asked to visit the hospital towards the end of the year to find out what impact LINK's project and the directory of community services are having on patients and their carers.

Access to GP Surgeries: Great Response to Survey



The aim of this project is to investigate people's experiences of accessing their GP, focusing on making appointments in advance and outside of traditional working hours (9am to 5pm). So far, very nearly 200 people have completed LINK's short survey and told us what they think and we're thrilled with the response. The LINK team are currently analysing the results to find out if and where any problems are recurring.

We will then be working with the GP surgeries and North Tyneside PCT (who commission GP services) to improve systems for those who need it.

It has also been noted that a lot of the responses have been very positive, particularly around staff attitudes. LINK feels it is important to pass this information on to the relevant GP surgeries so that good practice is recognised and possibly shared. LINK would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey. For more information on this project contact the team on 0191 200 1429 or email link@voda.org.uk

Young People's Project: Workshops Underway!



LINK's series of Young People's workshops are now underway, looking at the issues of mental health awareness and staff attitudes towards young people. Held in conjunction with Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust's Child Health Action Team (CHAT), the sessions are being used by the young people to explore and make short films around the issues that are important to them. This will be presented to service providers and

commissioners at an event being organised by Northumbria Healthcare in July.

Two members of LINK's young people's working group have also been invited to run a workshop with mental health professionals at the event, in order to help them understand young patients' experiences of using their services. There will also be a presentation about this project at LINK's Taking a Look at LINK event on Thursday 24 June. For more information about this project contact LINK Development Worker Hannah Claydon on 0191 200 1429 or email hannah.claydon@voda.org.uk

Personalisation Project

The LINK Third Sector Reference Group has agreed a series of topic-based meetings with Hayley Hudson (Service Manager, Planning and Services Development in Adult Services) in order to address priorities within the personalisation agenda. The planned topics are:

- ▶ **June:** information and communication with service users and the voluntary sector
- ▶ **July:** staff development within North Tyneside Council
- ▶ **September:** the changing market, focusing on voluntary sector providers

If you are a local voluntary sector organisation and interested in how personalisation could affect you and your service users please contact Hannah Claydon on 0191 200 1429 or email hannah.claydon@voda.org.uk for more information on this group.

Quality of Care at North Tyneside General Hospital

Following information received from a number of LINK members concerning the quality of care at North Tyneside General Hospital, LINK will work with hospital staff to gather evidence and develop recommendations for improvements. This new project for LINK is still in the development stage. There will be the opportunity to shape this project at the Taking a Look at LINK event on Thursday 24 June and an update on the project report will be made available soon after.

Enter and View Volunteers Recruited



Following our recruitment process in May 2010, LINK now has seven authorised enter and view volunteers. These are:

- ▶ John Robson
- ▶ Mary Ayre
- ▶ Daphne Hall
- ▶ Eileen Turner
- ▶ Maureen Mullen
- ▶ Norma Brunton
- ▶ Molly Herridge

A second stage of interviews is taking place on 18 June 2010. The authorised volunteers will soon take part in practice visits before undertaking the first enter and view visits arranged by LINK. Keep an eye on the Enter and View section of our website www.linknorthtyneside.org for details of these visits.

Your LINK Representatives

We have a number of active members who represent North Tyneside LINK on a range of important, strategic boards and groups across both the borough and the region. This ensures LINK has a wide influence on the health and adult social care sector. We are looking to improve the two-way communication process between these reps and the wider LINK membership, so below you will find the names of all of the currently active LINK reps and the groups they sit on.

If you have an issue that you would like your Representative to raise, you can contact them through the LINK Host Team who will ensure your query or concern is passed on. The reps' feedback from their various meetings can be found on LINK's website at www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk/representing-link.html and will also be reported on in future editions of the Stronger Voice newsletter.

Group / Board	Representative (s)
North East Ambulance Service LINK Forum	Pat Bottrill
Learning Disability Partnership Board	Peter Douglas, Margaret Parsons
Physical Disability Partnership Board	Hilda Bell, John Robson
Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board	John Robson, Hazel Parrack
Mental Health Partnership Board	Jane Noble
Older People's Partnership Board	Joan Knox, Norma Playle
VONNE Health and Social Care Forum	Lindsay Perks
Equality, Diversity & Human Rights Group	Lindsay Perks, Jane Noble

LINK has a vacancy for a suitable representative to sit on the **Mental Health Partnership Board**. This Board meets approximately 4-6 weeks and feeds in to North Tyneside's Joint Commissioning Board. If you are interested in representing LINK on this board, and would like more information contact LINK's Development Worker Hannah Claydon on 0191 200 1429 or email hannah.claydon@voda.org.uk.

Staff and Board Changes at LINK



It is with sadness that we announce that LINK's Development Worker Hannah Claydon will be leaving the team in August 2010. Hannah has been with North Tyneside LINK since its launch in 2008 and has been a real asset to the team, contributing a great deal of knowledge and hard work in her time with us. Hannah is heading for the sunny climes of Australia and we're sure all LINK members will join us in wishing her a fond farewell and good luck for the future.

A replacement for Hannah is currently being recruited by LINK's Host, North Tyneside VODA, so look out for an announcement coming soon!

This month, we also bid goodbye to Board Member Fiona Leeming. A representative of Barnardo's, Fiona's role in her organisation has recently changed meaning she will no longer be working in the borough of North Tyneside. However, we are delighted to announce that Barnardo's Steve Forster will take over from Fiona as a co-opted member on LINK's Board from August. For full details of LINK's Board, please see the Governance section of our website www.linknorthtyneside.org.uk.

LINK Responds to NHS Trust's Quality Accounts

Following consultation with our members, LINK has now formally responded to the Quality Accounts of:

- ▶ Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and
- ▶ Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust

Both responses can be found on the Publications section of our website.

Members Have Their Say on the JSNA



On May, 14 LINK members attended an event about North Tyneside's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This document, produced by North of Tyne PCT and North Tyneside Council, sets out the health and wellbeing priorities for North Tyneside with the aim of influencing commissioning decisions and priority-settings.

The event saw Director of Public Health Dr Fu Meng Khaw deliver a presentation on the JSNA, and members take part in discussions around the priorities and how they would like to be involved in the refresh of the document in the future. The JSNA will also be a workshop topic at our event in June. A report from the event can be downloaded from the Publications section of our website or requested by contacting the team on 0191 200 1429 or email link@voda.org.uk.

LINK News Round-Up

Care Quality Commission Invites Comments from LINK on North Tyneside Council's Adult Social Care Services



The Care Quality Commission has requested LINK's involvement in its performance assessment of North Tyneside Council, in its capacity as a commissioner of Adult Social Care. The Commission would like

to know the collected views of LINK regarding the council and how effectively it commissions or arranges the adult social care services in the borough.

Published in December 2009, the performance report for North Tyneside Council can be downloaded from the Care Quality Commission website, www.cqc.org.uk (and search for North Tyneside) and should be used as a basis for comments.

For more information or to submit a comment, email johanne.mears@voda.org.uk or telephone 0191 200 1429 by the deadline of Thursday 24 June (comments can also be passed to the team at the Taking a Look at LINK event).

North Tyneside Council Invites LINK to Help Monitor Care Homes

A request from North Tyneside Council for LINK to work with the council in monitoring North Tyneside's care homes has been approved by LINK's Board. It is envisaged that LINK's Enter and View volunteers will be involved in this process, which LINK's Manager Johanne Mears is currently finalising the details of. Look out for more information on our website and in future newsletters.

LINK Makes Referrals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

North Tyneside's Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) role recently asked LINK to make referrals that it may consider adding to its workplan. In response, LINK suggested that the issues of the IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) service and the involvement plan for personalisation may be considered priorities.

Update on LINK's Commissioned Reports

Earlier this year, LINK commissioned a number of investigations in to several issues that had been raised as priorities by LINK members. The following reports are now available (or will be very soon) to download from the Publications section of our website or by request on 0191 200 1429, email link@voda.org.uk.

- ▶ **The Quality and Availability of Respite Care in North Tyneside Report:** as a result of this report, North Tyneside Council is going to undertake a strategic review of respite services for older people. The Council's response to the report can also be read on the Publications section of our website
- ▶ **LINK Member's Investigation into the Experience of Transgendered People Accessing Health and Social Care Services in North Tyneside**
- ▶ **LINK Member's Investigation into the Experience of Lesbian and Gay People Accessing Health and Social Care Services in North Tyneside**
- ▶ **LINK Member's Investigation into the Quality of Home Care Services in North Tyneside**

Coalition Government's Plans for Health, Social Care and Disability

Since the last edition of Stronger Voice, the new Coalition Government has published its full coalition agreement, which outlines its programme for working as a partnership government. The following is a summary of the actions outlined under the Health, Social Care and Disability heading:

- ▶ Guarantee year-on-year increases in health spending and end top-down reorganisations of the NHS
- ▶ Strengthen the role of the Care Quality Commission and Monitor, the Foundation Trust regulator
- ▶ Develop a 24/7 urgent care service in England and provide GPs with greater incentives to tackle public health problems
- ▶ Introduce directly elected members of primary care trust boards to provide a stronger voice for patients locally
- ▶ Establish a commission on long-term care and break down the barriers between health and social care funding
- ▶ Extend personal budgets for social care, introduce direct payments for carers and improve access to respite care
- ▶ Help the elderly live at home for longer through home adaptations and community support programmes
- ▶ Reform the Access to Work programme, so disabled people can apply for jobs with funding already secured for any adaptations and equipment
- ▶ Prioritise dementia research

For more information or to download the full coalition document visit www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

North East Improvement and Efficiency Partnership

NEIEP supports North East councils and their partners to work together on shared priorities to improve services and become more efficient. One of the priorities identified in the North East is Adult Social Care. NEIEP's Adult Social Care Programme (ASCP) aims to deliver greater choice and control for people who need social care, and to develop services that can meet future needs.

The involvement of local people is essential. The project has, and will involve:

- ▶ The Excellence in Reablement Reference Group, which has developed a set of ten principles for reablement services across the region (LINK has had two members on this group)
- ▶ Invitation for service users and carers to comment on the meaning of 'quality' in order to develop a Quality Framework
- ▶ A project looking at how people can stay independent and healthy
- ▶ An event will be developed to support local authorities and their partners to learn more about 'co-production' and how people can work together

For more information about this project visit www.northeastiep.gov.uk/adult/

Health and Social Care News Round-Up

▶ **Learning Disability Week: 21 - 27 June 2010**

The theme of this year's campaign is to get health trusts and hospitals to sign up to the 'Getting it right' charter, to show their support for equal healthcare. Mencap has a range of resources and information on its website www.mencap.org.uk to help organisations to take part in Learning Disability Week, including a campaign guide, petition sheets and support cards. Locally, a Festival of Sports, Health & Wellbeing event is being held on **Wednesday 23 June** from 10am to 7pm at The Park Leisure Centre, Howdon Road, North Shields. The event will feature a range of indoor and outdoor sports and activities, the opportunity to sign up for the Mencap Charter of Promises for better healthcare for people with learning disabilities and information on health, wellbeing, food, diet and nutrition. For more information telephone LDF on 0191 200 1100

▶ **Invitation to Help Shape Children's Heart Services in Your Area**

A review of children's heart services in England is currently taking place to ensure children and young people receive the very best possible care. NHS North of Tyne is holding an event on **Thursday 1 July** at St James' Park, Newcastle, in order to give people a chance to find out more about the review and have your say on how services should be organised in the future. The event takes place from 6pm to 9pm with light refreshments on arrival. For more information or to book your place visit www.eventsforce.net/specialisedcommissioningevents, telephone 0845 363 1478 or email specialisedcommissioning@graylinglive.com

▶ **Macmillan Cancer Awareness Day**

The Macmillan Bus is coming to The Linskill Centre in North Shields on **Wednesday 7 July**, to raise awareness about cancer for people with learning disabilities. Anyone is welcome to attend the event as there will be lots of information and support for all, including the signs and symptoms of cancer, information on prevention and general advice on help and support available. The bus will be at the Centre between 10am and 4pm. For more information or to book a place telephone 0800 328 2377 or email cancerinfo@northtyneside-pct.nhs.uk

▶ **Northern Burn Care Network**

This Network was created in 2008 to work across whole of the North of England (including the North East) to change and improve burn care services for the population in that area. Its functions include to review burn services, host support groups and facilitate patient involvement, and to hold events of relevance to the network. For more information visit www.ncbn.nhs.uk

Contact LINK: Tel: 0191 200 1429 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)