

The future of the NHS in Wokingham Borough



The government calls it modernisation, critics call it the destruction of the NHS, but they all agree that the health service is about to undergo the biggest reform in its history.

Sixty years ago, few could have predicted that the National Health Service would look as it does now. Indeed, its founders even predicted

falling demand for its services, as major infections were brought under control.

Predicting what the NHS will start to look like over the next 60 years may be even more difficult as the pace of change will be furious and could lead us in directions that we have not even countenanced.

A number of people had expressed concerns and confusion about all the Coalition Government plans to change the way in which healthcare is delivered. As a result the Wokingham LINK decided to hold a public meeting on the 17th February 2011 with key figures willing to respond to questions.

Helen Mackenzie (Acting Chief Executive of NHS Berkshire West) gave a presentation (slides available upon request) confirming that the NHS will continue to exist and healthcare will be free at the point of delivery. However the coalition government have outlined plans for a number of changes;

We currently have the following structure in place; the Department of Health, Strategic Health Authority (South Central), then 9 Primary Care Trusts (PCTs).

All PCTs will go in 2013/14 and be replaced by an NHS Commissioning Board. In Berkshire there will be 7 GP Consortia that will be established as corporate bodies. They will be responsible for managing 80% of NHS health budget. The NHS Commissioning Board will have the responsibility for holding consortia to account and for allocating and accounting for NHS resources

In all this change you the patient should not notice too much difference. You should still have good access to GPs. You should still have access to hospitals and a system that works well. It was agreed that with so much change happening over the next few years it was crucial to keep the public informed – with information that is easy to understand.

If you are interested in finding out more about health or social care services in Wokingham or are interested in having a say please get in touch with Christine Holland on christineholland275@gmail.com

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Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

We wanted to make you aware of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) engagement. The engagement period is open until 8 April 2011.

The JSNA is the assessment of the current and future health and well being needs of the local population. This information is used to inform priorities and targets and commissioning of services that will in turn, ultimately improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities.

This year instead of a separate JSNA for each local authority area, the approach has been modular based on specific health conditions. NHS Berkshire West has worked with its local authority partners; and GPs and other key partners to help establish an over-arching, evidence-based consensus on local priorities for health and well being.

The modules on which your views are sought are dementia, diabetes, CVD, COPD and stroke and summaries of these modules can be viewed on

<http://www.berkshirewest-pct.nhs.uk> and follow "Listening to you" then "Have your say" and "Current Consultations" and you can give your views by filling out the online questionnaire

If you have any questions please contact Christine Holland the LINK Chair on christineholland275@gmail.com

Care for Stroke Patients



Those of you that read local newspapers or listen to local radio may recall that the Care Quality Commission announced the results of its survey of Stroke Care in England in January. Berkshire West PCT was assessed as being amongst the least well performing PCTs in England.

The review covered care in hospital, discharge, rehab, early supported discharge, aims and adaptations, long term care, end of life care, social care and links to support services.

The areas where the PCT fared well were acute care, early supported discharge, TIAs, end of life care and the Quality Outcome

Framework.

Areas where the PCT and other local services fell short included the continuing rehab and information needs of patients and carers, the review of care after a stroke, signposting to support services and the care of patients and carers following a stroke.

The PCT is responding by setting up a Stroke Patient Information project, by seeking to establish a Patient / Carer User Group and by looking at ways of improving the review of stroke care.

The review for Berks West PCT is available on http://www.cqc.org.uk/db/documents/2010_StrokeArea_5QF.pdf or by Googling the Care Quality Commission, clicking on the tab "Find a report" then on "Reviews and Studies" then on "Stroke Services" and then downloading the reports that you are interested in.

If any of our members wish to comment on their experiences please e-mail tonylloyd25@googlemail.com

Volunteers Wanted !!



- Are you passionate about patients and the public having their say about health and social care services?
- Do you want to make sure that people's stories about their care are heard and acted upon?

The next year is a big year for the LINK as we prepare for HealthWatch - and we want to make sure that local people are in a position to make their stories heard and to ensure that the public is getting the best possible treatment from health and social care services.

But to do this, we need a strong volunteer base of Wokingham residents who can give their time and passion for health and care services to advocate for patients and the public and hold services to account.

The LINK have identified several areas of short-fall in the capacity of provision by Health and Social services to meet population needs. Areas include;

- Dentistry
- Physiotherapy
- Mental Health
- Elderly Care and Long Term Conditions and Disabilities

The Wokingham LINK are looking for enthusiastic and motivated individual, who can spare a few hours each month in making a difference to local health and social care services.

If you are interested in volunteering with the LINK, please contact Pat Evans, Wokingham LINK Steering Group Member on 0118 9733020 or email: jeandpe@Camelot.entadsl.com

How will the Voluntary Sector cuts change the face of Wokingham?

Faced with a changing landscape for both public services and the voluntary sector, Wokingham Borough Council is reconsidering how it supports the voluntary sector to meet local priorities. As part of transforming its services, Wokingham Borough Council has been reassessing the way it works with the voluntary and community sector in order to best target support for frontline, priority services. In future, the Council will directly fund voluntary and community groups to meet local priorities that will improve the quality of life for residents. This 'commissioning process' will replace the old system of simply funding a few groups each year through grants, a system that has led to so-called legacy funding – grants being paid to the same groups each year without direct reference to the community's priorities.

On the one hand the Government's Big Society initiative is calling for more volunteers to make a difference to their local area, however on the other hand the Local Authority are having to reduce funding for voluntary groups and organisations. On their own, many of these cuts would barely register anywhere outside the community in which the charities operate: a few hundred pounds here, a few thousand there; a community engagement worker made redundant here, a day centre's hours dramatically reduced there. But taken together, a pattern emerges: a entire networks of publicly-funded (or part-funded) local voluntary services being reduced or obliterated.

What is this going to mean for local services in Wokingham? Organisations fearing their funding will be cut to make savings to Wokingham Borough Council's stretched budget include Berkshire Costume Service, Connexions, which helps the borough's youth with employment and education, and Wokingham Mencap. The closure of Voluntary Action Wokingham Borough this month will mean a number of services – such as training, information and advice and networking will be lost. The LINK host arrangements from 1st April have still not be confirmed.

At a recent Council meeting Councillor Prue Bray (leader of the Liberal Democrats at Wokingham Borough Council) proposed a motion deploring the cuts in Council grants to voluntary organisations. Cllr Bray said: 'The voluntary sector in Wokingham Borough plays an invaluable role in offering services to protect our vulnerable residents. If the council had to provide these services itself, there is no doubt that they would cost much more than they currently do. In the current economic climate, the priority has to be to look after the Borough's vulnerable people in the most cost effective way available. It is ridiculous that the Conservative council sees cutting grants to the voluntary sector as the best way to achieve this.'

Community Engagement Survey 2010

In May 2010 the Wokingham LINK engaged in a Community Engagement Survey which invited residents of Wokingham Borough to give us their views on many aspects of health and social care. 390 copies were distributed and 139 results were collected. The analysis showed that many residents would like to see more access to information in clarifying clear signposting to the services which are available in both the NHS and Social Care and how they work together.

A 'One Stop' information hub for all services was suggested more that once and use of Wokingham Borough's "Wokingham Direct" Terminal in their headquarters will be followed up in the future. The survey results identified that younger people, especially young parents, are among the hard to reach in these matters and this group are seen as a target for LINK work for the immediate future.

Services for people with Neurological Condition

West Berkshire Neurological Alliance

This was a joint exercise between the West Berkshire Neurological Alliance (WBNA), West Berkshire LINK and the Wokingham LINK. The project was to focus on 8 neurological conditions which were; Dystonia, Fibromyalgia, ME, MS, Parkinsons, Polio, and Stroke. 1332 questionnaires were sent out to patients with a range of neurological conditions and to their carers, 254 were returned from patients and 153 from carers.

The WBNA devised the questionnaires and arranged their printing and despatch. The report is being reviewed by Professor Parker of York University

The draft final report is out with stakeholders for comments. We will be circulating this widely once all responses have been collected and integrated into the report.

Wokingham LINK and the future....

As reported in previous issues of LINK news, you will know that the LINK is set to undergo change following Government proposals. Due to take place in 2012, the development from LINK to HealthWatch will be in accordance with Government guidance as outlined in recent NHS White Paper "Liberating the NHS" and is contrary to national press claims that LINKs around the country are to be "scrapped".

Local HealthWatch will have similar responsibilities with a wider remit to the existing LINK. They will ensure that the views and feedback from patients and carers are an integral part of local commissioning across health and social care.

They will also have similar power including the ability to carry out visits to local health and social care services and provide information and advice. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead will be able to commission the local HealthWatch to provide additional services such as advocacy and supporting people who wish to make complaints about NHS services.

As of the 1st April 2011, Help and Care will no longer Host the Wokingham LINK. To find out more about Healthwatch, please contact Rachel Masters, Partnership Development Officer on 0118 974 6037 or email Rachel.masters@wokingham.gov.uk



LINK supporting community development in the Norrey's Estate

Whilst Wokingham is recognised as being one of the most affluent areas to live in England there are some pockets of relative deprivation, such as the Norrey's ward. The Norrey's Ward consists of 3464 dwellings, approximately 560 of which are social housing. The LINK have been working in partnership with the Norrey's Community Partnership Forum to support healthier lifestyle amongst the estate's population.

The LINK agreed to provide some limited financial support in return for involvement in and feedback from the project and introductions to local residents. The LINK funded the printing of some recipe cards to support a "healthy eating" theme at the second Norrey's summer street party on 24th July 2010.

More than 250 people attended the party and of those 15 were selected by the LINK Development Officer to be involved in a follow up sample survey focusing on their eating habits 3 months after the street party. 11 of the 15 surveys given out were completed and returned to the Norrey's Development Officer at the community flat.

- 1) This survey provided some good initial evidence that the initiatives undertaken by Candice Wright and her supporters to encourage Healthy Eating on the Norrey's Estate are beginning to have an impact.
- 2) The Norrey's street party and the recipe cards funded by the LINK seem to be

having an impact on local resident's behaviours and actions, with several people using the recipe cards and reporting a change in meal preparation as a result.

- 3) The initiatives are constrained by three key factors

- cost of fresh produce
- access to fresh produce
- lack of time to cook from scratch.

The LINK were able to follow up it's initial investigation into eating habits by being one of the official supporters of the Norreys Community Health Roadshow which took place on Wednesday 2nd February 2011 at All Saints School.

The Norreys Community Health Roadshow was designed to raise the awareness of local residents issues related to health such as healthy eating and how to keep active. Children were kept occupied with a colouring corner, circus skills and Smoothie making courtesy of Brambles Children Centre. The adults had a chance to get a health check, find out about support for stopping smoking, Berkshire Healthcare Trust's "Talking Therapies" counselling scheme, receive nutritional information from Promote Health Club and of course give feedback about local health and social care services to the LINK



Patient Access to GP appointment in Wokingham

At the beginning of 2010 several patients commented forcefully on their difficulties in making consultation appointments, particularly by telephone, with their GPs. We combined with Wokingham Borough Consultation Team who invited the Citizens' Panel to make their comments and there were encouraging responses.

This survey proposed by patients was to study the ease or lack of ease in obtaining an appointment with their GP especially by telephone. In this case the LINK, worked with the Citizen's Panel in circulating the survey to 600+ members of the Panel and 389 results were received. Analysis showed that in the matter of Access to Appointments out of the 14 practices in the Wokingham Borough, 4 were regarded by their patients as excellent, 7 as good and 4 showed some difficulties.

News on Carers Allowance

The Government has announced that Carer's Allowance – paid to people who provide more than 35 hours of care a week - will remain separate from the proposed Universal Credit that other benefits, such as Jobseeker's Allowance and Income Support will be merged into one.

Wokingham Borough Council have a "Carer's Strategy 2008-2011" to ensure they meet their statutory responsibilities to carers.

Last year the LINK worked with both the Local Authority and Primary Care Trust to pursue the allocation of the additional funds (2009/10 £1,280,334) allocated to the West Berkshire, Wokingham and Reading Councils for respite breaks for adult carers.

It would appear that much of the funding has been used, through the Partnership Development Fund, to support such organisations as Crossroads, Alzheimer's Association, Princess Royal Trust for Carers, Age Concern, Parkinsons Disease Society and Multiple Sclerosis Society.

In addition, funding is used to provide Direct Payment for carers wishing to purchase individually tailored services. The LINK welcome the news that benefits paid to carers/family will be retained.



The results were distributed to the members of the Citizen's Panel and to the Primary Care Commissioning section of the Berkshire West PCT. The latter combined these with the results of a survey of the PCT Health Network and used them in the assessment interviews of the local Practices and in Practice Manager Forums meetings. The PCT recognised that a possible solution was improving IT access and priority was given in this matter in funding requests to the GP IT development bid process for services such as EMIS Access and patient check-in systems. This has resulted in significant improvement in these aspects of Reception support in some surgeries.

The GP services were highly praised in the Survey but patients still have difficulties and members of the LINK are making efforts to build relations with the GP Practices especially in the matter of Patient Participation Groups which should encourage patient contribution to future commissioning and planning matters.

Please contact your GP practice manager for details about your surgery's patient participant groups - patients voice is **crucial**



Experience of parents of children with autistic spectrum disorders when using the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) in Wokingham



The LINK recently explored parents with autistic children experiences of the Children and Adolescence Mental Health Service (CAMHS) with the aim of making recommendations to service providers to enhance and improve parent involvement.

The issue came about after several parents of autistic children, highlighted how they felt interaction with the CAMHS team could have been better managed and more constructive. Parents spoke about a number of concerns including; being left confused and upset following consultations, not being informed about their child's care plan, where medication is prescribed not understanding how their child's behaviour may change.

Ten semi-structured interviews were carried out with parents of autistic children who had used the CAMHS service. Most of the parents interviewed (six of 10) reported a negative experience of the CAMHS service. The remaining four could best be described as having had a 'mixed' experience; being mostly negative but with some positive aspects of the service reported.

A number of recommendations were made to Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust

- Holistic support for parents at the point of referral
- Addressing possible under-resourcing of CAMHS
- Staff training
- Improved communications between GPs, parents and other stakeholders
- CAHMS may wish to review procedures for assessing / interviewing children and parents
- CAHMS as 'gatekeeper' to statement of SEN and consequent support
- Continuing consultation / involvement from parents in a challenging time

The report has been well received by Berkshire West NHS, with a review into the provision of diagnostic and therapeutic services for children with autism being undertaken and is due to report findings on the 31 March 2011. The review is being led by the PCT with the full support of the CAHMS provider (Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust), Community Health and the Local Authorities.

Once this has been complete there will be further engagement and discussion with Berkshire Autistic Society and the LINK.

Visit www.makesachange.org.uk to read the full report.

Supporting User Lead Organisations (ULOs) in Wokingham



The LINK have played a role in supporting the development of ULOs in Wokingham. A ULO is an organisation that is run and controlled by the people who use support services including disabled people. Mental health service users, people with learning disabilities, older people and their carers and families.

The user-lead group "Shaping our lives" has identified 3 key characteristics that distinguish ULOs from other voluntary sector organisation;

- Based on clear values of independent, involvement and peer support.
- Service Users control the organisation.
- Their knowledge derives from direct, lived experience.

ULOs help people to exercise choice and control over how their support needs are met. Typical activities will include; information and advice, advocacy, peer support, personal budgets, direct payment, assistance with self assessment and support plans.

The LINK Development Officer has been part of the ULO Project Board since May 2010 which was instrumented in identifying and supporting groups to complete the self assessment. Please contact Neil Haydon, Chairman for more information by calling 0118 989 3959.

Are you being served?

The LINK teamed up with the Wokingham Area Access Group (WAAG) to produce a 20 minute training and advisory film highlighting service and access issues for disabled customers in shops and restaurants.

The DVD provides hints and tips when liaising with customers with different forms of disabilities, tips include;

- Eye contact and visual communication is important
- Point out the price
- Count out change clearly
- Offer to fetch things from other areas of the shop

If you would like a copy of the DVD, please contact David Gaskin, Chairman by emailing chairman@waag.co.uk.

There are now 21 groups in Wokingham involved that have formed a consortium.

These groups are;

- Immense
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder Family Help
- Age Concern Twyford
- Deaf Positives
- Link visiting scheme
- Wokingham Area Access Group
- Thrive
- Berkshire County Blind Society
- Wokingham User Forum
- Bracknell Area Deaf and Hard of Hearing Group (BADHOGs)
- Two left feet
- The Ark
- Support Horizon
- Caring and Listening Support Group (CLASP)
- Wade Day Centre for Elderly
- Fast
- Mencap
- Redibus