

# Have your say

West Sussex



Your voice on local health and social care



November 2010

## Your NHS needs you!

If you are a patient, a carer or a representative with experience of the following, and are interested in helping the NHS drive up standards, please get in touch with the LINK:

### Hip and knee replacements, heart conditions, pneumonia and dementia

**Enhancing Quality** is a groundbreaking programme currently being rolled out across the South East of England (including West Sussex) and by becoming involved you can really make a difference.

The team, based at Crawley Hospital, needs your help in designing a system for gathering feedback from patients – a system that *really* identifies what it is that patients want.

And they also want advice on other aspects of their work, for instance, around patient held records for heart failure and end of life care.

If you would like to be involved, call Olly Grice on 07739 436601 or email the West Sussex LINK at: [westsussexlink@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:westsussexlink@makesachange.org.uk)

To read more about this programme click on the following link to our website:

<http://www.makesachange.org.uk/cms/site/news/west-sussex/your-nhs-needs-you.aspx>

## All change for LINKs! - but not yet!

LINKs will evolve into local HealthWatch, consumer champions for patients and communities.

“Local HealthWatch will provide a powerful new voice for Patient Participation Groups and other consumer groups that join them.”

Department of Health,  
HealthWatch Engagement Document

July's Government White Paper - *Equity and excellence: Liberating the NHS* - made it clear that whatever changes are made to the NHS, the views of patients will continue to be a central part of the development of health and social care services. And to give patients a stronger voice, the Government plans to create a national consumer champion called **HealthWatch England**.

On a local level the Government intends to transform Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) into **local HealthWatch** organisations which (like LINKs) will be the patient voice for users of health and social care services. This will make sure that views and feedback from patients and carers are integral to local commissioning of these services. The new local HealthWatch organisations will also retain the powers that LINKs currently have, like the right to 'Enter & View' premises where care is provided.

Additional roles are indicated too. For example, it has been suggested that local authorities would be able to commission their local HealthWatch to provide advocacy, helping people to make informed choices and get the services they need, as well as supporting those who want to make a complaint.

HealthWatch England and the local HealthWatch organisations are expected to be up and running from April 2012, so the next eighteen months will inevitably see much “behind the scenes” activity as the LINK evolves into a local HealthWatch.

Meanwhile, the West Sussex LINK will continue to maintain its focus on developing the network, and engaging with as many local people as possible to ensure that commissioners and providers of health and social care services are made aware of issues and respond appropriately.

To read the West Sussex LINK Stewardship Group's response to the plans for LINKs / HealthWatch submitted during the recent public consultation period, visit our website and look under “LINKs and the future”.

## Diet, facilities and education top the list of health and wellbeing issues

west sussex  
youth cabinet

This is the conclusion of a report published as a result of the partnership between the LINK and the West Sussex Youth Cabinet. It was compiled on the basis of a series of health and well-being related questions circulated to young people across West Sussex as part of the Youth Cabinet's election process in March 2010. The survey has provided a sound understanding of the issues that are being faced by young people across West Sussex with regards to their health and well-being.

Although only a relatively small percentage of the eligible population participated, we have been given a true insight into the issues that are most important for the county's young people. It is clear that diet, facilities and education are top of the list when it comes to analysing these results. The West Sussex Youth Cabinet and the West Sussex LINK will be working closely together to ensure that these results are disseminated efficiently and effectively - and that they are taken into consideration when further decisions are made in the future affecting the health and well-being of young people across the county.

The report is available to read on the website under 'Reports'. A paper copy can be made available on request by contacting Olly Grice at West Sussex LINK.



### Engaging with Community Groups

Many of us, at one time or another, have issues over the way health and social care is delivered – usually resulting from a personal experience or that of a close friend or relative. But what do we do about it except, perhaps, 'sound off' to our friends and colleagues for a while? Often, nothing. And so nothing changes.

One of the roles of the LINK is to identify trends from such issues and bring them to the attention of the NHS and the councils that provide the services, so that things can be changed. But getting people to share their issues can be quite challenging.

From talking to community groups, the LINK has learned that often people who would not consider going to a meet-

ing about say, Social Care, are more likely to share their views and concerns among their own familiar groups. So, with this in mind the LINK has been exploring how it might work with such groups (like tenants associations, carers networks, mother and toddler groups, for example) to make it easy for them to get their issues listened to.

As a result, the LINK has developed a very simple way of capturing people's views, issues and concerns by training community groups' own leaders and champions to run short sessions for their own members using a specially designed "toolkit". A pilot session was held recently to train nine Community Learning Champions at Southlanders, a Southwick based tenants association (see photo).

And the process doesn't just generate 'one-off' discussions but allows co-ordinators to let the LINK know on a regular basis as things change and new issues arise. This ongoing relationship with community groups is particularly important as nationally we move into a time of big changes in the local services that may be available.

By being part of the network of local groups and keeping local issues at the forefront, the West Sussex LINK can ensure that councils and the NHS pay attention to the needs of local communities in the decisions they make.

So, if you are part of a group that meets regularly – you might just be a few friends who get together for a coffee - and would like to be able to influence the changes to services in your area, please contact the LINK and we can discuss how we can help you to do this. Please see page 4 for contact details.

## The LINK reports

Since our last newsletter, the LINK has produced the following reports: [Listening to Black and Minority Ethnic \(BME\) Communities](#) (a brief overview of some early liaison with BME communities, groups and support workers), and [Health & Social Care Needs of Gypsy and Traveller Families and Communities in West Sussex](#) (in which the LINK has sought to identify and address some of the barriers which prevent these families from accessing support for their health and social care needs). The full reports are on the website under **Link Projects / Reports** and can be reached by clicking on the following hyperlink:

<http://www.makesachange.org.uk/submenu/west-sussex/link-projects-updates/reports.aspx>

## Enter & View

### Nutrition Report latest

East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) has completed its review of nutrition, hydration and feeding in hospitals. As part of the review, the HOSC asked the LINKs in East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton and Hove to visit local hospitals to observe practice at mealtimes and talk to patients and carers about their experiences. The LINKs' findings were a key part of the evidence used to inform the review's conclusions and recommendations to the local hospital Trusts. The HOSC report and the LINK reports are available on the HOSC website.

East Sussex HOSC will be sending the HOSC report formally to the Trusts and requesting a response for discussion at the next HOSC meeting on 18th November.

Link to HOSC website: <http://www.eastsussexhealth.org/news/NutritionFeeding.html>

### More LINK volunteers take part in training day

With new Enter & View work in the pipeline and more being planned, there is a continuing need to have trained Authorised LINK Representatives resident across the county. Our appeal for more volunteers (July Bulletin) resulted in another eleven individuals signing up for training. The all day session took place at Worthing earlier this month and was facilitated by Jessie Cunnett of Patient and Public Involvement Solutions.



### What quality and safety standards can you expect from your NHS hospital?

In our April Newsletter, we told you about a new system of health and adult social care regulation in England called the 'essential standards of quality and safety'. A new publication from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) informs patients and families what standards to expect from the regulation of their NHS hospital.

Following the introduction of a new law, all NHS hospitals in England must now be licensed by the CQC. To be licensed hospitals must show that they are meeting new essential standards of quality and safety. CQC continuously monitors them to make sure standards are upheld or improvement action is taken. Now CQC has published a leaflet which informs patients, their carers and families, what they can expect from the essential standards. The leaflet also explains how important it is that patients or their carers tell the regulator about their experiences, both good and bad, to help CQC make the right decisions. Called '*What standards to expect from the regulation of your NHS hospital*' the leaflet can be read or downloaded from the CQC website at: [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

The CQC website also publishes an up-to-date directory of all licensed NHS hospitals. You can now look up the current status of any NHS hospital trust in England.

## Consultation Event

The LINK has been working closely with a number of agencies, looking into the issue of access to GP services in Crawley for people whose first language may not be English.

Rethink, Crawley Ethnic Minority Partnership, the Expanding Communities Project, Friends, Families and Travellers and the LINK held a consultation event at Friary Hall in Crawley in September at which members of ethnic minority communities were encouraged to come along and share their experiences.

The event was well attended and translators were on hand to discuss and record any issues participants may have experienced. A report of the findings will be produced in due course and shared with service providers

For further information please call Jane Weston on 0300 111 0102

## Promoting the West Sussex Local Involvement Network



October has seen the culmination of much recent marketing activity with leaflets and posters promoting the West Sussex LINK appearing in pharmacies, libraries and at other WSCC Help Points across the county. This activity was timed to coincide with the publication of a LINK advert and short article in the council's *Connections* magazine, which is delivered to 350,000 homes throughout West Sussex.

In spite of the future plans for LINKs (see front page), promoting ourselves remains an important activity for us. The more people who know what we are here for, the more issues we will hear about. And the more people who get involved with LINK projects and activities (like Enter & View), the more effective we will be in making change happen.

So, if you would like to get more involved, or would like posters and leaflets to display, please email: [westsussexlink@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:westsussexlink@makesachange.org.uk)



## Life is for Living Event



Two LINK participants who usually work behind the scenes for the network left their desks for a day last month to promote the LINK at this year's *Life is for Living* event. Administrators Diane Ruban and Cheri Midderigh hosted a West Sussex LINK stand at this annual event in Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre, near Horsham.

"This was a great opportunity to talk to people about the LINK and what it does", says Cheri. "We had a lot of interest, particularly in our Enter & View work, and how the LINK can help people with specific health and social care issues. Our information-packed eco-friendly LINK branded shopping bags were very popular!"

The all day event was organised by Horsham Partnerships for Older People with Horsham District Age UK, Broadbridge Heath Leisure Centre, West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, and Horsham District Council. The Council's '*Preparing for an Ageing Population*' consultation was also launched enabling older people to have the opportunity to say what is important to them today and in the future.

## Advocacy project update

The Advocacy report commissioned by the LINK has now been completed and presented to the project team by Dee MacDonald, Research Fellow and Marian Barnes, Director of the Social Science Policy and Research Centre at the University of Brighton.

The report - which runs to 38 pages - is now being reviewed by the West Sussex LINK Stewardship Group after which it will be published and recommendations taken forward.

## Sussex Community NHS Trust

Sussex Community NHS Trust is now up and running following the integration of West Sussex Health and South Downs Health. Based at Brighton General Hospital, the Sussex Community NHS Trust is now the provider of all community health services in West Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

For more information visit the website: <http://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/index.cfm>



This is how to get in touch if you want to contact the West Sussex LINK

Please advise us also if your contact details change or if you no longer wish to be a LINK participant.



**telephone** 0300 111 0102

Calls to 03 numbers are charged at no more than UK geographic rates (as for 01 and 02 numbers) and will be included as part of any inclusive minutes. Calls from mobiles may be higher.



**email** [westsussexlink@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:westsussexlink@makesachange.org.uk)



**post** Freepost RSCG-BYGL-LGKS, West Sussex LINK, Billingshurst, RH14 9EY



**SMS** text message to 07739 436601

To visit the LINK website go to [www.makesachange.org.uk](http://www.makesachange.org.uk) and select 'West Sussex'.