

Sandwell LINK

Sandwell

LINK

MAKE IT
HAPPEN!

Issue 4 September 2009

Developing health and social care services around you



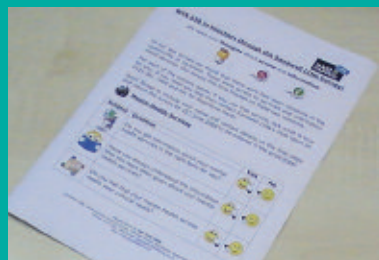
Come and see Sandwell LINK this summer...



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LINK Survey Results



What you said...

In the last issue you had the opportunity to complete our new questionnaire about information and access to services. We had around 60 people come back to us with their views from all over Sandwell.

Access

In both health and social care, there was some excellent feedback about access. This is shown in the following table:

	Hospitals	GP/Health Centre	Social care
Found physical needs met	96%	90%	79%
Found cultural needs met	95%	87%	84%
Found difficulty with receptionist	9%	18%	N/A

The bad news was:

Area	What was said:
Mental Health Services	33% said cultural needs were not met
Long-Term Conditions	35% said providers did not work together
Ambulance and Transport	46% said 'Ring & Ride' did not meet their needs

Information

In both health and social care, there was again excellent feedback about information being presented in an easy to understand language. However, there was less satisfaction with the information provided by mental health services.

	Health Information	Social Care	Mental Health Services
Understand language	91%	87%	59%

It was the information provision, rather than the form which was presenting the issue. The following table shows the percentage of people saying they were getting enough information in each area:

Information concerned	Respondents:
GP and Health Centres: on services provided	70%
Hospitals: on performance data	72%
Long-Term Conditions: on patient rights	66%
Long-Term Conditions: on carer rights	58%
Social care: correct information on support	58%

What are we doing...

This is the part that really is up to you. The Management Group are in the process of reviewing this information and implementing a work plan. Subgroups have been set up for health and social care and this is where you have the opportunity to get involved in work on these issues. If you feel strongly about this, don't sit silently – come and work with the providers to make it right!



All respondents who took part in the survey were entered in a prize draw to win £50 of vouchers. Above you can see the lucky winner, Clare from Smethwick.

Update from Sandwell LINK!

Brand New Health and Social Care Subgroups

Sandwell LINK has two brand new subgroups one for health and one for social care. LINK members are free to join either or even both of the subgroups. The groups have been set up in away that will allow members to decide their own level of commitment. Members can opt to attend the subgroup meetings, only receive the minutes or even receive the minutes and contribute by proxy by emailing us, calling us or sending us a letter. It's **YOUR** LINK so if you have any other suggestions as to how we could make it easier for you to participate then let us know at SandwellLINK@bcha.co.uk or on 0121 561 1969 or by writing to us at Sandwell LINK, 134 High Street, Blackheath, West Midlands, B65 0EE

Health Subgroup Update

The Health Subgroup have had their first meeting and will be having a workshop style meeting with the wider LINK membership in order to devise their work plan. The Health Subgroup is already involved in working with a community group to look at the relocation of a GP surgery within



Sandwell, as well as looking at dignity issues within Sandwell hospitals.

Social Care Subgroup Update

The Social Care Subgroup has decided to focus their work plan around the needs and services available to the approximately 30000 unpaid carers within Sandwell. The subgroup is particularly interested in looking at the health of Sandwell's carers. This decision was guided by the report that it has recently been identified by CARES, Sandwell's local carers charity, that 7 out of 10 carers have some sort of health problem of their own. The Subgroup has also decided that social care needs of child carers should also be a priority point for the group's work plan.

The Subgroup will next be meeting on **Monday 21st September 9.30-11.30**. The meeting will be attended by key guests who work with carers within Sandwell. As well as each guest giving a presentation about the work that they do, there will also be a chance for LINK Social Care Subgroup members to ask the guests any questions that they may have.

If you are interested in joining either of the subgroups or just want more information then please contact Natiesh McLean on 0121 561 1969 or by email at SandwellLINK@bcha.co.uk



Sandwell LINK's Annual Report has been published!

The LINK has published its Annual Report for 2008-2009. Copies of the report were sent to:

- Secretary of State
- Care Quality Commission
- Strategic Health Authority
- Sandwell PCT
- Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust
- Sandwell Mental Health NHS and Social Care Foundation Trust
- Sandwell MBC
- Scrutiny
- All LINK members



The Report is available for the public to download from the LINK's website:

www.SandwellLINK.org

If you would like to receive a hard copy of the Report, then please contact the Host Team on: 0121 561 1969 or alternatively you can email your request to: SandwellLINK@bcha.co.uk

Enter & View

On Friday 7th August 2009, the first four members underwent training to 'enter and view' for Sandwell LINK. These were:



Amaro Pereira



Bill Hodgetts



Pam Jones



Dorothy Nemedi

'Enter and view' is a power that LINKs were given by the Government when they were established through the Local Government and Public

Involvement in Health Act 2007. It means that members of the LINK who undergo training and CRB checks can become 'authorised representatives' who go into the premises of health and social care providers in order to explore the community concerns that are in the LINK's work plan.

There are many rules surrounding which premises authorised representatives can go into, and how and why they do these visits; this is why training is necessary. The training also goes over conduct and behaviour, because during visits the members have to give both staff and patients proper consideration. The training takes a full day in order to cover everything necessary.

Right now Sandwell LINK already has their first 'enter and view' visit

planned. They're going to be working with Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust to look at recent work the Trust have done on separating sexes on their wards in preparation for the next assessment by the Care Quality Commission.

In future this training is going to be rolled out to other members of the LINK, so if you think you might like to get involved then get in touch with the Host team on **0121 561 1969**. We're also going to run a course for some providers so that they can gain a better understanding of what 'enter and view' is all about. Look out for more news on both of these over the next couple of months.

Update from Sandwell PCT PALS!



PALS annual report informs that the service has seen an increase in contacts by 60% from the previous year. The report outlines trends in service areas and also includes a section where feedback via PALS has made a difference to patient experience. The report makes recommendations on how information from PALS can assist the PCT to improve patient experience. If you would like to find out more about PALS activity over the past year, copies of the report can be made available on request.

PALS have recently introduced a texting facility which will ensure the service is more accessible for patients with hearing and speech difficulties. It is also hoped it will

also attract young people in particular who are currently under-represented.

A new NHS Complaints procedure was introduced in April 2009. PALS and Complaints continue to work seamlessly to ensure that patients are offered the best choice of addressing any concern they might have. Joint PALS and Complaints training is provided to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to deal with any issues raised and to view feedback in a positive way. Hence there has been an increase in the number of people being referred to the service by PCT staff.

PALS relies on good working relationships and networking in order to be able to reach out to those people in the community who may not be aware of the

service. It asks all organisations and community groups to spread the word about PALS. Both leaflets and posters can be provided for display in suitable locations.

The service does not only address concerns or comments about healthcare provided, it also welcomes compliments which are forwarded to staff. A significant proportion of the work undertaken also includes signposting to relevant agencies and providing accurate information on a wide range of issues.

For further information PALS can be contacted via:

Freephone: 0800 030 4654

Text: 0780 000 1150

Email: s.pals@nhs.net

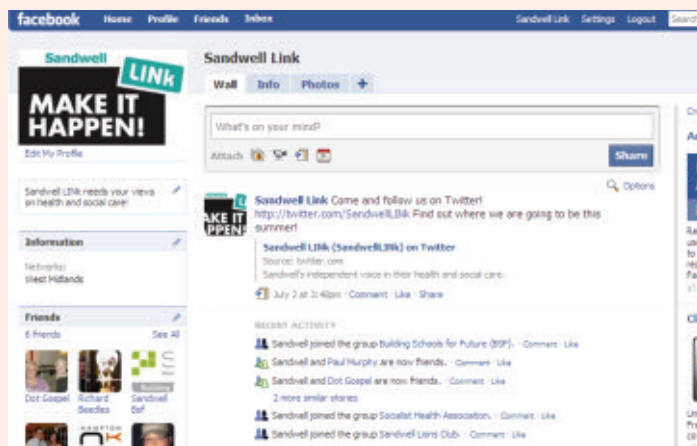
Fax: 0121 612 1436

Follow us on Twitter, or add us as a friend on Facebook!

You can now keep up to date with all the latest Sandwell LINK news and information through Sandwell LINK's brand new Twitter and Facebook sites www.facebook.com/SandwellLINK or www.twitter.com/SandwellLINK. So that you never miss another of Sandwell LINK's Twitter updates why not add us to your RSS feed? It's a lot simpler than it sounds to add us to your RSS feed. All you have to do is simply go to the Sandwell LINK Twitter page and press the orange RSS feed button. This will then

add all our updates to your RSS feed which you can access when you open up Internet Explorer by again clicking on the orange RSS feed button from the main tool bar.

You can leave your comments for the LINK on either of the sites as well as our website www.SandwellLINK.org, so feeding into your LINK couldn't be easier.



Where have we been this summer?

The LINK has been busy promoting itself this summer at the Tipton Fun Day, Friar Park Fun Day and the Sandwell Show.

Host staff and LINK members braved the unpredictable British summer weather to promote the LINK to the public.



Meet Natiesh McLean, Sandwell LINK's Support Officer



Natiesh McLean is the newly appointed Support Officer for Sandwell LINK, having started in the role in June. Natiesh previously spent some time working

at Black Country Housing Group with the former Patient and Public Involvement in Health Forums. She has also recently completed a degree in Sociology and Policy Studies and so is equipped to handle the challenges of Sandwell LINK.

Natiesh has already begun an extensive community engagement program. She is currently focusing on both youth and BME engagement and has started to make links with community youth workers and BME community groups.

Cancer Services need your voices...

Pan-Birmingham



Cancer Network

The Pan Birmingham Cancer Network 'User Partnership Group' is a group of people who have experience of cancer services and work together to help make a difference.

What is the Pan Birmingham Cancer Network?

A partnership bringing together the organisations that plan and provide cancer services for the Pan Birmingham area. The main organisations we work with are hospitals, hospices, Primary Care Trusts, community and voluntary groups. We work with these organisations to make sure quality cancer care and cancer services are being delivered.

The areas the network covers are; Birmingham, Solihull, Sandwell, Walsall and South Staffordshire.

Who are the User Partnership Group (UPG)?

The user partnership group (UPG) is made up of people who have either:

- Have or had cancer
- Cared for someone who has had cancer
- Experience of supporting patients and carers
- Worked in voluntary or community projects
- Usually live within Birmingham, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall or South Staffordshire

What is the aim of the User Partnership Group (UPG)?

The UPG aims to identify areas of improvement as well as areas of excellence, from a user perspective, helping to make the right changes so that future patients and carers have an easier cancer journey.

What does the User Partnership Group do?

The UPG provides links between patients, carers and health professionals to help shape local services in the Pan Birmingham area. Members of the UPG represent the patient and carer voice on the Network Board and other groups.

How can you help?

You can contribute as little or as much time as you are able to. There are a variety of ways that you can help such as:

- Helping to establish and maintain links with support groups and other interested agencies
- Helping to design patient surveys
- Commenting on patient information
- Become a member of the User Partnership Group, Network Board or any other groups we run.

How can you make a difference?

Bring along your experiences and knowledge of the cancer journey and join the other service users involved in the network to be an effective voice for patients and carers.

We are not...

- The UPG is not a complaints forum. If you have a concern or complaint please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) at your local hospital.
- We are not a cancer support group, but we do offer support to each other in the projects we are involved in.



Who do I contact for further Information?

For further Information contact;
Caroline Horton
User and Public Engagement Lead

Pan Birmingham Cancer Network
97 Vincent Drive
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2SQ

Telephone: 0121 414 8283
Email: caroline.horton@westmidlands.nhs.uk
Website: www.birminghamcancer.nhs.uk

Updates in Health and Social Care

Keeping older people fit and healthy

"Simple measures such as good footcare, sight tests and light exercise can help older people live better", Care Service Minister Phil Hope said as he launched the Older People's Prevention Package.

The package sets out how preventing health problems before they occur can help older people live better and healthier lives. It is part of the government's

ageing strategy Building a Society for All Ages.

The prevention package will:

- promote best practice around falls prevention and effective fracture management
- introduce measures to improve access to affordable footcare services
- clearly set out health 'entitlements' including sight

tests, flu vaccination and cancer screening

- summarise existing progress on audiology and telecare services

Additional services will be incorporated into the prevention package over time, including continence care, treatment for depression, and arthritis.

Andy Burnham launches the Big Care Debate

Everyone in England will have access to a National Care Service that is fair, simple and affordable under plans set out by Health Secretary Andy Burnham in the Green Paper Shaping the Future of Care Together.

Huge pressures are being put on existing services. More people need care because they are living longer – in 1948 life expectancy was 66 while today it is 78. For the first time there are more people over the age of 65 than there are under the age of 18.

The current system is also unfair. Some people have to pay tens of thousands of pounds or sell their house, to pay for care. Someone with Alzheimer's, for example, could have to pay up to £200,000.



The National Care Service will create a level playing field and end the postcode lottery of care services. Everyone in England will be guaranteed:

- prevention services - the right support to stay independent and well for as long as possible and to delay care needs getting worse
- national assessment - care needs will be assessed and paid for in the same way across the country
- joined-up services - all the services will work together smoothly
- information and advice – the care system will be easy to understand and navigate
- personalised care and support - services will be based on personal circumstances and need
- fair funding - money will be spent wisely and everyone will get some help meeting the high cost of care needs.

Sandwell LINK Website!

Sandwell LINK has a website at: www.SandwellLINK.org.

You can access the website to find out more about Sandwell LINK and the work it is conducting. Minutes, reports and surveys are all available on the website, so you can find out in more depth what the LINK has been up to and what its plans are for the future.



www.SandwellLINK.org



Sandwell Local Involvement Network Gives You The Opportunity To Influence Your Local Health And Social Care Services.

Anyone can get involved, and it has been set up to make sure that people in your area get the health and social care services they need.

We want to hear about your experiences of health and social services and your ideas for improvements or changes. Your LINK has the power to implement small changes and influence big changes.

To join Sandwell LINK, contact the Host Organisation at Black Country Housing Group on:

tel: 0121 561 1969
 email: SandwellLINK@bcha.co.uk
www.SandwellLINK.org

