



Your voice on local health and social care

Your Voice on Local Health and Social Care

December 2008

Oxfordshire

Number 1

YOUR CHANCE TO BE HEARD

Ever wanted to speak up about a health or social care service in your area but not known how? It might have been to offer an opinion on how things could be improved, or talk about an experience – good or bad.

Well, now you have the opportunity.

A Local Involvement Network (LINK) is being developed in Oxfordshire providing new and exiting opportunities for more people to have a say in how health and social care services are provided in the County.

HOW DOES A LINK WORK?

A LINK (Local Involvement Network) is a network of local people and groups. It listens to what people like YOU have to say about health and social care services in your area, and tells councils and the NHS what it has discovered. They are legally obliged to give the LINK any information it asks for and to respond to any recommendations the LINK makes. Joining together in LINKs, we can be more effective than we could be on our own.

YOUR LINKs HOST ORGANISATION

Each local Council has contracted with a Host Organisation to establish and support the LINK in its area. The role of a Host includes activities such as helping LINKs with marketing and communications, developing policies and procedures (covering aspects such as decision making), keeping records, arranging visits to view health and social care services, gathering the views of local people, and organising meetings.

Oxfordshire County Council has appointed 'Help and Care' to be the Host Organisation in its area
www.helpandcare.org.uk

HOW TO CONTACT US:

The LINKs office for Oxfordshire will be opening in Witney from January – further details will be announced in the next newsletter

Local phone until further notice – **01865 810583**

Locality Manager – **Adrian Chant**

Administration Assistant – **Nancy Darke**

Email us: **OxfordshireLINK@makesachange.org.uk**

or

Call us on 0300 111 0102

Monday to Thursday 9am-5pm

Friday 10am-4.30pm

(Calls to 03 numbers cost the same as calls to 01 and 02 numbers, and are included as part of any inclusive call minutes from both landlines and mobiles)

Write to us at:

Freepost Business Reply Service

Licence No. BH1902

LINKs

896 Christchurch Road

Bournemouth

BH7 6BR



**Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year**

**LINKs are looking forward to a
productive New Year in which we can
make changes for the better. Thank
you to everyone for your support and
involvement so far...**

INFORMATION EVENTS

A series of LINKs events and workshops has been taking place around the County through October & November to raise awareness of LINKs generally and to gain interest in nominations for a core 'Stewardship Group' for the LINK. Events have been well attended with 82 individuals together with a good range of representation across Health, Social Care and Voluntary Sector partners taking part.

Feedback

Feedback from these events together with summaries from workshops have been collated and will be used to inform future requirements and structure. The following are a selection of comments based upon some suggested workshop topics:

What would you like from your LINK?

- “Active not passive”
- “Training & education”
- “A voice for everyone”
- “Inclusive”
- “Good representation across the County”
- “Transparency”
- “Leadership”
- “Good communications”

What can you bring to your LINK?

- “Responsibility”
- “Enthusiasm”
- “Time”
- “Best endeavours”
- “Ability to challenge”
- “Experience”
- “Contacts with local organisations”
- “An informed voice”

How will the 'Stewardship Group' prioritise health & social care issues which the wider LINK identifies?

- “Possibility of success”

- “Severity of issues”
- “Impact of doing nothing”
- “Given a fair hearing”
- “Research”

WHAT'S NEXT?

Election time....

The next step for the Oxfordshire LINK is to elect a 'Stewardship Group', the role of which will be to steer the work of the LINK and to support and enable groups and individuals to carry out a work programme through:

- Ensuring key local stakeholders are represented and their views considered
- Allocating resources for the work of the LINK, recognising that these resources are limited
- Communicating with the wider community
- Planning work and allocating resources to support that work
- Supporting groups to undertake work and take up issues as necessary
- Supporting groups to produce credible reports which commissioners and providers can use to improve services
- Approving reports produced by groups on behalf of the LINK

It is important that as many people as possible in Oxfordshire are given the chance to have a say in the election of this group. Therefore, if you haven't already done so, please take this opportunity to register your interest in the LINK to ensure that you are:

- **Kept up to date with what's happening in the Oxfordshire LINK**
- **Provided with the opportunity to be a candidate for election to the Stewardship Group**
- **Are able to vote in the election**

The timetable for the election of the Stewardship Group will be as follows:

5th – 30th January 2009: Nominations open

4th – 26th February 2009: Ballot papers sent out & voting open

27th February 2009: Stewardship Group elected

From this point training and support will be available to the group and planning will take place concerning priorities for the immediate work programme through gathering evidence from participants in the wider LINK

LOCAL PARTICIPATION

Oxfordshire LINK continues to have a presence at local Community and Voluntary sector events and meetings wherever possible in order to raise awareness, promote involvement and to register additional LINK participants. For example a presentation was made to approximately 70 representatives attending a recent County Voluntary and Community Sector Forum.



A video presentation took place for a week at the Westgate Shopping Centre in Oxford where promotional staff handed out in excess of 400 leaflets and signed up 119 individuals for the LINK:



An information & registration stall at the Winter Green Fair drew interest amongst the alternative health and environmental displays:



At the time of writing there are over 280 people registered to participate in the Oxfordshire LINK, with more taking part every week.

FOR GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

Our Development Officers are keen to come out to your group to talk about the LINK, listen to your views and experiences of health and social care and discuss ways in which your group might like to be involved in the LINK

GET INVOLVED

Your local LINK wants to hear from you what YOU think about local Health or Social Care services – good or bad. There are lots of different ways you can do this. For instance, you can talk to someone, fill in a questionnaire or online survey or attend a meeting

If you want to make your voice heard:

- ✓ Call us on 0300 111 0102
- ✓ E-mail us OxfordshireLINK@makesachange.org.uk
- ✓ Complete and return the registration form on the next page.

WEBSITE

💬 **For those of you with internet access, why not register on the LINKS website? This is how simple and effective it can be**

Make a Change to your local health & social care services in 3 easy steps:

- 1) Register online at www.makesachange.org.uk
You can register as an individual or as an organisation
- 2) When you have registered you will receive a confirmation email. Activate your account by following the link in the email
- 3) You are now ready to Make a Change. Simply log in and start joining in the online discussions to have your say

Here are some *great benefits* to signing up:

- Discuss issues online and share views with other people
- Add Blogs (online commentaries like a diary or journal)
- View news and information for your local area and other areas
- Take part in opinion polls
- Read national news stories
- Find out about national campaigns
- Look at the latest newsletters for Oxfordshire
- Find events in your area

Registration of Interest in Oxfordshire LINK.

To register your interest in the LINK by post, please complete this form and send to:

Freepost Business Reply Service
Licence No. BH1902
LINKs
896 Christchurch Road
Bournemouth
BH7 6BR

Your Name (& Organisation, if applicable):

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Address:

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Phone Number:

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Email:

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If you have e-mail, please tick this box to confirm you are happy to be contacted by this method

Data Protection

Help and Care is a host organisation for LINKs. We will process the personal information you give us for administrative and statistical purposes. We will not disclose personal information about you to any other person or organisation without your permission.



Now it's up to you...

Register your interest....

Let the LINK know what you have discovered about Health and Social Care Services in Oxfordshire

The LINKs Vision:

- **LINKs are truly inclusive; everyone has a voice and LINKs will help people be heard in ways that suit them**
- **LINKs will join people's voices to tackle broader issues than they could raise on their own**
- **LINKs are progressive**
- **LINKs will change things and be able to prove it**
- **LINKs will deal with real health & social care issues**
- **LINKs will spend ALL its money on achieving change for local people**