

# Somerset Local Involvement Network

January 2010

Issue 05



## Message from *your* Stewardship Group

A principal role of the Stewardship Group is to plan the work of the LINK based on evidence gathered from the wider LINK network.

To that end we met more than 70 people at our first event at Lyngford House, Taunton in November when we began planning the next stage of our development.

Proceedings started with talks from local policy makers who provided a strategic overview of health and social care. They were: Ann Anderson, Director of Strategy and Planning, NHS Somerset; Miriam Madison, Corporate Director – Community, Somerset County Council; Jo Ridgway, Director of Organisational Development at Musgrove Park Hospital; Dr Rosie Bennyworth, GP at St James’s medical Centre Taunton; and Diana Rowe, Director of Operation/CEO Somerset Partnership.

In the afternoon we held an interactive session to assist in the development of the LINK work plan. This brought about much debate on the difficulties we have had in making progress over the past year as well as a clear steer for the way forward. In all, 21 topics which address local health and social care issues were put forward. Since this event the comments have been added to the 114 collected by the Host’s Development Office and put into a series of themes that we will add to a work plan over the coming months.

Themes include:

- Carers and care at home
- Equal opportunities and support to be involved
- Aspergers Autism
- Influencing commissioning practice
- Transport
- Information/GP surgeries
- Personalisation and direct payments.
- Involving young people

We will keep all those who have registered an interest in the Somerset LINK informed of progress.

## In This Issue

- New volunteers
- Consultation
- What’s on
- News in brief

LINKs are made up of individuals and community groups who work together to improve local services. Somerset LINK covers all health and social care services commissioned by the NHS and County Council. The only services excluded are children’s social services.

## Stewardship Group welcomes new people

THE Stewardship Group has been strengthened by the addition of new volunteers.

There are eight of us (so far!): David Boyland, Leroy Clifton, Chris Evans, Carole Hounsell, Brian Shipton, Brian Stother, David Reeves and Rachel Witcombe.

We have included brief resumes of our new volunteers to let you know more about them and to encourage you to get actively involved, too.



David Boyland (left) retired in 2004 having been Head of Public & Patient Involvement with the Health & Social Care Department in the Welsh Assembly. From 2004 to 2006 he worked for the

Healthcare Commission as a complaints case manager. For the past three years he has worked part-time for Somerset County Council as a registrar of births, deaths and marriages. He has also been a member of the Taunton & Somerset public and patient involvement forum (covering Musgrove Hospital, Taunton), and has been involved in interview panels for Somerset PCT in selecting an organisation to deliver new emotional health and well-being services (mental health) in Somerset.

He said: *"I am currently 65 years of age, married (my wife is an assistant priest in the Church of England) and we live in South Somerset. I have a continuing interest in helping to develop genuine (as distinct from cosmetic) public and patient involvement in health and social care services, and am keen to be involved in the Somerset LINK as it develops."*

Brian Stother (below) has a professional background in social housing and valuation work and has lived in the county for more than 30 years. He and his family have experience of a range of health services and he is a volunteer



interviewer of patients at Taunton's Musgrove Park Hospital.

He has a passion to help improve health and social services and likes to adopt a holistic approach to issues. He is a former director and chair of Bridgwater YMCA.

Brian Shipton (right) has the time and the energy to devote to worthwhile objectives; he set up and chaired a Local Action Team and has been Chairman of the Local Diabetes UK Taunton & District Diabetes Support Group for over a year.



He said: *"Over the past 25 years I have been responsible for achieving set goals, this was by influencing and motivating a team of technical & commercial colleagues across the UK, so I have had a wide range of training to achieve this."*

You can contact us by e-mail [somersetLINKs@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:somersetLINKs@makesachange.org.uk) and writing 'For the attention of the SSG' or an individual member's name in the subject line. Or call or write to us.

# Consultation...make your voice heard!

## Help set hospital priorities

TAUNTON & Somerset NHS Foundation Trust is calling on patients, carers and the public to contribute to its annual report.

The Department of Health and Monitor requires all healthcare providers to produce a 'Quality Account' as part of the 2009/10 annual report.

National guidelines say the Quality Account should reflect local priorities as well as the Trust's business objectives and national requirements.

Kathy Richardson, Associate Director of Governance & Patient Safety at Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton said she would be grateful for any comments or suggestions from LINKs and the public which may help to identify and prioritise areas.

She said: *"We are very keen to understand what people in our local area feel is important so that we may be able to include them in this or future years' quality accounts."*

Suggestions already received include: effective communication, discharge arrangements and multiagency working.

Email: [Kathy.richardson@tst.nhs.uk](mailto:Kathy.richardson@tst.nhs.uk)  
Write: Kathy Richardson, Associate Director of Governance & Patient Safety, Blackdown House, Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton TA1 5DA

## Plans to improve GP surgeries

SOMERSET Primary Care Trust plans to improve more than 50 GPs' surgeries throughout the county. Do you have an opinion about changes to your local practice? We would like to hear from you. Call us on 0300 111 0102 or email: [somersetLINK@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:somersetLINK@makesachange.org.uk)

## Hospital car parking – to pay or not to pay?

THAT'S the question posed in a public consultation exercise on the implementation of free NHS hospital car parking.

In September Andy Burnham, the Health Secretary, pledged to abolish parking charges for inpatients, their relatives and friends within three years.

The consultation exercise asks the public whether this should include all inpatients or just those who need to stay in hospital for longer than a day.

The Government does not plan to make any extra money available for the policy, instead the NHS will have to fund it

through 'back-room' efficiency savings.

If you have strong feelings about this subject, make sure your voice is heard. The consultation period ends on February 23. More details at [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_110557](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_110557)

## Somerset's new dementia strategy

DO you have experience of caring for a loved one who suffers from dementia? Have you used or developed an interest in dementia services in Somerset?

If so, you may be interested in an opportunity to represent Somerset LINKs in the 'Raising Awareness and Understanding Working Group – Somerset Dementia.' Please contact us on 0300 111 0102 or email: [somersetLINK@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:somersetLINK@makesachange.org.uk)





## What's on!

### LINks Spring meeting

LINks Stewardship Group plans to hold a meeting in public in **March** when we will welcome discussion with anyone interested in health and social care.

When the date and venue have been arranged we will let you know and publish the details on our web site [www.makesachange.org.uk](http://www.makesachange.org.uk)

### Help for carers

St John Ambulance, which is registered with Somerset LINks, is running courses for carers across the county and has also produced a helpful booklet for carers.

If you, or anyone you know, might be interested, call Jude Glide, Carer Support Manager 01823 345922 or [www.somerset.sja.org.uk](http://www.somerset.sja.org.uk)

### 'Enter and view' training

LINks have an important statutory power that entitles authorised representatives to enter and view health and social care services.

These visits have to be part of a project or other on-going activity that the LINK is undertaking as a part of its overall work plan. It should enhance on-going work and complete a picture of how particular services are delivered.

We are running 'Enter and View' training on **March 2** and want to hear from anyone interested in joining the team. If you think you have the appropriate skills and personal qualities for these inspections, do come forward.

The training takes place at Great Bow Warf, Langport and there are still places available! Call us on 0300 111 0102 or email: [somersetLINK@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:somersetLINK@makesachange.org.uk)

### Free equality networking opportunity

THE Forum for Equality and Diversity in Somerset is organising a free networking lunch on **February 5** at Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater.

Guest speaker Alison Mawhood, of Compass Disability Services, will talk about 'The Personalisation Agenda', a radical reform of public services.

If you want to find out more, or book a place, contact Nat Stevens, Project Coordinator, Compass Disability Services call 0330 333 0089 / 0844 984 2828 [www.compassdisability.org.uk](http://www.compassdisability.org.uk)

### Mental health support in Chard

A mental health information desk to signpost people to various services will be at in the foyer of Chard Guildhall on **Tuesday, February 2 between 1-5pm.**

Chard Intentional Peer Support Group (CIPS) will run the desk for the first month and thereafter, on the first Tuesday afternoon of the month, it will be manned by Mindline Somerset. CIPS would like to hear from other organisations which would like to get involved, or provide publicity materials.

CIPS is running an event 'Breakdown to breakthrough' to tackle the stigma of mental health at the Guildhall at 11am-2.30/3pm on November 10. A variety of speakers and organisations will be at the event providing help and information.

If you are interested in booking tickets (free of charge) for your organisation, please contact Julie, call 07506238540, email [chardpeergroup@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:chardpeergroup@yahoo.co.uk) or write to CIPS, Forefront Community Centre, 42 Fore Street Chard TA20 1QA.



## Tell us your news!

If you'd like to submit an article for consideration in the March edition, please let us know by the end of February.

Newsletters are currently issued every two months with more updates online.

## How to contact us

Email:  
somesetLINK@  
makesachange.org.uk

Call:  
0300 111 0102  
(03 numbers cost the same as 01 & 02 numbers and are included in all mobile phone bundle packages)

Write:  
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RSAC-KSRE-CZCE  
Somerset LINK  
Unit 2  
Bowdens  
Business Centre,  
Hambridge, Langport,  
Somerset TA10 0BP

Visit:  
[www.makesachange.org.uk](http://www.makesachange.org.uk)

## Health & care professionals urged to engage with LINKs

THE Department of Health wants to see health and care staff from all sectors proactively engage with their LINK and encourage conversations between services and patients.

They are urging health and care professionals from GPs to nurses, dentists to community support workers and social workers, to proactively support their LINK by promoting participation amongst a range of diverse service users and by using their LINK as a vital service planning and delivery tool”

Joan Saddler, National Director of Patient and Public Affairs at the Department of Health said: “*The better we understand our patients and the public, the better we can respond to their needs. In order to place quality at the heart of the NHS, we need to put the views of patients there too and LINKs provide the ideal way to do this.*”

The call from the Department of Health comes as part of a nationwide campaign that aims to drive up awareness of LINKs and promote their ability to help bring about genuine change. As part of this campaign, a LINKs website has been launched on NHS Choices [www.nhs.uk/links](http://www.nhs.uk/links)

## Calling young people!

WE want teenagers and young people to get involved with the LINK and ensure their health and care issues are specifically represented.

Sexual health, drugs, alcohol and stress are among the concerns felt by younger members of the community.



Young volunteers, aged 16 and over, could communicate and engage with their peers and represent their views in the LINK.

If you are interested, or know someone who might want to get involved, please contact us.

## Somerset LINK is hosted by:



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