

International Women's Day

The LINK had a stand at this lively and informative event. We received lots of issues ranging from maternity care to care for people with dementia.



Complaints

The LINK is looking for people who have made complaints to the NHS or Social Care Services.

We want your view on the process, whether good or bad.

Contact us (in confidence if you want) so that we can use your experiences for the benefit of others.

Improved health and better job prospects?

If we said to you we can help you to...

- a) reduce your stress
- b) increase your self esteem and confidence
- c) boost your CV and job prospects
- d) enjoy a feel good factor
- e) make new friends
- f) improve health and social care in your area

...you'd think we were having you on, right?

Well the good news is, we're not. It is possible to do these things just by volunteering for the LINK. Scientists say that people who actively help others are more energetic and healthy.

"94% of employees who volunteered to learn new skills had benefited either by getting their first job, improving their salary, or being promoted".

We have a wide range of volunteering roles including researcher, enter and view LINK representative, action group member. To find out more contact us (details on page 3).

Strengthening the LINK team

We are delighted to tell you we now have a full staff team to support Brighton and Hove LINK.

Val Young, our new Development Worker (4 days a week), joins us from East Sussex LINK and before that she worked for the Patient Public Involvement (PPI) Forum for Brighton and Hove PCT. Val will be busy going out and about in Brighton and Hove, meeting groups, attending events and hearing what you have to say about local health and social care.

Charlotte Irtelli is our new administrator (5 days a week) and she joins us from the NHS Brighton and Hove (PCT) Commissioning Team.



A warm welcome to Val (left) and Charlotte (right)

LINK News

Can you help the LINK this April?

Your views count. Together we can improve health and social care in Brighton and Hove. Contact us with your comments on the issues below or anything else related to health and social care in Brighton and Hove. Please use the enclosed form (available in other formats on request) or call us.

41% of dental surgeries taking on new patients in Brighton and Hove



The LINK has heard from residents about difficulties in finding an NHS dentist, so we decided to see for ourselves and carried out a mystery shopper exercise.

We asked 48 dentist surgeries in Brighton and Hove if they were taking on new NHS dental patients. Of those, 41% said they were accepting new NHS patients at the time of the survey (February).

The LINK has passed the survey results to NHS Brighton and Hove (PCT) who are responsible for dental services in the area and is now setting up an action group to look at improving dental services.

If you would like to join it, or have something to say, good or bad, please contact us. If you want to know which local dentists are accepting NHS patients in Brighton and Hove call the Dental Helpline on 0300 1000 899.

Hospital Discharge

Tell us your experience if you have been an inpatient at the Royal Sussex County Hospital in 2009 or 2010.

Or better still, join the LINK hospital discharge group.

Pharmacy



Recently the LINK was concerned to hear about a pharmacy in Brighton and Hove that gave the wrong medicine to a patient.

If this has happened to you or you have any comments to make about your local pharmacy please tell us about it.

**Win £25 in
M&S
vouchers***

Tell us what you think of health and social care services in Brighton and Hove and you could win £25 in M&S vouchers*. So not only will you help to improve local services but you will be in with a chance of winning £25.

Simply call, write in or email us with your comments. Telephone us on 01273 810235; email linkadmin@cvsectorforum.org.uk

Spotlight on General Practitioners (GPs) Surgeries

Your GP

Your local GP surgery provides a wide range of family health services, including:

- advice on health problems
- vaccinations
- examinations and treatment
- prescriptions for medicines
- referrals to other health services and social services.

If your condition is not urgent, you can expect to see a doctor within two working days or a health professional, such as a nurse, within one working day. If you don't need an appointment within two working days, you can also book in advance if this is more convenient for you.

Your views...

The Government thinks people should be able to choose a GP practice that is most convenient for them, currently you can usually only register with a GP in the local area where you live. We want to hear your views on this so we can feed this back to the Government. <http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/portal/links>

Royal College of General Practitioners' Recommendations for Patient Care

The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) have recently published a UK Wide Manifesto for Patient Care. It sets out a number of recommendations for improved health care in the future under three separate headings: High quality GP Care for All; Care for Patients Closer to Home; and Improving the Health of the Nation. Some of the key features under these headings are:

- GPs to have more time with their patients
- The GP and patient relationship to be maintained and improved
- Better round the clock care for patients
- More care provided in the community
- Action to promote healthy lifestyle choices and tackle rising obesity
- Action to prevent the harmful effects of alcohol misuse and smoking
- Better access to talking therapies

The RCGP's manifesto proposes consultation periods to be increased from ten minutes to fifteen. But in order to accommodate this increase in appointment time, less serious illnesses would be directed to practice nurses or pharmacists, or by dealing with the GP on the phone, or by email or on the internet.

The GP's manifesto recognises that "The ageing population means that more patients will have long-term and increasingly complex conditions. They will need more time with their GP to discuss their care and treatment options."

More detailed information, including the manifesto, can be seen at quick link: <http://tinyurl.com/yfvvj4m> or phone the RCGP to find out more about the Manifesto; call 0845 456 4041 or see www.rcgp.org.uk

How You Have Helped the LINK Improve Local Health and Social Care

Thanks to all of you who have given your views and supported the LINK over the last couple of months to achieve the following:

- Brighton City Council agreed to fund printing of Care Passports (for carers to record the care needs, preferences and communication requirements of the person they look after if the patient themselves cannot communicate with staff)
- Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust (BSUHT) is now looking into providing more information on fare concessions for people travelling to hospitals on their website
- The LINK submitted views into the national consultation into hospital car parking
- The LINK completed a survey of access to NHS dentistry in the city.

The LINK can be contacted by phone, post or email.

By post:

Freepost RSGY-UXAC-ZZZG
Brighton and Hove Local Involvement
Network
BRIGHTON
BN1 4GQ

Telephone: 01273 810235

Email: linkadmin@cvsectorforum.org.uk

Website: www.bhlink.org.uk

Out of Hours GPs

The deaths in 2008 of three year old Joseph Seevraj from Hove, and David Gray in Cambridgeshire have raised concerns about the quality of out of hours health care services since GPs opted out in 2004.

Since then, Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) responsible for providing cover at nights and weekends have often relied on private firms working under NHS contracts. For the patient, this means that outside normal surgery hours you can still phone your doctor's surgery, but you are likely to be directed to an OOH service. (The (OOH) period is from 6.30pm to 8.00am on weekdays and all day at weekends and on bank holidays.)

In 2008 Joseph Seevaraj died from complications arising from tonsillitis; his parents had telephoned the OOH service and taken the advice of the OOH doctor. However, the Coroner (the public official who investigates by inquest any death not due to natural causes), Veronica Hamilton-Deeley said "He needed basic medical attention. The failure to provide it was gross failure. I am satisfied there is a clear connection between this gross failure and his death."

David Gray (East Cambridge and Fenland) died after an OOH doctor mistakenly gave him an overdose of diamorphine (a powerful painkiller). The coroner in this case ruled that the patient had been unlawfully killed. There is one OOH GP on call for Brighton and Hove which has a population of 240,000 and covers an area of 34 square miles. The GP is supported by a trained driver and receptionist and is backed up by a call centre team which includes nurses who help to assess patients' requirements at night.

During the OOH period you:

- should only telephone for an ambulance in a life threatening situation (ring 999)
- should telephone NHS Direct for healthcare advice on 0845 46 47
- should telephone your usual GP surgery telephone number if you require the services that you would normally use your daytime GP for.

You can also call NHS Direct on 0845 4647 (24 hours a day, seven days a week) for medical advice. Telephone consultations and triage (an assessment of how urgent your medical problem is) are an important part of all OOH care.

Have you used the Out of Hours Service?

If so, what do you think of the quality of service you received? Do you have general comments (we are looking for examples of both good quality care as well as where things could be improved). Or would you like to share your opinion on the principle of out of hours care?

Calling all Groups and Organisations in Brighton and Hove

Why should my group or organisation sign up to the LINK?

- It's free and quick – just complete a simple form
- The LINK has legal powers to help improve health and social care
- The LINK can help draw attention to neglected issues or ideas
- The LINK can influence those who make decisions about new or existing health and social care services
- You will receive our free monthly newsletter which is quick and easy to read and contains local and national health and social care news and LINK updates
- The LINK newsletter is the first place the LINK will advertise any tenders for work we wish to commission
- You can advertise your group/organisation and/or event to a wider group of people via our monthly newsletter (free of charge)
- The LINK can come to your group or meeting to hear your views on health and social care and tell you more about the LINK.

What have you got to lose by signing up? Contact us for a sign-up form.

LINK Representatives (people who are signed up to the LINK who speak on behalf of the LINK at meetings).

The LINK is often invited to sit on various groups, and by being at the table where important discussions are held, we are able to have an influence on improving local health and social care services.

We need more people who would be prepared to attend these meetings and be actively involved. This is an opportunity to not only represent the LINK but to be at the forefront of shaping future services and saying what you think. Full training and support will be provided. Contact us for more information.

LINK Participants Training and Development

If you have signed up to the LINK and want to volunteer to help support the work of the LINK we can provide free training and development. Please complete the enclosed skills form.

Local News

Brighton and Hove patients and families to benefit from new essential standards of care



From April 2010 new essential standards of quality and safety are being introduced gradually across all health and adult social care services in England. The Care Quality Commission (CQC), the new independent regulator of health and adult social care, will license services if they meet essential standards and constantly monitor them to make sure they are compliant with new legislation about to be passed in parliament.

NHS trusts are the first to come into the new system starting 1 April this year; they will be followed in October by all providers of social care for people over 18 years of age and by providers of independent healthcare. Over the coming two years the system will include all primary care and dentists too.

The new system means that you can expect your care and treatment to meet essential standards of quality and safety that respect your dignity and rights. The biggest change from any earlier system of regulation is that each of the standards is based on an actual outcome for people rather than a policy or a target. Providers must demonstrate that people in their care have a quality experience across all aspects of their treatment, care or support. For more information go to www.cqc.org.uk or call 03000 616161.

12 to 15 years?

If you're aged 12 to 15 NHS Teen LifeCheck is the website for you. There's a quiz that checks out your life and lets you know how you're getting on. There's stuff about your health and keeping fit, staying safe, alcohol, drugs and loads more. There are also top tips and info about support services. It can help you to set your own goals and make smart life choices.

Why should I do an NHS LifeCheck?

Being a teenager isn't easy. There's plenty of stuff going on in your head - mates, alcohol, your family, school, smoking, sex. Sometimes you just need somewhere private to go to where you can see if you are doing OK or to get some advice.

How do I do it?

Just visit www.teenlifecheck.co.uk



New Rights Under the NHS Constitution

From 1 April 2010, patients will have the right to:

- start consultant-led treatment within 18 weeks of referral for non-urgent conditions
- see a specialist within 2 weeks of referral where cancer is suspected, or for the NHS to take all reasonable steps to offer a range of alternative providers if this is not possible and the patient requests this.

A further right, to a NHS Health Check every five years for those aged 40-74, will take effect from April 2012.

visit <http://tinyurl.com/yj76mme> or telephone 0300 123 1002 for more information. www.nhs.uk

New Diabetes Group

The Sussex Diabetes Gateway are a community group that has recently been set up to support people living with diabetes in Brighton & Hove and wider Sussex.

The Gateway plan to make a variety of individual, tailored support available for parents, young people, adults and older people who live with diabetes and are looking for support in achieving this goal. They will also be looking to raise the voice of people living with diabetes in the area to improve diabetes services with the local NHS.

If you would like more information on the support available, are willing to lend a hand or to raise particular issues with diabetes healthcare, please contact Alex Hawkey, Secretary of the Sussex Diabetes Gateway, at alex.hawkey@ntlworld.com or call 01273 772452.

A website will be launched later in the year.

National News

A&E Targets criticised again

The Department of Health's NHS target for Accident and Emergency (A&E) treatment has been criticised by the College of Emergency Medicine because it risks patient safety. Currently the NHS target on treatment in Accident and Emergency stipulates that patients should spend less than four hours from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge.

Speaking to Radio 4's Today Programme, John Heyworth, President of the College of Emergency Medicine, has stated that "In principle, the four hour target is a good thing, but for patients and clinicians at the moment, it is not working as intended." Mr. Heyworth criticised the target as it fails to recognise that "There are not enough staff in emergency departments, not enough experienced consultants and not enough beds in hospitals. With the ever increasing workload in our departments, there is a mismatch between demand and our ability to deal with it. This means that on a daily basis clinicians are under immense pressure to comply with the targets."

Your views...

The LINK wants to hear your views on A&E targets, do they work? Were you treated well at A&E?

Prescription Fees Frozen

Health minister Mike O'Brien announced that the cost of a prescription in England will be frozen at £7.20 per item in 2010/11. NHS dental charges will also remain the same. The British Medical Association has called for charges to be scrapped completely in England. Prescriptions are already free in Wales and will be free in Northern Ireland from next month and in Scotland by 2011.

NHS Cuts to Spending

Following Chancellor Alistair Darling's budget, the Department of Health outlined how it plans to achieve £4.35 billion of savings annually by 2012-13. The department said the targeted savings to deliver the annual total would focus on: driving down prices for goods and services bought by the NHS; reducing staff sickness absence in the NHS; cuts to the NHS IT programme; more efficient use of land and buildings; and reductions in energy use.

Mobile calls to claim benefits go free

Six of the biggest mobile phone network companies (O2, Orange, Tesco Mobile, Vodafone, T-Mobile, Virgin mobile) no longer charge their customers for calls to 0800 Benefit Claim lines. Currently 12% of UK households use only mobile phones and do not have a land line. Calls to the 0800 numbers affected are already free from BT land lines.

New booklet available from the Disabled Parents Network (DPN)

"They said what?" is a new booklet that highlights common myths about disabled parents and community care legislation. The idea for the booklet came from disabled parents who had difficulties getting the assistance or equipment they needed in order to look after their children. Some of the things they were told by social workers and other professionals were not accurate, but the parents usually did not have the necessary knowledge about their rights to challenge these statements. The booklet sets out some of these statements and gives information about what disabled people are entitled to. www.disabledparentsnetwork.org.uk (quick link: <http://tinyurl.com/yk3u3v3>). Telephone 0300 3300 639

Care Quality Commission (CQC) to Scrutinise Care for People with Learning Disabilities

The CQC has published a five year plan outlining how it will drive up standards on behalf of people with learning disabilities. This is in direct response to the inpatient follow up review which was published in December.

Key to driving improvement will be:

- a special review of physical healthcare for people with a learning disability and people with mental illness
- piloting a joint service inspection of local authorities and primary care trusts to check adult safeguarding mechanisms
- consulting on a special review on the use of restraint and the health and social care need involving "experts by experience" (people with a learning disability and carers) in a range of social and health care inspections and reviews
- continuing to work with the Department of Health and the Information Centre to improve available data, including performance indicators and the possibility of having a national minimum data set for learning disabilities.

To find out more go to www.cqc.org.uk or call 03000 616161

National consultation and involvement

Skills for Care Accolades 2010

The Skills for Care Accolades 2010, in partnership with the Department of Health, are now open and taking nominations in 14 categories.

Achieving an Accolade proves you are improving the lives of people using social care services through workforce development.

Does this sound like you or your organisation? If you provide a high quality service and invest in training, qualifications and development for your staff we want to hear from you.

You can also nominate another organisation or employer that you think would be a worthy winner of an Accolade. The awards this year will take place on the 25 November at The Dorchester Hotel in Mayfair, London, where we will be joined by a celebrity presenter for the evening.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/accolades or call 0113 241 1295.

Consultation on Payment of Residential Social Care Services

There are four issues for consultation regarding the charging regulations:

- Treatment of personal injury compensation
- Treatment of single premium investment bonds
- Introduction of a new disregard for pre-paid funeral plans
- Deferred self top-ups during the 12-week property disregard.

What do you think should be included in any financial assessment to assess an individual's ability to pay for residential social care services?

For more information on this consultation and how to respond: www.dh.gov.uk (quick link: <http://tinyurl.com/yk2xvgj>) or call 0207 210 5952

What's happening in April?

18th – Brighton Marathon

<http://brightonmarathon.co.uk> Tel 0844 241 2566



1 – 30th Bowel Cancer Awareness Month (Bowel Cancer UK)

www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk Tel 020 7381 9711

4 – 10th Mental Health Action Week (Mental Health Foundation)

www.mhf.org.uk Tel 020 7803 1101

12-18th Orchid Male Cancer Awareness Week

www.orchid-cancer.org.uk Tel 0207 601 7167



19 – 25th Depression Awareness Week (Depression Alliance)

www.depressionalliance.org Tel 0845 123 23 20

19th LINK Steering Group (meeting in public) – Stanmer Room, Brighthelm (12.15- 14.30)

Complaints

Brighton and Hove is not a complaints service, we look at wider issues affecting people rather than issues that solely affect individuals. If you have a concern about an NHS service your first point of contact should be the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) at the relevant Trust. If you want to make a complaint but are unsure how to do this contact the Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS). They can help provide more information about the NHS complaints process and what it involves and provide support.

NHS Brighton and Hove PALS: 0800 013 0251

Brighton Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust PALS: 01273 696955, extension 4029

ICAS: 01424 437491

Brighton and Hove City Council: 01273 290000

LINK Newsletter

Accessibility

We try to write this newsletter as clearly as possible. To ensure the information is accessible we:

- avoid jargon
- use plain English
- explain all acronyms
- provide easier to type links to webpages
- provide a telephone number, not just a website link
- produce the newsletter in other formats (on request)
- provide the newsletter as a download from the LINK website

Contributions

Brighton and Hove's LINK newsletter is issued every month, if you have an article that you would like considered for inclusion please email or post by the 20th of each month.

Making it better

We want to know how the newsletter can be better, we are always trying to improve. Let us know by contacting claire@cvsectorforum.org.uk

Saving Resources

After you have read the newsletter please forward on to anyone who you think would find it useful. Wherever possible we email the newsletter to save resources.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily represent the views of the Brighton and Hove LINK. The LINK accepts no liability for any inaccuracies or omissions in this newsletter. Content of the newsletter is for general information.

Tell us what you think of health and social care services in Brighton and Hove and you could win £25 in M&S vouchers*. So not only will you help to improve local services but you will be in with a chance of winning £25.

**Each month we will select at random one individual who has given us their comments and award the prize.*



Linkadmin@cvsectorforum.org.uk
01273 810 235

Freepost RSGY-UXAC-ZZZG
Brighton & Hove Local Involvement Network
BRIGHTON
BN1 4GQ

What does it mean?

A glossary of health and social care terms

Advocate	a person who supports someone and can act on their behalf
Clinical	of, or for, the treatment of patients
Clinical governance	the organisational framework through which and NHS body is accountable for ensuring and improving patient safety & high standards of care
Health provider	an organisation which offers services to improve people's health
Intermediate care	alternative to general hospital admission for treatment. Also provided to allow patients to be safely discharged from hospital & complete their recovery at home or other suitable place, such as a community hospital or nursing home
Joint commissioning	usually refers to NHS and social services working together to agree spending plans to get the best service for those who use their services, such as mental health service users, physically disabled people, older people
LINK Action Group	a small group of people who meet to discuss issues and agree actions on a defined topic
LINK Steering group	the group of 15 elected people who lead and coordinate the activities of the LINK (Local Involvement Network)
NHS	National Health Service
NHS Trust	could either be a commissioner or a provider trust. Primary care trusts are often both commissioners & providers
PALS	Patient Advice Liaison Service – an in house service providing information & help to NHS patients
Primary care	care provided by GPs and the team who work with them in their surgeries, health centres & by dentists, pharmacists & opticians
Primary Care Trust (PCT)	the main commissioning body in the NHS. PCTs have replaced health authorities. The PCT in Brighton & Hove is now called NHS Brighton and Hove
Providers	Hospital Trusts, GPs voluntary organisations & sometimes private institutions who provide health care according to their contract with the PCT
Social care provider	an organisation which offers services to help support people

Providers in Brighton and Hove

Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC)	provides Social Care Services (commonly known as Social Services) to protect, care for and support vulnerable people to enable them to live as full and independent lives as possible.
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals (BSUH)	regional teaching hospital ; provides general and specialist acute hospital services working as one teaching hospital across two sites, Royal Sussex County Hospital and Princess Royal Hospital
Children and Young People's Trust (CYPT)	brings together education, health and social care for all 0-19-year-olds (and up to 25 years for those with special needs)
South Downs NHS Health Trust (SDHT)	provides community, rehabilitation, specialist and, in co-operation with the Children and Young People's Trust, children's services for people living mainly in the Brighton and Hove area
South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMBUS)	responds to 999 calls from the public, urgent calls from health professionals and in Kent and Sussex, and provides non-emergency patient transport services
Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (Sussex Partnership)	provides specialist mental health, learning disability and substance misuse services in and across Sussex.