



Your voice on local health and social care

bulletin

West Sussex LINK

5th October 2009

LINK looks at Advocacy

As a user of health and/or social care services, have you ever been in a situation where you found it hard to speak up for yourself or ask the right questions about the things that were concerning you? If not, you might know someone who has.

With health and social care providers continuing to offer a greater choice in the way their services are delivered, service users will need the information and support to enable them to make informed decisions about their care.

More and more care is now being delivered on a personal basis (for instance, individuals being in control of their own care budgets). As a result, the need for information and support has never been greater.

The West Sussex LINK has embarked on a project looking into advocacy services in West Sussex - specifically, the issue of advocacy services in the area of personalised care.

How to get involved

The working group, currently consisting of members of the LINK Stewardship Group and staff from the LINK Host team, would like to hear from any LINK participant who has experience (good or bad) of advocacy services relating to personalised care – or those who would just like to be involved in the project.

Participation in the work, which is being funded by the LINK, could range from gathering further evidence on the issue to feeding back recommendations to service providers.

Contact us

If you would like to be involved in this work, or have an experience of advocacy that you would like to share please contact us by one of the following methods. Thank you.

- email westsussexlink@makesachange.org.uk
- write to **Freepost RSCG-BYGL-LGKS, West Sussex LINK, Billingshurst, RH14 9EY**
- telephone **0300 111 0102** (costs no more than calls to other local codes (eg: 01403, 01243).

Advocacy should ...

...help get your voice heard.

...give you information and support so you can make better choices.

...get people to understand your point of view.

...make it easier for you to get information in a way that you can understand.

...help you carry out tasks according to your wishes.

“Who you gonna call?”

For most drivers, a vehicle breakdown can be resolved by a call to the AA, RAC or similar service provider. But for those whose mobility depends on an electric scooter or wheelchair - what the DVLA term ‘invalid vehicle’ - there seems to be no such support available. Well, that is what West Sussex LINK participant, Reg Woollard, has told the LINK office.

Reg says that now that the major breakdown suppliers no longer provide a service for drivers of invalid vehicles, when his machine comes to a halt, the options seem to be:

- Phone a friend
- Call on the nearest house, ask to leave the machine there and call a taxi
- Ring the local mobility suppliers (and hope its not a weekend or a Bank Holiday)

Reg is keen to get things changed and so has asked whether the LINK can provide him with feedback from other disabled drivers about their experience of breakdowns. He is particularly interested to know how many breakdowns people have had, the causes (battery, puncture or other), and whether they occurred in a town or a rural location.

So, if you have experienced a breakdown and would be prepared to share your story with Reg, please contact him by phone (01243 552524) or email (regwool23@btinternet.com).

Thank you.

Stewardship Group Meetings

The West Sussex LINK Stewardship Group (pictured right) meets every month and from October their meetings will be open to the public. So, if you are interested in observing the group at work, please come along.

If you do attend there will be opportunities to ask questions at the end.

The next meetings will be held in Billingshurst Village Hall and are scheduled for Monday 26th October (13.30 - 16.00), Thursday 19th November (14.30 - 17.00) and Monday 14th December (10.30 - 13.00).

Minutes from past meetings can be found on the website* along with information about the elected members of the Stewardship Group.



West Sussex LINK Stewardship Group

[Top L to R] John Gooderham, Christopher McCrory, Michael Vincent, Betty Smith, Terence Rixon. **[Middle]** Vicki King, John Thompson, Lilian Bold, Stuart Henderson, Patrick Shanahan. **[Bottom]** Tony Reynolds, Paul Renshaw, Anthony 'Taff' Davies and Mary-Ann Letten.

* To access news and information online from the West Sussex LINK go to www.makesachange.org.uk select 'South East', then 'West Sussex'.

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