

# Local Involvement Networks

## An introduction

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**Getting Ready for LINKs**

# Why LINKs?

- *Health and Social Care Act 2001*
- patients forums
- *Our health, our care, our say*
- *A stronger local voice*
- *Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007*
  - abolishes patients forums
  - establishes Local Involvement Networks

# Why LINKs?

- get more people involved
- realign involvement to match new structure of the NHS
  - centred on commissioning by PCT
  - a greater choice of providers
  - integration of health and social care
- in line with local authority scrutiny of health and social care

# What is a LINK?

- broad network bringing together individuals and organisations
- to encourage more people to get involved and have their say about local care services
- run by local people, independent of the local authority and the NHS
- diverse and inclusive – whole community, organisations and individuals

# What's new?

- both health and social care
- and broader factors affecting health
- geographical area not specific organisation
- one for each social services local authority (same area as scrutiny and PCT)
- will replace patients forums, but not the same

# What will a LINK do?

- encourage and support involvement in commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services
- gather information on local people's views about their needs and experiences
- enable people to monitor and review services and how they may be improved
- convey views and make recommendations to decision-makers and service-providers

# And NOT do?

A LINK will not:

- take over from existing community groups
- become involved in individual complaints
- duplicate the work of other bodies
- work in isolation

# Specific powers of LINKs

- to ask for information from and to make recommendations to service providers
- to refer social care matters to overview and scrutiny committees
- for certain representatives of the LINK, who have had the necessary training and criminal records bureau checks, to enter and view specified types of service

# Who will be in the LINK?

- organisations and individuals
- members and participants
- inclusive
- diverse
- not just health and social care activists

# How will the LINK work?

- open and accountable
- clear leadership and governance
- accessible mechanisms for receiving views and giving information
- flexible – to work with the changing landscape of NHS and social care

# How will the LINK work?

- develop its own way of working
- set its own agenda and decide how to carry it out
- develop relationships with local services and other forums and networks
- work closely with scrutiny committees

# How will the LINK be set up?

- build on existing community networks and forums
- learn from and extend work already taking place
- be tailored to fit the local circumstances of the area

# Establishing the LINK

Local authority:

- given a targeted grant from DH
- must procure a Host organisation

Host:

- will set up and support the LINK
- will be accountable to the LINK

# Getting ready for the LINK

- engage the local community
- raise awareness and understanding of role of LINK
- gather and share information about the local community and existing engagement
- explore how local people would want the LINK to function
- sustain engagement through transition

# Transitional 'pre-LINk' group

- forum for those wanting to be involved
- focus for preparing for and establishing the LINk
- develop governance and accountability
  - how LINk will conduct its business and take decisions
  - the role of the management board
- from 1 April act as LINk