



# Report to Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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LINK Warwickshire

Deb Saunders

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Jan 2012.

The purpose of this report is to update a report presented to Overview and Scrutiny in October last year.

Since the last report there have been many changes to LINKs. The hosting arrangements have been transferred to Warwickshire CAVA and they instigated the updating of the staff team to include a Manager and a full time Community Engagement Officer, these additions have resulted in a change in focus and direction and clear strategic leadership.

It was felt imperative to ensure that LINK was able to deliver high quality services to members, the public and to our partners during the passage of the Health and Social Care Bill through the Houses of Parliament and any uncertainty over how long the organisation would continue and the timescales for Health watch were determined.

To this end we have been working towards becoming 'Health watch fit' that is ensuring that Warwickshire LINKs delivers the services and outcomes that will enable a planned and seamless handover to the new organisation. We decided to concentrate on the projects and developments that would best serve the Health watch model as we believe it to be and those systems that would be part of the new organisations infrastructure, that is:

Developing the Warwickshire LINK web site

Collecting stories from our membership re their experiences of the face to face reality of the health and social care services, in order to start building a picture of health and social care on the ground in Warwickshire

Developing the membership database

Ensuring robust partnerships are in place

The legacy of previous Link work

Commissioning reports that are relevant and timely not only to our wider membership but also to our partners

## **Website**

In this technological age this is a key tool for communicating with members and new and prospective members, we have worked hard over the last few months to ensure our website delivers clarity of purpose and carries up to date information and news.

News events are updated daily and we check for new members daily, and as a further communication tool we are now signed up to social media.

## **Stories**

It is our aim to collect peoples stories of their encounters with the Health Service both the good and bad practice which we are hoping to develop into 'voice on the ground' to act as a forewarning of any trends or difficulties before they become overwhelming.

## **Engagement and Developing the Membership Database**

With the appointment of a Community Engagement Officer it has been possible to re-engage in a meaningful way with our members and to look at the recruitment and retention of new people. The database has been redeveloped and we are in a much better position to talk about our membership and the number of engaged groups and individuals that are part of LINK. The Community Engagement Officer is also in the process of attending all the community forums across Warwickshire to introduce himself and the organisation and to encourage local people to tell their stories and to become members of the organisation.

## **Robust Partnerships**

The LINK Manager has been working, since her appointment in July, to develop relationships with strategic partners. We now work closely with Coventry LINK and are meeting with University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire and The Partnership Trust to consider their Quality Accounts jointly. We have also met with the Head of Human Rights and Equality for the Arden Cluster together to start the rating process for the Equality Delivery system and will be meeting with her equivalent at the Partnership trust to do the same. We meet regularly with Esther Peapell Head of Public and Patient Engagement for the Arden Cluster and have started to develop a partnership with the secretariat of the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Chair of the organisation is in consultation with the major Charities involved in Neurological conditions and Links are considering how we can be most helpful to them in taking their interests and concerns further.

We are talking to WCC social care and looking to develop joint working in the coming year.

We are involved in the discussions concerning Maternity and Paediatric services at George Eliot Hospital and hosted an information meeting on the closure of Birch Ward at St Cross Hospital in Rugby.

We are hoping to develop working relationships with the Clinical Commissioning Groups in Warwickshire and have secured a meeting with representatives from the South CCG

With our partners Age UK we are developing joint approaches to complimentary work and are working to keep communication flexible and appropriate.

We have developed a relationship with Warwickshire Observatory which will enable Warwickshire LINK to ensure our reports and findings contain robust and up to date data.

### **Legacy of Previous LINK Work**

In the year 2010 – 2011 LINK was responsible for Four reports and we feel that it is important that all our work has relevance and helps partners improve practise and quality.

The reports covered:

- Out of Hours Services –  
we found that the experience of this service was good and that there were no substantial recommendations to be made.
- Information Provision for those with Visual Impairment –  
although on the whole the services were found to be adequate the main recommendation of the report that information be routinely provided in other forms was found by our partners in Health to be too expensive to implement.
- Dignity in Care Homes  
This was undertaken with our partners in Social Care helping us with some of the training and development of our Enter and View team. We visited [private] Care Homes across the county to encourage them to sign up to the Dignity Pledge, we are again working with our partners to revisit the homes we visited to look at progress and implementation of the pledges and to consider how we can take this work forward together.
- Mental Health  
This was an internal scoping report to help us decide if there were areas that needed further investigation. Several themes were identified and together

with Adult Social Care and the Partnership Trust we are developing the criteria for a joint project which will investigate the most useful and pressing of these.

### **Commissioning Relevant Reports**

This year 2011-2012 so far we have commissioned three reports;

- Access to Health care for Gypsies and Travellers –

This is a scoping report which will seek to inform and direct further work and should be completed by the end of January. Our partners in the Arden Cluster welcome this work and are happy to work with us in developing further work, we have been grateful to our partners in WCC for their help and co-operation with the writing of this report.

- Access to Dentistry for those with Learning Disabilities, Improving the Patient Experience-

This report was commissioned after the Chief Dental Officers report identified this as possible gap in service; it has also been identified nationally as a priority. A majority of Learning Disabled patients undergo a general anaesthetic for dental treatment and we hope this report will help inform good practise to ensure that this ceases to be the norm. There has been considerable interest in this report nationally as it is an area where there has been very little research. This report will be completed at the end of February

- Young People and Health and Social Care

This report was commissioned as in Warwickshire LINK young people are very under represented as a group and we have no real evidence of how they feel about the health and social care they receive.

We have undertaken this work in partnership with our colleagues at WCC who are developing the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis to ensure that the findings from the report are a relevant part of the bigger picture. This report will be completed by the end of February.

## **Next Steps**

As this report is being written we have heard from DH that the timescales for Health watch to start has again been moved to April 2013, given this timescale LINK is now talking to partners to consider a work programme that will be most useful to all concerned.

We are working to develop community focussed 'hubs' to allow and encourage members to discuss issues around health and social care that is of concern or interest to them and to enable us to correctly reflect this in our future work.

We will be working in a focussed way to ensure that any projects we commission are also relevant to the work of our partners. We are still developing ideas and canvassing opinion but I am envisaging maybe one fairly substantial project and maybe two or three much smaller pieces of work. We will continue to work with partners to raise our profile and credibility and to develop a secure and robust legacy for Health watch.

Deb Saunders LINK Manager Jan 2012

## Summary Work Stream Warwickshire LINK Oct 2011

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	<b>Work Stream</b>	<b>Further Details</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
1	Gypsy and Traveller report	Commissioned ARC to deliver scoping report re issues around access to GP services and models of good practise to help inform NHS strategies and policies	Draft November 2011 Completed Dec 2011
2	Quality of Dental Provision: Improving the Experience for People with Learning Disabilities	Commission report with recommendations for models of good practise in dental provision	Commission Oct 2011 Draft Jan 2011 Completion Feb 2011
3	Giving Young People a Voice in Health and Social Care	Commissioned report into young peoples experience of health and social care and recommendations for good practise	Commission Oct 2011 Draft Jan 2011 Completion Feb 2011
4	Joint work with WCC Health and Social Care around mental and physical health and the procedures and practises that could be improved	Scope an aspect of this subject – jointly agreed and look for ways of working in partnership to deliver agreed outcomes.	Initial discussions Sept 2011 Proposal Nov 2011 Joint work commence Dec 2011
5	Barriers for BME communities in accessing cancer services	Joint piece of work with Coventry LINK and Arden Cancer Network funded via a bid to MacMillan Cancer support	On going – in discussion with LINK Coventry
6	Improve partnerships and joint working with a range of organisations	Attend a range of strategic meetings to raise the visibility and understanding of the work of LINK and it's movement to Health watch	ongoing
7	Increase the number of involved members	Develop a range of groups and initiatives across the county to engage and retain volunteers – Community Engagement Officer	Engagement officer in post Nov 2011 Engagement plan in place Dec 2011

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### Ongoing Existing LINK work

1	Quality Accounts	Follow up/comment on the work each trust has committed to in this years quality accounts – some joint with Coventry LINK	Jan – March 2011
2	NHS Changes	Monitoring developments with NHS Warwickshire and develop relationship with 5 Clinical Commissioning Groups	Ongoing
3	LINK Bulletin	Ensure the bulletin is written and disseminated to all members and partners	Ongoing
4	Marketing and Publicity	Ensure the website is up to date and accessible. Leaflet printed and ready for distribution. Promotional material designed and purchased	Ongoing
5	Database development	Ensure LINK database is current and reflects the membership.	Completed Feb 2011