

## Summary Report for Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2009

Harrow Council (Local Authority) awarded Parkwood Healthcare (Host) a contract on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2008 to develop and manage the Harrow Local Involvement Network (LINK).

The Host has employed two staff at its office in Harrow to develop and manage the LINK. A Research and Information officer was recruited in September 2008 to conduct a mapping exercise of the local communities and organisations. This involved consulting the Census, the Harrow Vitality Profile (2006) produced by the LA, The Harrow PCT annual public health report (2008), The Practise Based Commissioning (PbC) plan (2008), accessing information from various other sources (i.e. Online searches, PCT, LA, public events etc) for inclusion in the Harrow LINK database. The database now has over 500 contacts, which is increasing and being reviewed constantly. A Development Manager was recruited in December 2008 and his role was to develop the LINK by establishing contacts with statutory bodies, organisations and voluntary sector and key independent individuals, put systems in place and invite participation from a range of community leads and individuals.

Regular monthly and ad-hoc meetings have been chaired by the Host to develop the LINK since October 2008 initially in a form of:

- Transition Group meetings (to understand what and how the group wish to see the LINK develop)
- Planning Group meetings (to agree on who should be part of the LINK locally and invite them to participate)
- Steering Group meetings (this formed the basis of the LINK, emphasis was given to producing governance framework and documents, increase participation from a cross range of communities and groups and voluntary and statutory sectors and attend/participate in meetings and events within such sectors)
- Task groups were created to Launch the LINK on 26th March, produce governance documents, produce Annual Health Check commentaries, and participate in the Executive Committee election / annual report event on 20<sup>th</sup> May.

Contacts have been established with key figures at NHS Harrow Trust, Royal National Orthopaedic Trust, Central and North West London Foundation Trust and a strong Statutory Sector Liaison Group (SSLG) has been formed with the Host Chairing the bi-monthly meetings. The objective of this group is to act as a conduit for information between the LINK and the health and Social care providers across and beyond the borough. It is to share information that is potentially useful for all parties concerned. To test out new ideas and approaches for the benefit of service users and to provide advice on the development of strategic procedures to support dialogue with providers.

Steering Group representatives have attended various meetings and events (see page 8 of the Harrow LINK 2008/09 annual report) from which they have gathered valuable information of the needs and requirement of the service users and providers. This information and experience will be very useful to the Executive Committee to help form a work-plan.

The Executive Committee will elect a Chair and a Vice Chair at their first meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> June, which will help the LINK to agree and direct its activities and resources. The Committee members will attend an Induction training organised by the Host on 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> June to help it understand what is required of them. Members have also been invited to attend Enter and View training sessions in July organised by the Department of Health.

To-date, the LINK has 53 Participants including 14 Executive Committee members. Engagement activities are ongoing to ensure that there is wider involvement from all types of people and including youth services.

The Host is in regular contact with the LA LINK lead and meets the Contract Management team every quarter to provide performance management and contract compliance evidence.

### **Future plans:**

- **Engaging with other LINKs**

The LINK will increase its engagement activities with other LINKs to understand wider issues and promote good practices. Contacts have been established with adjoining LINKs and good working practices have started to be exchanged. A London LINK which meets at Kings Fund building in London has been formed by the DH lead and is used for gathering and exchanging information affecting the London region. There is no time scale for this activity.

- **Governance**

The LINK will agree its governance documents and establish a methodology and process for achieving its outcomes. It is expected that the governance documents will be approved on 18<sup>th</sup> June.

- **Workplan**

A separate task group will be formed to draw up a Workplan, which has to be achievable and realistic. This will be based on information and intelligence received from various communities and local organisations and direct contact from members of the public. The LINK has already received a handful of queries or suggestions for the Executive Committee to consider as part of their Workplan from concerned citizens and service users, which will be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting. This group is expected to be in place by July/August 2009.

- **Engagement with the public**

To help promote the LINK into the wider community, it is anticipated that a communication task group will be formed. Its role may involve producing new literature, engagement activities i.e. attending meetings/events. The task group is expected to be in place by July/August 2009.

The LINK will develop Communication and Information Sharing Strategy in order for the LINK to meet the communication needs of a diverse community. Linking up with carer and user groups to learn from their experience of services, reaching out to hard to reach groups to offer the LINK as a voice for their concerns, representing the needs of marginalised groups such as Refugees and Travellers, engaging with young people to learn about their experience of health and their need for more tailored services, seeking representation on key provider committees to ensure that the patient voice is heard, requesting information from providers, liaising with voluntary infrastructure agencies so

that the LINK can be informed and understanding of user and carer groups and assist in their quest to achieve better services for their members.

- **Enter and View**

An Enter and View (E&V) group will be formed by September 2009. This will involve recruiting suitably qualified persons from the Participants list lead by representatives from the Executive Committee. All E&V members will be CRB checked before they can participate in any such activities. The LINK will only undertake activities that have been brought to their attention and evidence based, and is part of their Workplan.

- **Building relationships**

The LINK will identify and develop relationships between the network and the Host Organisation and develop relationships with key local stakeholders and develop working protocols with other LINKs. This has already taken place by the Host introducing bi-monthly Statutory Sector Liaison Group meetings with representatives at Head of Unit level from the Harrow Council, NHS Harrow, Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust and North West London Hospital Trust. Quarterly meetings are planned with the CEO/Chairs of the Trusts and relevant Service Director at the Council. The LINK is also working closely with the Overview and Scrutiny administration team.

- **Training and Recruitment**

The LINK will create a Training and Support programme with the help of the Host. The LINK will encourage Recruitment and Retention of Participants. This is an important step in keeping the LINK healthy and in touch with the local needs.

For further information on the LINK's work to-date, please refer to the Harrow LINK 2008/09 annual report.

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4<sup>th</sup> June 2009