



Dudley Local Involvement Network

Annual Report

April 1st 2008-31st March 2009

Your Local
Your Involvement
Your Network

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Here to help you get the health and social care services you want.

Be part of the LINK, it is your voice that **WILL** make a big difference.

Foreword provided by Chairman Mr David Orme



It gives me great pleasure to be able to present the 1st years Annual Report for Dudley Local Involvement Network (LINK).

I have been part of the LINK since 30th September 2008 and have participated in activity which has ensured that the LINK has the necessary knowledge and understanding to work with Health and Social Care service providers to improve the services for the people of Dudley.

I have had many opportunities to meet with providers of our services and build good relationships. These relationships continue to grow as do those of the voluntary sector and that of members of Dudley community. Without these partnerships and the participation of the community Dudley LINK would be unable to thrive.

The next year will be an action filled challenge for the LINK as they take on their role with fresh vigour concentrating on their work plan and helping to improve the services for people in Dudley. If you would like to be involved in the LINK then please know that everyone is welcome and the time you give is entirely up to you.

I would personally like to thank the following participants for all their time and efforts over the past 12 months:

Ann Middleton (Interim Chair)
Gary Barker
Sue Solly
Janet Darby
John Roden
Steve Sharples



Vincent Keogh

I would also like to thank Dudley MBC (Adult, Community and Housing Services), Dudley Primary Care Trust, Dudley and Walsall Joint Mental Health Trust, West Midlands Ambulance Service Trust, Dudley Group of Hospitals Foundation Trust, Voluntary Organisations throughout Dudley and members of the community for being willing to participate and able to make partnerships to help strengthen the LINK.

Contacting the LINK

For the year 09/10 there will be a regular opportunity for local residents to meet with the LINK Community Development Officer on a drop in basis at venues located throughout Dudley Borough. For venues and times please use one of the following contact methods.

To write to Dudley LINK please use the following address
 Woodside Children's Centre
 Highgate Road
 Woodside
 Dudley
 West Midlands
 DY2 0SN

Or

Call the Community Development Officer Maxine Makin 07595 778034
 Email dudleylink@shaw-trust.org.uk

Or contact

Administration Office
 Dudley LINK
 The Old Library Centre
 65 Ombersley Street East
 Droitwich Spa
 WR9 8QS
 Phone 01905 779073

Or go to

Web site www.communityvoicesonline.org
 Web link www.dudleylink.org.uk

To contact the Host organisation please use

Shaw Trust
 Administration Team
 The Old Library Centre
 65 Ombersley Street East
 Droitwich Spa
 WR9 8QS



Transitional Period for the LINK

The Transitional LINK Group (TLG) was established following a stakeholder event held by the Council and Dudley Voluntary Council (DCVS) in November 2007. The TLG comprised former PPIF members, voluntary sector and community representatives including Dudley Women's Forum, Alzheimer's Association, Stroke Association, Dudley Carers forum and Halesowen Asian Elderly Association. The Council acted as the supporting host body. In addition the transitional body was supported by Dudley's empowerment network DOSTI and an expert facilitator from the Centre of Public Scrutiny (CfPS)

The Transitional LINK group engaged/worked with the following bodies:

- ☉ Dudley Council for Voluntary Services and empowerment network DOSTI which facilitated the TLG meetings.
- ☉ Dudley MBC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- ☉ Directorate of Adult Community and Housing Services (responsible for Adult Social Care) and Dudley PCT, both of which regularly informed the group on key developments.
- ☉ The Dudley Health and Well-being Partnership

The TLG met on regular basis commencing January 2008 to facilitate the effective development of the LINK and advise on key aspects of the procurement of the Host. The TLG was supported by an expert facilitator from CfPS. The Activity of the TLG is set out below under the following areas:

Work programme

The Transitional LINK was encouraged to incorporate service specific issues into its work plan in addition to items relating to its infrastructure development. Consequently the Hospital pharmacy services was identified by the TLG as the key issue it wished to monitor – in regard to waiting times and patient choice.

Procurement of the Host

The vast majority of time was taken up on developing the LINK and involvement in procurement.

The TLG was totally involved in the procurement process: devising the tender specification through to recruiting the successful agency. The Council and the ILG working together ensure the development of a LINK that would best meet the aspirations of the public and community and voluntary sector. The tender specification was initially arrived at through the stakeholder event referred to above which the TLG then further refined. Two members of the TLG formed part of the tender selection panel.

Referrals

As referred to above the TLG pursued the monitoring of Hospital Pharmacy services as part of its work plan. This followed concerns regarding waiting times for hospital issued prescriptions. Their concerns and recommendations to improve patient choice and reduce waiting times were presented in a letter to the Hospital Trust supported by the interim Host (Dudley MBC). In response the Trust advised the majority of reported delays were



due to its late completion of the To Take Out (TTO) prescriptions and not linked with the discharge general of Pharmacy functions. The TLG was also informed that the issue with TTOs had been resolved and patients no longer experienced delays with this service. The PCT was also informed of this issue and is considering the matter as a commissioner.

Other

PCT and other Local Authority representatives attended meetings of the TLG and advised on key developments with the aim to develop open and constructive relationships with the LINK.

The LINK was also updated on the activity of Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care and was involved in the development of a protocol to govern the relationship between both bodies.

The TLG considered communication opportunities, drawing on information from Dudley MBC and Dosti about publications, websites, email groups and existing planners in order to develop an effective communication strategy for the LINK

Other activity

Towards the end of the transitional phase in July the Interim Host facilitated the election of a Chair to facilitate leadership of the ILG during the transfer of support to the successful tenderer.

Whilst Dudley Council was in the process of commissioning a Host Organisation the TLG held a number of meetings to develop some work to facilitate the effective development of the LINK. Six TLG meeting were convened in total including five in the transitional period (*Please note that minutes of these meetings can be provided on request*):

- 1st February 4.00-6.00pm - Facilitated by Dudley Council
- 5th March – Facilitated by Dudley Council
- 9th April 4.00-6.30 pm – facilitated by empowerment network DOSTI
- 14th May, 4.00-6.30pm - facilitated by empowerment network DOSTI
- 12th June, 4.00-6.30pm - facilitated by empowerment network DOSTI
- 9th July, 4.00-6.30pm -facilitated by empowerment network DOSTI

Running parallel to the TLG meetings were a number of LINK project team meetings facilitated by the Council. These comprised representatives from the Health and Adult Social Care sector and community and voluntary sector representatives.

Shaw Trust were successful in acquiring the contract in July 2008 to work with the LINK.

Why Our Work is Needed.

Dudley LINK is the place to go if you have and concerns about the way in which your local health and social services are run or you feel you know of ways in which they could be improved.

The LINK is a network of volunteers, who are made up from individuals and groups from Dudley community,

The LINK is independent but has support from their Host organisation (Shaw Trust) to help them with their activity.

Their aim is to improve health and social care services in Dudley

They have powers to make changes happen to ensure that service users in Dudley are provided with the services they need.

What You Told Us

Dudley LINK has received comments from a number of individuals and organisations all of which have been studied by the steering group. The following is a list of current priorities for the LINK.

Task groups needed to research:

- The local and cross boundary difficulties when patients are discharged from hospital and then require care. Can they be improved?
- Dementia (working with partners)
- What help is available for elderly carers, is it enough?
- Accident and emergency waiting times. How can they be improved?
- Access and provision to services for disabled users. Are they good enough?
- Alcohol abuse, what is being done and can this be improved?

Ongoing priority:

- To ensure that the elderly are listened to regarding LINK activity.
- Improvement in accessing social care priorities

Action required

- 75+ check ups, do they take into account patient privacy?
- Waiting times for prescriptions when discharged from hospital, have these been improved?

This list is constantly being added to with the comments and views from the people in the community and prioritised by members of the steering group using their decision making procedure.

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In order for the LINK to have the strongest impact they are looking for people who are willing to take part in its activity. The LINK really wants to hear from all sectors of the community, it is your right to have a say in the way in which your services are run and managed.

There are lots of ways that people can get involved.

The structure of the LINK allows for individuals with very little time to play an important part in the LINK and their activity. There is also an opportunity to be more involved if you wish.

The LINK is the voice of the community and everyone is welcome to be involved.

What Dudley LINK Will Do

Work with providers, partners and the community to help improve your health and social care services by:

- Listening to your views and experiences
- Set up task groups to work on particular topics
- Request information from commissioners or providers
- Refer matters to Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- Send reports and recommendations to commissioners
- Visit health and social care premises.

What Dudley LINK Have Achieved

The following work plan was created in October 08 for immediate work to be undertaken leading up to an AGM.

- Community Mapping
- Map Social Care
- Generate interest in link participants
- Raise profile of LINK
- Communication pathways with statutory organisations
- Health priorities
- Social Care priorities
- Scope purpose of AGM to be held by 31st March 2009
- Research services provided by statutory organisations
- Map services that are provided by GP's
- Build relationships with media

At the end of March 2009 the LINK had over 40 registered participants, some of which joined an interim steering group and played a very essential role in setting up the LINK in Dudley. The LINK has a mailing list of 650 voluntary groups and organisations and contact with the Dosti Network which communicates with over 750 groups and organisations throughout Dudley.

Being part of the steering group involved working with the Host organisation to ensure that as a LINK they were capable of managing themselves in their activity. All their governance has been written and can be accessed by registering on www.dudleylink.org.uk. This governance allows the LINK to have clear guidelines and be transparent in their operation as a LINK.



The LINK has a steering group that are responsible for the decisions that are made regarding their priority on what topics, issues or concerns are investigated and dealt with. To be part of the steering group you will have to be elected and commit to attending a meeting once a month.

The LINK is currently actively seeking new members to the steering group.

Task groups are set up to look at particular topics such as issues with social care or health care. To be part of a task group you do not need to be an elected member, you just need to have an interest in the topic that is being investigated.

Sub groups are also part of the LINK. Some sub groups are formed to look at the ways in which the LINK can best communicate with the public or media or to arrange events or look at the finance of the LINK. A sub group may also be involved in Enter and View which will allow them to go to the providers of services and investigate on issues that have been brought to the attention of the LINK. To be part of an Enter and View sub group you will need to undertake training and have a CRB check.

The structure of the LINK also allows for involvement by completing a questionnaire or survey or by providing you own experiences to the LINK regarding your health and social care services.

You can also be involved by registering on the LINK website at www.dudleylink.org.uk and starting or contributing to discussions.

The LINK has a responsibility to ensure that they are reaching out to everyone in the community and that everyone has an opportunity to be involved. The Host for the LINK works closely with the members and participants to ensure that their activity is engaging with the whole community. The LINK made the decision to spend funds on advertising in local news papers, creating advertising leaflets which were distributed throughout various locations in Dudley and producing a DVD to be used in GP surgeries and other appropriate venues. Information on Dudley LINK has also been sent via postal methods to over 650 different groups and organisations throughout Dudley, promoted on Bridge Radio and all the participants and the Host have promoted the LINK at meetings and events when ever possible. Engaging with communities and raising the profile of the LINK is an ongoing duty for the LINK.

The LINK had their first Annual General Meeting on 30th March 2009. This was a great opportunity to promote the LINK and let everyone know that the LINK is now ready to tackle the issues in Dudley regarding Health and Social Care. The AGM also marked the start of the official membership status to the LINK and that of a new Chair Mr David Orme (previous interim LINK Vice Chair) who has taken the place of Mrs Ann Middleton (interim LINK Chair) who has given her time over the past year with dedication to ensure that the LINK will be able to undertake its future activities.

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This year participants of the LINK have been active in the following:

Training

Enter and View training

Widening Participation

Attended workshops with providers regarding health and social care

Attended meetings and forums throughout Dudley where the LINK has been promoted

Black Country Cardiovascular Network

Dudley Health Care Forum

Dudley Podiatric Forum

Dudley Heart Undergoing Support group

Expert Patient Programme

Alzheimer's Association

Stroke Association

Soldiers and Sailors Air force Association

Dudley PCT Board

Dudley Community Partnership

Soroptimist International

Fibromyalgia Group

Dudley LINK has made Partnerships with:

Dudley Group of Hospitals

Dudley Primary Care Trust

Walsall and Dudley Joint Mental Health Trust

West Midlands Ambulance Service

Patients Advice and Liaison Services

Independent Complaints Advocacy Services

Careers Association

Age Concern

Action Against Medical Accidents

Dosti

Community Renewal Neighbourhood Partnerships

Dudley Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny

Dudley MBC Social Care

Dudley LINK has representatives on

Dudley Health and Wellbeing Partnership

Dudley Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The LINK have attended

Action for Breast Cancer London

LINK National Conference London

Regional LINK Active Participants Workshops

West Midland Ambulance Service Familiarisation Event

Consultation event for the new single complaints procedure

Wolverhampton LINK Launch

Birmingham LINK Launch

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Trust consultation event.



The LINK has regular monthly meetings to help them steer the direction of the LINK and make decisions on actions they wish to take. All minutes can be accessed by logging on to www.dudleylink.org.uk

Sub group meetings have also been arranged to work on activity promoting the LINK.

Income and Expenditure

Local Authority

Expenditure £19,913.06

Shaw Trust

Contract Amount £98,292

Contract Expenditure

Staff Costs £34,747

LINK Discretionary Costs £6,295

Operating costs £9,052

LINK Discretionary Budget

Budget	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Advertising and Printing	£4,500.00	£4,000.00	£4,000.00	£12,500.00
Workshops and Meetings	£4,500.00	£5,000.00	£4,500.00	£14,000.00
Members expenses	£4,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£16,000.00
Research & Development	£2,000.00	£3,000.00	£3,000.00	£8,000.00
Interpreters and Translation	£4,000.00	£5,000.00	£4,500.00	£13,500.00
Monitoring and Inspection Training	£500.00	£500.00	£500.00	£1,500.00
Totals	£19,500.00	£23,500.00	£22,500.00	£65,500.00

Final Status	Budget Year 1	Total Spend	Variance	Budget Year 2	Spend Available*
Advertising and Printing	£4,500.00	£4,936.34	£-436.34	£4,000.00	£3,563.66
Workshops and Meetings	£4,500.00	£1,084.93	£3,415.07	£5,000.00	£8,415.07
Members expenses	£4,000.00	£274.38	£3,725.62	£6,000.00	£9,725.62
Research & Development	£2,000.00	£0.00	£2,000.00	£3,000.00	£5,000.00
Interpreters and Translation	£4,000.00	£0.00	£4,000.00	£5,000.00	£9,000.00
Monitoring and Inspection Training	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00	£500.00	£1,000.00
Totals	£19,500.00	£6,295.65	£13,204.35	£23,500.00	£36,704.35

*Subject to carry over of funds

Next steps

The next 12 months will be very active for the LINK.

It will be holding regular monthly meetings to make decisions on the prioritisation of work as it comes to their attention and including it in their work plan.

The LINK will be setting up task groups to look at issues as they arise and to work on areas covered in their work plan.

It will work closely with all the providers and their partners to ensure good communication and joined up thinking when making decisions for their work plan and activity.

It will commit to listening to everyone's views that come through the LINK and acting accordingly.

It will continue to engage with the community using many different methods and provide and share information to all relevant partners and the community.

The LINK aims to see a dramatic increase in its participation and welcomes anyone who wishes to participate

Thanks

A final thank you to everyone in this report who has supported the LINK through its first year and has made it possible for the LINK to start its second year with the knowledge, resources and commitment required to ensure great success in ensuring the Health and Social Care in Dudley is one which meets the needs of the community.