

# LINK News



Issue 10 - September 2010

## Be part of the Plymouth LINK

The LINK is a network of people who have experiences and ideas about how to improve health and social care services. The LINK :

- ♥ talks to all local people about what they want from health and social care services
- ♥ talks to the people who provide and influence services about how they can meet the needs of the public
- ♥ supports people to get involved in the LINK



## NHS Reforms

**The way the NHS runs is changing and will be going through a major process of reform over the next few years. How aware are you of these changes? Will you be a part of the change?**

The coalition government is planning far-reaching reforms to the NHS that some are heralding as the most radical since 1948. They say they want to build a service that is personal, fair and diverse, putting patients at the heart of everything. Their recently published white paper - *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS* - spells out the proposed changes.

Under these proposals a new consumer champion, to be known as *HealthWatch*, will be set up to strengthen the patient's voice and Local Involvement Networks will have a major role, becoming local HealthWatch organisations.

The public has been given the opportunity to give their views on the proposed changes until early October. We have dedicated a large portion of this issue of LINK News to help you to understand the changes and to help you to have your say. Read about it on pages 2-4.

Plymouth LINK & NHS Plymouth  
present an event promoting health and wellbeing

# Healthy Plymouth

9th October 10.00am — 4.00pm

Plymouth Piazza

For the programme of events, see page 7



# Proposed NHS Changes

For the purpose of consultation, the Department of Health has issued the following summaries of some of the proposals contained in the White Paper and related consultations.

## **Putting patients and the public first**

The White Paper *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS* sets out the Government's ambition to give patients more information and choice about their care – in future, it claims, there will be 'no decision about me without me'. Under the vision, patients would have more comprehensive information about NHS services and would share in decisions about their care.

## **Summary of key themes and proposals**

⇒ Involving patients in making decisions about their care improves results, satisfaction and cost-effectiveness. To achieve this:

- Patients should have access to more information about healthcare, in a range of formats
- Patients should be able to rate and record their experience and patient experience data should be given more prominence
- Patients should have greater control of their records and be able to share them with organisations such as patient support groups
- Patient choice should be extended to include greater choice of provider, choice of consultant-led team, which GP they register with, and choice around diagnostic tests
- Choice should also be extended in areas such as maternity, mental health, long-term conditions and end of life care.

⇒ Delivering outcomes for patients is the primary purpose of the NHS. To achieve this:

- The Secretary of State for Health would hold the NHS to account for improving healthcare outcomes through a new NHS Outcomes Framework
- There will need to be a significant shift in focus for the NHS – moving away from monitoring the processes of care to monitoring the results of the care and treatment provided to patients
- The Department of Health say they need your views and help in developing this national NHS Outcomes Framework so that together control can be given back to patients and clinicians by focusing on what really matters – improved health outcomes for all

⇒ A separate consultation on 'Transparency in outcomes - a framework for the NHS' has been published. This proposes:

- Using five national outcome goals or domains covering all treatment activity for which the NHS is responsible, across effectiveness, patient experience, and safety
  - Preventing people from dying prematurely
  - Enhancing the quality of life for people with long-term conditions
  - Helping people to recover from episodes of ill health or following injury
  - Ensuring people have a positive experience of care
  - Treating and caring for people in a safe environment and protecting them from avoidable harm
- Identifying specific areas in which improvement in quality can be achieved accompanied by outcome indicators
- NICE Quality Standards to support commissioners to understand how better care can be delivered

Further details are contained in the consultation document, '*Transparency in outcomes – a framework for the NHS*', which you can download on : [www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_117583](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_117583)  
Consultations on patient choice and an information strategy will be published in the autumn



## Commissioning for patients and increasing democracy and legitimacy in health

⇒ The White Paper sets out a vision where clinicians are empowered to deliver results. To achieve this it proposes the setting up of:

- GP Commissioning Consortia, responsible for commissioning local services
- An autonomous NHS Commissioning Board, responsible for commissioning other services such as primary medical services, dentistry and community pharmacy.
- A new role for local authorities, to support local strategies for NHS commissioning and integration of NHS, social care, and public health services
- All NHS Trusts will become foundation trusts (FT), or be part of an FT, with staff having a greater say in how their organisations are run

⇒ An enhanced role for local authorities. Within this new system, local authorities would have an enhanced role in health:

- Leading joint strategic needs assessments (JSNA) to ensure coherent and co-ordinated commissioning strategies
- Supporting local voice, and the exercise of patient choice
- Promoting joined up commissioning of local NHS services, social care and health improvement
- leading on local health improvement and prevention activity

Further details are contained in consultation documents '*Commissioning for patients*' and '*Increasing democratic legitimacy in health*' which can be downloaded on:  
[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_117587](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_117587) (Commissioning)  
[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_117586](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_117586) (Democratic legitimacy)



## Regulating healthcare providers

- The White Paper proposes that services are provided by autonomous providers who are regulated by Monitor and the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Monitor would become an economic regulator for health and adult social care, regulating prices, promoting competition, and supporting service continuity
- The CQC's role would be strengthened and given a clearer focus on essential levels of safety and quality of providers
- All NHS Trusts will become or be part of a Foundation Trusts (FT) with staff having a greater say in how their organisations are run, and with FT's being given more freedom



Further details are contained in the consultation document '*Regulating healthcare providers*', which you can download on :  
[www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH\\_117782](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_117782)

## Cutting bureaucracy and improving efficiency

In order to meet the current financial challenge, the NHS will have to make efficiency savings.

- Efficiency savings will be reinvested to improve quality and outcomes
- NHS administrative costs will also be reduced to free up further resources for front-line care.
- The size of the Department of Health will be reduced, and quangos will be abolished if they are not necessary. The functions of other quangos will be streamlined.

Later in the year the Department of Health will be issuing further consultations on: choice, an NHS information strategy, and education and training.

**If you have views or want to get more involved on any of the areas we are working on, please get involved.**



# LINKs and the proposed changes

## HealthWatch

The White Paper proposes that patients and communities need a strong, independent champion that can represent their views, support individuals and hold services to account.

**HealthWatch England** would aim to become the national champion for health and social care consumers. Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) would 'evolve' to become **local HealthWatch** organisations

### Key points and proposals

#### **Local HealthWatch**

Would be funded by and accountable to local authorities, with a remit to:

*Represent the community and hold services to account*

- They would continue to represent the views of their community in shaping the commissioning and delivery of services
- They would be able to contribute to the process of proposing poor services for investigation and a HealthWatch representative would sit on the local Health and Wellbeing Board

*Support individuals*

- Local authorities would be able to commission HealthWatch to provide NHS complaints advocacy, as well as advice on accessing services and making choices about care.

*National voice*

- Local HealthWatch organisations would feed intelligence to HealthWatch England.

#### **HealthWatch England**

- Would be the independent consumer arm of the Care Quality Commission
- It would provide support for local HealthWatch organisations and leadership
- HealthWatch England would be able to recommend services for investigation by CQC
- The Secretary of State for Health, the NHS Board and the health regulators would have to listen to the views of HealthWatch England.

#### **Relationship with local authorities and commissioners**

- As well as commissioning support for and services from HealthWatch, local authorities would have to ensure their local HealthWatch is effective
- Commissioners would continue to have a duty to involve the public in decisions

#### **Transition**

- Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) would evolve into local HealthWatch organisations for 2012.

The proposals for creating HealthWatch are set out in the White Paper and consultation document *Increasing democratic legitimacy in health*, both of which are available on the Department of Health website at [www.dh.gov.uk/liberatingthenhs](http://www.dh.gov.uk/liberatingthenhs).



## **Where can I find out more?**

The White Paper and related consultation documents are available on the Department of Health website at [www.dh.gov.uk/liberatingthenhs](http://www.dh.gov.uk/liberatingthenhs). Details about how to respond to the proposals can be found within the consultation documents. Details about how to respond to the proposals can be found in the consultation document and White Paper. The deadline for responses to the central consultation on the White Paper is 5 October 2010. The deadline for responses to the related consultations is 11 October 2010.

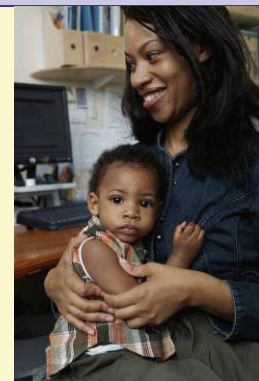
In addition, an information strategy and a consultation on all the choice commitments will be published later this year.

## More News. . .

### The White Paper and related consultations - tell us what you think

Andrew Lansley, the new Secretary of State for Health claims that: “Only by putting patients first and trusting professionals will we drive up standards, deliver better value for money and create a healthier nation”. What do you think?

We are preparing a response to the White Paper from the Plymouth LINK and would like to know your views on the proposals and what you think of the way that the consultation has been done. Our contact details are on the back page.



### New publication informs patients and families what standards to expect from the regulation of their NHS hospital

Following the introduction of a new law, all NHS hospitals in England must now be licensed by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). To be licensed hospitals must show that they are meeting new essential standards of quality and safety. CQC continuously monitors standards to ensure they are upheld or improvement action is taken. Now CQC has published a leaflet informing patients, their carers and families, what they can expect from the essential standards. It also explains how important it is that patients or their carers tell the regulator about their experiences, both good and bad, to help CQC make the right decisions. Called ‘*What standards to expect from the regulation of your NHS hospital*’ the leaflet can be read or downloaded from the CQC website at [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

At the same time the CQC website publishes an up-to-date directory of all licensed NHS hospitals. You can now look up the current status of any NHS hospital trust in England.



### South Western Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SWAST) Members needed



SWAST is currently looking to recruit as members people who are interested in the ambulance service. Membership is free and members can expect to be kept informed about the ambulance service, become involved with the Trust and have opportunities to participate in consultations and surveys.

If you are interested, please contact Helen Braid by phoning 01392 261526 or by email at [Helen.braid@swast.nhs.uk](mailto:Helen.braid@swast.nhs.uk)

### LINK Successes!

- ✓ Following LINK feedback about problems with accessing dental treatment for older people, the Peninsula Dental School has widened its catchment area and is now offering treatment to include all people aged 50 or over in the city. Referrals must be made at Waves, the one-stop shop for older people in Frankfort Gate. Ring them on 01752 674744.
- ✓ LINK feedback has resulted in GP contract monitoring to include questions about opening hours, use of Language Line and registration.
- ✓ Following members feedback, the LINK is working with care homes to audit and improve the hospital discharge process.
- ✓ The LINK is involved in the Strategic Health Authority’s special acute hospital review for patients with learning disabilities and has a representative on the review team.
- ✓ Plymouth LINK has supported the development of a leaflet for carers of people with mental health needs.

# LINK work: what we need to know

(contact details are on the back page)

## Carers:

Commissioners have asked the LINK about carers' priorities for service improvements. If you are a carer, which of the following is a priority for you?

- Lack of recognition/support from services
- Access to Direct Payments
- Access to Social Services assessments
- Financial issues
- Need for respite
- Social opportunities

## Signage at Derriford:

Do you have any feedback about the new signs at Derriford? The hospital has just improved the information that guides patients and visitors around - what do you think about it?

## Pharmacy and Optician Services

Have you found them helpful? Easy to use? If you have frequent/multiple prescriptions, has the pharmacy made you aware of the pre-payment prescription that could save you money? How satisfied are you with these service? (It is useful for us to know which service your feedback is about)

## Waiting at Derriford

Are you satisfied with communication about your appointments at Derriford? Are you made aware of how long you will have to wait to be seen? How?

## Getting an NHS Dentist

If you would like an NHS dentist but don't have one or know how to find one, NHS Plymouth's new Oral Health Strategy aims to: "ensure the population of Plymouth who wish to attend a dentist on a regular basis have access to a dental practice ensuring continuity of care."

If you want to get on the waiting list for a dentist please add your name to NHS Plymouth's database, or you may also wish to contact practices yourself to enquire as to the availability of NHS placements. The data base is a list of the names of people wishing to access a regular NHS dentist and is run on a 'first come, first served' basis. Should you wish to be included on the list you should write to the freepost address below, stating your name, address, telephone number and date of birth.

NHS Plymouth  
FREEPOST  
NAT 22278  
Plymouth  
PL6 5ZQ

## Access to Primary Care Services

LINK is working with NHS Plymouth to help improve access to primary care services (dentists, GPs, pharmacies, opticians) for different communities across Plymouth. We will be hosting a meeting with representatives from different groups to discuss these challenges and come up with ideas for improvement .

If you are part of, or work with, a group or community that has experienced problems using primary care services, we would like to hear about it - whether it's about accessible information, attitudes or even just knowing how to find a service. If you would like to be part of the meeting, or share your experiences so they can be taken into account, let us know.

**Please keep telling us about your views and experiences:  
together we can make a difference!**

# Out and about with the LINK



## Healthy Plymouth Event

**“Its your health ... check it out”**

**Saturday 9th October 2010**

**10 am to 4 pm at the Piazza, Armada Way**

**Meet your Local Involvement Network (LINK)  
(and give us your views!)**

**Entertainment and fun for all the family,  
Kung Fu, Tai Chi, music, breakdancing, games...**

**Find out about your health services**

**Dental hygiene, PALS, Stop Smoking, Sentinel Healthcare,  
Peninsula Dental School, medicines management, sexual health  
and more . . .**

Full programme available on our website, on the day or give us a call

## Other Events

LINK volunteers and the Support Team have been busy over the summer months, starting with the launch of the Annual Report at the Annual General Meeting on July 6th and, on July 17th, the Annual Celebration in the Piazza. Shoppers were entertained when Vicky joined the Plymouth Morris Men for a dance, while the Street Factory breakdancers kept the crowd spellbound. We gained 90 new members and 315 pieces of feedback on the day.

The LINK was also present at other city-wide events throughout the summer, including a new event for mental health service users and carers, Minds Matter, held in the Piazza on September 4th.

Plymouth LINK will also be represented at Older People's Day in the Guildhall on Friday October 1st, an all-day event with a focus on Plymouth's over-50s population.



**Your views count. Together we can help  
influence changes in health and social care  
provision in Plymouth.**



## Contacting the LINK Support Team:

For more information about the LINK and how to get involved, contact us at:

- By Post: Freepost RRZE-AGZT-EXRS  
LINK/PAPOP Support Team  
Unit 15, HQ Building,  
237 Union Street,  
PLYMOUTH,  
PL1 3HQ.
- By Phone: (1752)202407
- By e-mail: info@plymouth-link.co.uk
- By text: 07533 432200



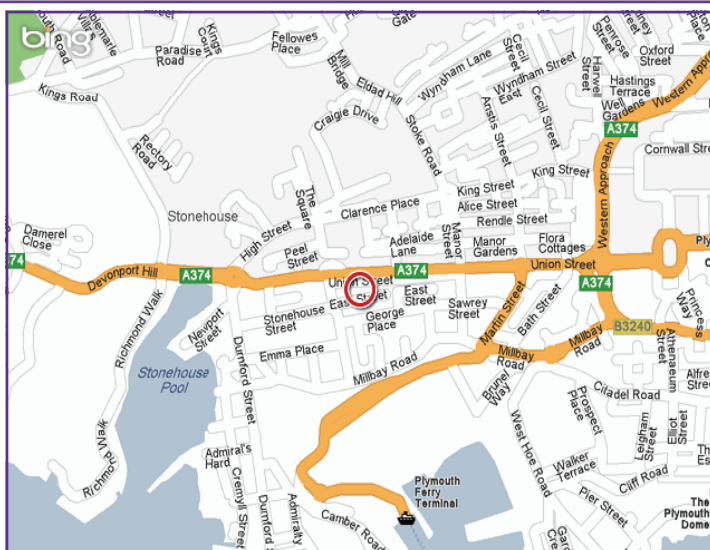
Vicky Shipway, Support Team Manager

[www.plymouth-link.co.uk](http://www.plymouth-link.co.uk)

## Do you have anything to say?

Please let us know if:

- There is information you would like to see in the LINK News
- You have any comments or feedback on the LINK News
- You have any news that we need to tell people about



## We need your views

On a besoin de votre opinion

نحتاج إلى آراءك

我們需要您的看法

我们需要您的看法

ئېمە پېويستمان به بيروبوچوونى تۆيه

Potrzebne są nam państwa opinie

Precisamos das suas opiniões

ما به دیدگاه و نظر شما احتیاج داریم.

Please let us know if you need this in another language or format