

Wokingham



Support Horizons is the
Host Organisation for the
Wokingham LINK

Wokingham LINK NEWSLETTER December 2011

The Wokingham LINK - Who are we?

The Wokingham LINK (Local Involvement Network) is an independent body of voluntary workers. We listen to the health and social care concerns of people living in all areas of the Wokingham Borough and investigate them.

The Wokingham LINK recognises people's views about the need for improvements in local care services. The LINK will tell the council and the local health services what it has discovered and make their recommendations.

The council and the local health services are legally obliged to give the LINK information it asks for, and to respond to recommendations made.

**Your
Opinion
Counts!**



Tell us your views!

Let us know your concerns and make your voice heard on health and social care issues in all areas of the Wokingham Borough.

Tel: 0118 989 3959
Mobile: 0755 338 5386
Email: jennie.grieve@wokinghamlink.org
Website: www.wokinghamlink.org

Or write to us at: Wokingham LINK
c/o Support Horizons
3 The Courtyard
Denmark Street
Wokingham
Berks RG40 2AZ



Message from Christine Holland, Wokingham LINK Chair



The major role of Wokingham LINK is to monitor the performance of all health and social care services by following up experiences that you are prepared to share with us. The LINK also undertakes work on issues raised by you and we are always seeking volunteers who can spare some time to investigate and work on projects with us. Please contact us if you would be interested in doing this.

We are all aware that there is a great deal of change taking place nationally in the provision of health and social care. The LINK have been assured by local health and social care providers that everything will be done to make sure changes have little or no affect on the service we receive.

Wokingham LINK has built good relationships with many providers and professionals who buy our care services (the commissioners) and we are working hard to extend connections with the new organisations as they take over their new duties.

Health

NHS Berkshire West (the Primary Care Trust which arranges health care for Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire) has joined with NHS Berkshire East to form Berkshire PCT. The PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) contact number has not changed, tel: 0118 982 2829.



There has been a change with Community Health Services such as health visitors and district nurses. They will still operate from their local offices but are now managed by Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, as are the Community Hospital and Westcall (the out-of-hours service that you will be directed to when your GP surgery is closed).

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (BHFT) now offer a Common Point of Entry for all new mental health referrals - tel: 0300 365 0300 (read on for more information).

Social Care

On 6th June 2011, Wokingham Borough Council transferred their adult social care provided services (such as homecare, day services and residential care services) into a local authority trading company called Optalis. This was to give adult social care provided services more independence and be able to develop its services to offer clients more choice and control in their lives. Everyone has worked hard to make this a seamless transition so people should not notice major differences in their care.



All the staff who worked for the Council's Adult Social Care Provided Services (around 300+ staff) transferred over to Optalis, and the services and support provided will continue to be delivered from the existing buildings. Optalis is wholly owned by the Council but is run independently. The Council still has a duty of care and a responsibility to make sure that the care and support offered by Optalis continues to be good.

All new contacts for Social Care can contact Wokingham Borough Council via Wokingham Direct on tel: 0118 974 6000.

Christine Holland

What projects have we been involved with recently?

A full list of our projects can be found on the Wokingham LINK website, but a few that we have been looking at recently include:

Establishing contact with Residential Care Homes in the Borough to build relationships

Pat Evans and Christine Holland accepted an invitation to speak to the residents of the Liberty of Earley House about changes in the NHS and their experiences. Christine said *"We have pursued one of their concerns about use of bus passes to pay for transfers by the Earley Volunteer Car Service to approved medical appointments and forwarded the information, provided by Wokingham Borough Council, to the residents."*



Members of the Wokingham LINK have been helping Liberty of Earley House carry out their Annual Quality Assessment Survey with the residents and found it a rewarding experience. A report will be issued in 2012.

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Wokingham Borough Council Social Care Literature - changing reading material into a format that is easier to understand

The LINK have started a project looking at the social care material that Wokingham Borough Council and Optalis provide to new social care clients. The working group have met a few times and are in the process of talking to the council about their ideas. Once a draft has been put together, the LINK would like to find out whether people find the information easier to read or whether it is confusing. If you would like to help with this feedback, please contact us.



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What projects are on the horizon?

Choice Champions

Choice Champions are a group of social care customers who have been trained by Wokingham Borough Council to support people who are new to self directed support. The Choice Champions are able to share their experience of personal budgets (money allocated by the council for care and support services) and offer advice to people who are either receiving assistance from adult social care services for the first time, or are switching to the new system of directing their own support arrangements using personal budgets. Within this new system people can choose, organise and control their social care and support in a way that meets their needs and which best suits them.

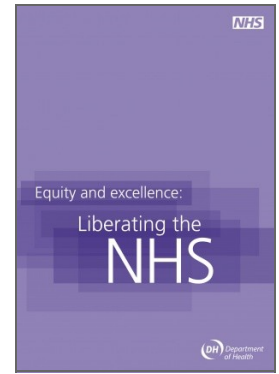


Next year the LINK hopes to take on a project to find out how useful people felt the help and advice given by the Choice Champions was to them, as new clients to social care.

What's happening in the NHS?

Changes are being planned to make the NHS:

- Save money
- Give more choice to patients
- Allow other people to do some of what the NHS does
- Allow groups of GPs (Clinical Commissioning Groups) organise how services should be delivered for their local populations
- Make sure that more people get their treatment in the community rather than in a hospital
- More independent of Central Government



What will this mean in Berkshire?

At the moment, 80% of the money is held by the Primary Care Trust (PCT). They commission local services - eg acute hospital, GPs and community services. The Government will give most of this responsibility to Clinical Commissioning Groups led by GPs. In Berkshire there are 7 Clinical Commissioning Groups of GPs working on this plan.



There is now one PCT cluster in Berkshire with one Chief Executive and this PCT will be dissolved by April 2013 as the GP groups take over their role.

In April 2011, community services (district nurses, school nurses, podiatrists etc) in the PCT all transferred to Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. The Trust is looking at how to arrange these services, and health professionals are working together with their local authority colleagues to make sure this happens in the best way.



The South Central Strategic Health Authority (SHA) has become part of a bigger SHA and will dissolve to make way for a new independent board for the NHS. In the meantime, the SHA continues to make sure there are no gaps in healthcare provisions across the region and oversees standards.

What changes will patients / people see?

People will still go to their GP and talk to the same people they have been talking to about their health.

The changes should mean that people have more choice about how and where they get their treatment. People can choose which hospital they go to for non emergency operations and in the future people will be able to choose any GP - it won't matter where you live.

People have also been promised more and clearer information about services. Healthwatch, a new patient body, will collect information about what patients think of services and how well services are doing.

Instead of the PCT working with the local authority to plan services, the Clinical Commissioning Groups will share this responsibility.

For more information around the Health and Social Care Bill, go to page 6.



NHS Equality Delivery System (EDS)

The EDS is designed for use by all NHS organisations to improve equality outcomes for patients and NHS staff. The EDS aims to engage local communities in deciding local health priorities and hold NHS organisations to account for positive outcomes.



An Equality panel for Berkshire will grade those NHS organisations that are taking part in the process in 2011 against EDS standards and will represent as many people in our communities as possible to make sure that it can cover all groups included in the Equality Act 2010.

In December the Equality Panel will meet to decide grades based upon evidence that they received in November and following this the NHS organisations will agree what steps they need to take to make services better. By January 31st NHS organisations have to publicise information on this.

What part can you play in EDS?

If you do not have any other way to feedback your experiences to the NHS, the LINK can be your voice. If you have something you would like to share, please contact the LINK (contact details on the front page). You can do this anonymously but it will help us provide you with some feedback if we can contact you again.



For more information on EDS, go to: <http://www.berkshirewest-pct.nhs.uk/page.asp?fldArea=1&fldMenu=7&fldSubMenu=3&fldKey=250>

Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Next Generation Care

After listening to patients, staff, governors and other healthcare professionals such as GPs, Berkshire Healthcare have reviewed their services and devised new ways to improve services whilst saving monies where possible.

To bring services together and make it easier to access the right help at the right place Berkshire Healthcare now offer one point of entry. From 15th November, **all new referrals** (for all mental health services) can contact **0300 365 0300** between 8am and 8pm Monday to Friday. Outside this time, calls are routed through Berkshire Urgent Care (community) service.



Berkshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust 

Care Quality Commission (CQC) in Wokingham

Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspectors visit health and adult social care services across England to check that they are meeting Government standards of quality and safety. They make unannounced inspections of services on a regular basis and at any time, and also in response to concerns.



During their inspections, CQC

- * Asks people about their experiences of receiving care
- * Talks to care staff
- * Checks that the right systems and processes are in place
- * Looks for evidence in case care isn't meeting Government standards

An example of these checks in action is a recent unannounced CQC inspection visit to Support Horizons in Wokingham. (Support Horizons is the host for the Wokingham LINK. They are a community owned, user-led social enterprise, providing social care.). They are waiting to hear how they well they were graded, but Tim Holland, Director of Support Horizons said *"Although the CQC inspection was a surprise, it was a positive visit and a great way to find out how we can do things better."*



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Do you have an experience to share with CQC?

If you use care services or are a professional and want to tell CQC about a particular care service, the LINK can be your voice. If you have something you would like to share, please contact the LINK. You can do this anonymously but it will help us provide you with some feedback if we can contact you again, and CQC may need more information from you.



To go straight to CQC, ring: 03000 616161 or go to their website: <http://www.cqc.org.uk/public/sharing-your-experience>

Consultations and Petitions



Fosters Residential Home in Woodley

On 16th November, the Council launched a 3 month consultation regarding the future of Fosters Residential Home in Woodley. The home has 35 beds and provides 24-hour accommodation and care for people who fall into the registration categories of frail, elderly and those with a diagnosis of dementia. The consultation runs until Wednesday 8th February, 2012. To complete the consultation online, go to: <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/council/consultations/current-consultations/fostersconsultation>

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Care and Care Home Funding for the Future

An online petition has been produced regarding the Dilnot Commission's recommendations on social care, to urge the Government to deliver a long-term solution on care funding. In particular it is asking them to include the creation of a new advice and information service for families accessing care in a White Paper which it has promised to delivery by Easter 2012. If you want to add your voice to the petition, go to: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/23461>

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General News and Notices

Telephone Christmas Carol Concerts from Community Network

On 20th December, older people who are unable to attend church because of illness or disability are being given the chance to participate in a Christmas Carol Concert from St Martin's In the Field, Trafalgar Square, via the telephone. Community Network will relay the concert via the telephone, and BT is funding the project, so there is NO CHARGE to those taking part.



Before the concert Community Network will send a programme to all those taking part allowing them to follow the service as if they were actually there. Then, just before the service, the telephone congregation is linked up to the church. Furthermore, unlike radio or television broadcasts, the minister taking the service refers directly to those listening on the telephone; reinforcing the feeling they are part of the congregation. If you would like to take part, you need to ring: **0845 619 9992** for further details.

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Alone at Christmas?

For people who will be on their own at Christmas, local charities and Churches Together in Wokingham are working with a local hotel to offer a free lunch from 12-3pm on Christmas Day. Please note, this invitation is for people who would otherwise be alone or struggling to provide a Christmas meal. Neither transport nor support will be provided. To be considered for this Christmas celebration, please send your details to Sharon Elliott of Faith in the Community - sharon.elliott@mac.com or ring: 07843 091950.



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New Non-Emergency Number for Thames Valley Police: 101

101 is the new number to call when you want to contact your local police station and is available 24hrs a day, 7 days a week. The 101 number is being rolled out across England & Wales during 2011 as the new national single non-emergency number. It will replace the 0845 8 505 505 number, but both numbers will run side by side until March 2012. Remember, in cases of emergency, please continue to ring 999!



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Home Heat Help

Extra help with fuel bills is available for some eligible households this winter (for example the elderly, a family with young children, someone with a disability or long term health condition). The saving could work out to be an average of £250 for each household. To find out whether you are entitled to this help, please ring the Home Heat Helpline freephone number on tel: 0800 33 66 99 and speak to one of their independent advisers on 0800 33 66 99, or go to their website: <http://www.homeheathelpline.org.uk>.



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Safeguarding - Support with Confidence

Support with Confidence is a joint Trading Standards and adult social care scheme that provides vetted and approved service providers for personal care and other domestic help, such as home maintenance, gardening services or even dog walkers. For more information, please contact Johan Baker at the Council on tel: 0118 974 6000 or email: johan.baker@wokingham.gov.uk



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