

News

1. What's going on in the LINK?

i) **Mystery shopping about to commence**

The LINK is working with Medway Council to provide some external validation of the quality of their services and, in particular, those contracted from external organisations. A mystery shopper is someone who poses as a bogus service user in order to gauge the quality of that service. The first such mystery shopping exercise will focus on advice services which the Council provide for those coming out of hospital or where the user may not be eligible to receive full care services.

ii) **Issues, issues, issues!**

The LINK's Moderating Panel - the group which advises the LINK on how it should respond to the various issues brought to it by LINK participants - is now established and is about to consult with LINK participants on how it should make its decisions. A number of issues are currently under consideration, as follows:

- Discharge arrangements from Medway Maritime Hospital and pressure on beds
- Excess waiting time in the Phlebotomy Department at Medway Maritime Hospital where a patient's blood is taken for testing
- Fire precaution arrangements at Medway Maritime Hospital
- Finding a wheelchair at Medway Maritime Hospital
- A call on the LINK to support the development of a primary angioplasty service in West Kent to treat heart attacks rather than with the traditional 'clot busting' medication
- Adequacy of physiotherapy and occupational therapy services for people with learning disabilities
- Impact of the Green Paper "Shaping the Future of Care Together" on those on benefits, particularly Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance
- A call for the LINK to establish whether certain Black and Minority Ethnic Groups at greater risk of cardiovascular diseases and mental ill-health are being screened and targeted for early intervention and treatment
- Deficiencies in audiology services in North Kent
- A call for the LINK to fund projects to support young carers

iii) **LINK visitors - one more hurdle to becoming 'authorised'**

The pool of LINK participants able to assist projects that require the LINK to exercise its 'enter and view' powers are on the last stage of the authorisation process. This has involved them going through a selection process, CRB and Protection of Vulnerable Adults checks and a period of training. No LINK visitor can be authorised without them completing all stages of the authorisation process. The final training sessions will be held on 22 and 30 September and they will then be up and ready to go.



iv) Selection of Coordinating Team Members

The period of office of LINK Coordinating Team members comes to an end on 30 September. The Coordinating Team provides an oversight of the LINK operation and manages things like the finances of the LINK and makes sure it operates legally and effectively. An event to appoint the new Coordinating Team takes place on the 29 September.

v) Speech Therapy Project – LINK participants join up

LINK participants with an experience of speech and language therapy services have come forward to assist NHS Medway with their review of services in Medway – a 12 week project set up to address waiting times for assessment and treatment.

2. NHS West Kent supports organ donation campaign

NHS West Kent is urging people to become organ donors in support of a national campaign. NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) has launched an online drive to make people aware that organ donors are desperately needed. In West Kent 79 people are waiting for an organ transplant.

The NHSBT's campaign is calling for 60,000 people to add their photos to an interactive mosaic called the 'Wall of Life' and sign up to the NHS Organ Donation Register.

These individual photos will create a bigger image of two-year-old Louisa McGregor-Smith from Middlesbrough, who received a life-saving heart transplant when she was just five months old.

For more information about organ donation or to sign up to the NHS Organ Donor Register contact: Donor Line by telephone 0300 123 23 23 or visit the website: www.walloflife.org.uk

3. Know your Numbers! – could you be one in three?

Know your Numbers Week 2009 is the nation's biggest blood pressure testing event which is taking place from 7 – 13 September 2009.

To raise awareness during this year's event the Blood Pressure Association is asking "Could YOU be the one in three?"

High blood pressure affects a third of UK adults yet millions have no idea that they have the condition. It is symptomless and if untreated can cause stroke and heart attack.

To help tackle this, nearly 1500 venues, known as 'Pressure Stations', will be offering free blood pressure checks at community and workplace venues nationwide. Participants include well known high street supermarkets and independent pharmacies, major employers spanning construction, energy, retail and manufacturing along with a wide-range of NHS and public sector organisations.



For more information please contact Blood Pressure Association, 60 Cranmer Terrace, London, SW17 0QS or visit the website:

<http://www.bpassoc.org.uk/microsites/kyn/Home>

4. Nursing and midwifery – record keeping: new guidance procedures are being introduced – implementation: 1 August 2009

The way in which nurses and midwives keep records is usually set by their employer. The Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC) recognise that because of this nurses and midwives may use different methods for keeping records.

Good record keeping is an integral part of nursing and midwifery practice, and it is essential to the provision of safe and effective care. It is not an optional extra to be fitted in if circumstances allow.

National programmes for the use of information communication technology and electronic record keeping are being introduced throughout the UK. Although electronic records are evolving, it is clear from nurses and midwives that paper based records are still commonly used. This guidance applies to both paper and electronic records. It replaces guidelines for records and record keeping (NMC 2002) and the NMC advice sheet on record keeping (NMC 2007).

This guidance is supported by further notes and frequently asked questions. The full report may be accessed at:

www.nmc-uk.org/aarticleprint.aspx?articleid=3791

For further information contact the Nursing & Midwifery Council, 23 Portland Place, London, W1B 1PZ

5. Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust

The next meeting of the Trust Board will be on 30 September at The Hop Farm, Beltring, Maidstone Road, Paddock Wood, TN12 6PY and will be held in the Blacksmith's meeting room. The meeting will start at 12.45pm subject to confirmation of agenda items. Full details of the meeting together with agenda and meeting papers will be available on the Trust's website from the 23 September. For further information contact: Gail Spinks, Maidstone Hospital, Hermitage Lane, Maidstone, ME16 9QQ, telephone 0845 155 1000 Ext 26418, email gspinks@nhs.net or visit the website:

www.mtw.nhs.uk

6. Important changes to urgent care and emergency services at Queen Mary's Sidcup

From Wednesday, 9 September 2009 the Urgent Care Centre at Queen Mary's Hospital, Sidcup – next door to Accident & Emergency (A&E) - will be open 24 hours a day, 7 days a



week for all patients including the very young and older people.

From the same date the A&E unit at Queen Mary's Sidcup will be closed temporarily overnight between 8.00pm and 8.00am.

An Urgent Care Centre is a walk-in service staffed by GPs and nurses – providing treatment for patients suffering from conditions that are urgent but not life-threatening, such as cuts and bruises, chest infections, fever, sickness and vomiting and simple fractures.

Generally, if you need medical attention and can get yourself to hospital you can go to an Urgent Care Centre. This means that the majority of patients will continue to access urgent treatment through the Urgent Care Centre at Queen Mary's Sidcup.

Every patient who needs treatment at the A&E unit, who arrives before 8.00pm that day, will be treated even if their treatment lasts beyond 8.00pm. After 8.00pm local patients who dial '999' and need emergency medical care will be taken by ambulance to the most appropriate A&E unit or specialist centre.

For more information, patient and public enquiries or to receive this information in a different language or format please telephone 0800 048 4636 (freephone answering service) and leave a message so that they can return your call.

For other enquiries, please contact Queen Mary's Sidcup A&E Communications Manager Leila Elbahy on 01689 864 793, email qmsaande@nhs.net or visit the website: www.slh.nhs.uk

7. Petition to the Prime Minister to ban the use of sun beds for under 18s

Following the announcement from the International Agency for Research into Cancer (IARC) at the World Health Organisation, reclassifying sun beds from a medium risk to the highest risk category for risk of causing cancer (effectively putting sun beds into the same cancer causing risk category as asbestos), Skin Care Campaign (SCC), Cancer Research UK and the Teenage Cancer Trust, the SCC has launched a petition to the Prime Minister. This calls on him to introduce legislation to ban the use of sun beds by under 18 year olds and that a total ban is put on the use of all coin operated sun beds.

For further information contact Andrew Langford, telephone 07810 564913, email alangford@skincarecampaign.org or visit the website: <http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/Sun-beds/>

Events

Please note that in accordance with the LINK's Governance, expenses are not reimbursable for attendance at the events shown below.

1. Mental health service user engagement forum

- Are you over 18 years old?
- Do you or have had mental health problems?
- Would you like to share your views and experiences about the mental health services in Medway and have the opportunity to feed back into the joint commissioning board?

If you have answered yes to the above, then book your place at the first Forum to be held on Thursday, 22 October 2009 from 11.00am to 2.00pm at CVS Medway, 5A New Road, Avenue, Chatham, ME4 6BB.

For further information contact Tracey at CVS Medway, 5A New Road Avenue, Chatham, ME4 6BB, email tracey@cvsmedway.org.uk or telephone 01634 818306, mobile 07891573474.

2. The 'UBUNTU' Conference – HACO second annual conference

The aim of the conference is to bring African community members together to create a collaborative plan for eliminating health disparities. It will also serve as the venue to bring all communities and organisations together to share, network and learn from each other. It will provide an opportunity for all parties to forge a common vision and direction on how to engage with African communities in Medway / Kent.

This one-day **free** conference will be relevant to everybody in Kent and Medway with an interest in African sexual health and well being issues. The event will be held at the Corn Exchange, High Street Rochester, ME1 1LS from 9.00am to 4.00pm on Wednesday, 28 October 2009

Book your place by contacting Tina Murphy, Health Action Charity Organisation (HACO), 1b Northgate, Rochester, ME1 1LS, email: conference@healthaction.co.uk or telephone 01634 844044.

3. What the Dickens? Medway NHS Foundation Trust's great expectations for diversity

Medway NHS Foundation Trust is holding an event to showcase its commitment to meeting the needs of our diverse local communities – as an employer and as a service provider. Go along and find out what they are doing; explore partnership working; share good practice; consider the Equality Bill and future plans in lively celebration, discussion and debate.

MEDWAY LINK Bulletin

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9 September 2009 - Issue 18



a Local Involvement Network

The event is being held at the Corn Exchange, High Street, Rochester, ME1 1LS on Wednesday, 21 October 2009 from 10.00am to 2.00pm (lunch will be provided).

Book your **free** place by contacting Melanie Lee, Human Rights, Equality & Diversity Manager, email melanie.lee@medway.nhs.uk or telephone: 01634 830000 ext 3354.

4. Council working with partners to make life better for Medway residents, their families and for carers

Between October – December staff from Medway Council's Welfare Benefits Unit and Revenue and Benefits Service will be working alongside the Pension Service, Medway Crossroads, Medway Carers Centre, MHS Homes, KBP (who are a firm of architects, designers, engineers and urbanists) Cerebral Palsy Care and other partner organisations for adults and children to raise awareness of entitlement to a range of Welfare Benefits, including Carers Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and Second Adult Rebate.

Numerous information days are planned throughout October – December, so check the diary below for key dates and look out for details of extra events at a location near you.

Date	Event	Venue	Times
5 October 2009	Launch Event	Franklin Rooms, Gillingham Masonic Club, Franklin Road, Gillingham, ME7 4DG	10.00am – 2.00pm
6, 13, 20, 27 October 2009		Strood Market	8.00am – 3.00pm
6 October, 3 November, 1 December 2009		Rochester Coffee Shop	9.30am – 11.00am
Every Wednesday		Elaine Centre	9.00am – 11.00am
Every Thursday		Gillingham Library	9.00am – 12.00noon
Every Friday		Rainham Contact Point	9.00am – 12.00noon
12, 19 October and 2 November 2009		Gillingham Market	8.00am – 3.00pm
12 October 2009		Pentagon Shopping Centre	To be confirmed
15 October and 24 November 2009		Hook Meadow Community Centre	11.00am – 3.00pm
26 October 2009		Pentagon Shopping Centre	9.00am – 5.00pm
28 October 2009	Talk – Ubu Tu	Corn exchange	To be confirmed



29 October 2009	Carers Event	Franklin Rooms, Gillingham Masonic Club, Franklin Road, Gillingham, ME7 4DG	To be confirmed
30 October 2009	Drop in Session	Walter Brice Centre	10.00am – 12.00noon
3, 4, 5, November 2009		Twydall Shopping Centre	10.00am – 3.00pm
9, 10, 11 and 12 November 2009		Morrison's, Strood Car Park	10.00am – 3.00pm
16, 17 and 18 November 2009		Hempstead Valley	9.00am – 8.00pm
20 November 2009	Drop in Session	CPC Cliffe Woods	To be confirmed
25 November 2009		Walter Brice, Hoo	9.00am – 12.00noon
2 December 2009	Closing Event	Franklin Rooms, Gillingham Masonic Club, Franklin Road, Gillingham, ME7 4DG	10.00am – 2.00pm

For more information contact Jo Brown, telephone 01634 331852.

5. Medway NHS Foundation Trust annual general meeting

Medway NHS Foundation Trust will be holding its annual general meeting on Tuesday, 29 September 2009 from 6.00pm onwards at the Pilkington Building, University of Kent's Medway Campus.

Go along and find out how the Trust has been working closely with their partners to bring patients the services they want. A particular focus will be the new Macmillan Cancer Care Unit, the design of which involved staff from Macmillan, cancer patients, carers and staff.

Refreshments will be provided and ample free parking is available on site. Just turn up on the day.

For further information contact Medway NHS Foundation Trust, telephone 01634 825292 or visit the website:
www.medway.nhs.uk

6. Islamic Exhibition – Kent Peace and Unity Group

The annual 'Kent Peace and Unity Seminar and Islamic Exhibition' would like to invite you to the one day opening seminar which will take place at Central Theatre, High Street, Chatham on 12 October from 10.00am – 4.00pm. A week long exhibition will be on display from 12 to 19 October at Eastgate House in Rochester High Street.

It brings all sections of the communities and statutory and voluntary organisations together



during 'Black History Month'.

For further information contact Catherine Morgan, CVS Medway, 5A New Road, Avenue, Chatham, ME4 6BG, telephone 01634 812850, email catherine@cvsmedway.org.uk or visit the website at:
www.cvsmedway.org.uk

7. Kent & Medway's mental health best practice day and annual general meeting

Want to find out more about mental health services in Kent and Medway, with a chance to learn about the work of the Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT)? This year KMPT is combining its annual general meeting with a celebration of mental health best practice.

Mental Health Best Practice Day along with the AGM will be held on Wednesday, 23 September from 1.00pm to 6.00pm at the St George's Centre, Chatham Maritime.

The day will include 30 different market stalls, showcase areas of very best practice, highlight innovative working and have a series of short presentations on a range of topics including an introduction to the health choices programme.

This is an open event and anyone can attend. For catering purposes, please notify your intention to attend direct to Julie Kemp by email julie.kemp@kmpt.nhs.uk or telephone 01732 520400.

8. NHS Medway annual general meeting

NHS Medway will be holding their annual general meeting on Monday, 28 September 2009 from 6.00pm onwards at the Corn Exchange, Northgate, Rochester, ME1 1LS.

There will be information stalls and people on hand to discuss the Trust's new initiatives.

This is an open event and anyone can attend. For catering purposes please notify your intention to attend direct to Heidi Mulhall by email heidi.mulhall@medwaypct.nhs.uk or telephone 01634 382771.

9. 'One Year On' – a conference for people who use mental health services and their carers

The review and redesign of acute mental health services in Medway and Swale was launched at a conference for people with acute mental health needs and their carers in September 2008. NHS Medway is inviting people who use mental health services and their families to the 'One Year On' conference.



The conference will be held on Tuesday, 15 September 2009 from 9.30am to 2.00pm at the Corn Exchange, Rochester. Refreshments will be available from 9.15am and lunch will be provided.

Travel expenses for services users and carers can be reimbursed on the day by NHS Medway.

If you would like further information, or to attend this event, please contact Kirsty by email info@kmn-ltd.co.uk or telephone 01634 821135.

10. Shaping the future of your ambulance service 2009

You are invited you to attend one of three similar events to be held in September. These will help build on information provided last year and seek your views as to how the Ambulance Service can improve and progress in the future. They will also provide an opportunity to share plans and progress on the South East Coast Ambulance NHS Trust becoming a Foundation Trust with you, as part of their formal consultation.

The events start at 10.00am, with lunch provided on the day, and finish promptly at 3.15pm, with the opportunity for further informal discussions over afternoon tea. These events will take place as follows:

- Wednesday, 16 September 2009 – Dorking Halls, Dorking, Surrey
- Friday, 18 September 2009 – Clair Hall, Haywards Heath, Sussex

For further information contact Paul Sutton, Shaping the Future, FREEPOST SVU500, The Horseshoe, Bolters Lane, Banstead, Surrey, SM7 2AS, email shapingthefuture@secamb.nhs.uk or telephone 01622 740385.

11. South East Coast Ambulance NHS Trust public meetings

South East Coast Ambulance NHS Trust are holding a series of public meetings to which all are invited. These meetings will take place as follows:

- 22 September 2009 – 6.30pm – 8.30pm
Grange Suite, Grangemoor Hotel, St Michael's Road, Maidstone, ME16 8BS
- 23 September 2009 – 10.00am – 12.00noon
Vestry Hall, Stone Street, Cranbrook, TN17 3HF
- 23 September 2009 – 2.30pm – 4.30pm
Queens Hall, Corn Exchange, Northgate Road, Rochester, ME1 1LS
- 25 September 2009 – 2.00pm – 4.00pm
Main Hall, Aylesham Conference and Training Centre, Ackholt Road, Aylesham., CT3 3AJ
- 30 September 2009 – 2.00pm – 4.00pm
Borough Hall, Main Road, Queenborough, ME11 5DJ



Refreshments will be provided, with sandwiches at evening meetings.

For further information contact Louise Hutchinson, South East Coast Ambulance NHS Trust, 40-42 Friars Walk, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2XW, telephone 01273 897805, email Louise.hutchinson@secamb.nhs.uk or visit the website: www.secamb.nhs.uk

12. Second Mental Health conference

This conference will be held on 24 September 2009 at the King's Fund, 11-13 Cavendish Square, London W1G 0AN from 9.30am until 4.30pm.

For further information contact Nghia Nguyen-Le, c/o Attend 11-13 Cavendish Square, London, W16 0AN, telephone 0207 307 2872, email nghia.nguyen-le@attend.org.uk, or visit the website:

<http://www.attend.org.uk/diamond-jubilee/events-and-activities/mental-health-conference.aspx>

Consultations

1. Medway NHS Foundation Trust wants to know!

Melanie Lee, Human Rights, Equality and Diversity Manager is striving to ensure that Medway NHS Foundation Trust meets the needs of all its patients. Please tell her how the Trust can ensure its services meet the needs of patients who are:

- from black and minority ethnic communities
- people with disabilities
- straight, lesbian, gay or bisexual
- younger or older people
- from different religious backgrounds or hold different beliefs?

Your input is invaluable so please contact Melanie Lee by email melanie.lee@medway.nhs.uk or telephone 01634 830000 ext 3354.

2. 'The Right to Control' - making choice and control a reality for disabled people

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) has launched a public consultation exercise to ask disabled people, service providers and other stakeholders about how the right to control could work.

The right to control will give disabled people real choice and control over the support they need to live their lives. This means that disabled people will be able to either:



- shape existing services to meet their needs
- take the service as a direct payment
- keep receiving services as they are
- have a mixture of these options.

For further information contact Leila Dean by email www.odi.gov.uk/right-to-control or telephone 01622 694879.

3. Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence strategic plan

In September 2008 the Council who promote health and wellbeing of patients and the public agreed a three year strategic plan to set direction through the transition to the new Council. The restructured Council, which took office in January 2009, has reviewed that plan and discussed its own role, priorities and strategic direction. This strategic plan therefore gives a new focus and strategy taking account of its new statutory powers and clarified role as set out in the Health and Social Care Act 2008. The Council invited comments on this draft strategic plan from regulatory bodies at the Regulators' Forum on 16 July 2009 prior to discussion at the Council meeting on 17 July 2009. The Council now invites comments from patients, the public and other stakeholders on this second draft over the summer. Discussion and feedback is sought by 22 September 2009.

For further information or to register your comments contact CHRE, 11 Strand, London, WC2N 5HR, telephone 020 7389 8030, email info@chre.org.uk or visit the website: www.chre.org.uk

4. Fair Access to Care consultation

A consultation is underway on revised guidance on eligibility criteria for social care.

The revised guidance is intended to replace the Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) guidance (2003), which was introduced to address inconsistencies across the country about who gets support, in order to provide a fairer and more transparent system for the allocation of social care services.

Following an independent review by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) (whose role has now been assimilated into the Care Quality Commission), the Department of Health has been working with stakeholders to revise the FACS guidance and now seeks views on the draft revised guidance.

It is clear that the way in which available resources for social care are prioritised has important implications for equality and we would like to highlight the consultation in the hope that you might be interested in sharing your views. The consultation can be found on the DH website at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_102362

MEDWAY LINK Bulletin

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The consultation will run until 6 October 2009.

For further information contact Social Care Eligibility Consultation , Room 118, Wellington House, 133-155 Waterloo Road, London, SE1 8UG, email social.care.eligibility@dh.gsi.gov.uk or telephone 020 7972 4097.

Contact Information

The Medway LINK may be contacted via the Host Organisation as below:

KMN, Avenue Business Centre, 17 New Road Avenue, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6BA.

Email: info@kmn-ltd.co.uk Tel: 01634 821135 SMS Text: 07976 596913

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm

(Answerphone available out of office hours)