

Derby LINK

Annual Report

01 April 2008 – 31 March 2009

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1. Introduction from Steve Studham – Chair of Management Committee

The first year of the Derby LINK has been an interesting exercise in how to build an organisation from nothing other than the goodwill of the members and the support staff. When we started there was no defined path to follow just a vision and a will to get on and do it.

The 'doing it' bit has taken the full year to achieve as it has been necessary to establish a constitution and viable working practices that are open and inclusive. The CVS have provided very valuable support in achieving this through their expertise in supporting fledgling voluntary groups in establishing themselves.

With this support the LINK has become a functioning body but one that is still establishing itself and identifying the best ways of participating and representing the needs of the people of Derby. Our resources are limited so the challenges will be to find appropriate ways to achieve this and have a positive effect on health and social care provision in Derby.

Finally, we would not have a LINK if it were not for the members who have freely given their time and energies to make it work and I thank them for this.

Steve Studham
Chair Management Committee

2. Introduction from Mark Blaney – Derby LINK Project Manager

At the end of the first year of the LINK project, I feel we can look back with pride on how much we have achieved and how well the project has developed in such a short space of time.

Although, like any new project, we experienced difficulties at times, these have not affected the positive progress we have made.

We were the first LINK in the region to hold formal meetings, agree our terms of reference and begin looking at issues. Our work in devising a scoring system to assess the impact of issues and developing a range of roles to allow as many people to volunteer with the project as possible was recognised by the NHS Centre for Involvement. We have been consulted by other LINKs from across the country on how we run our project and the involvement work of our volunteers.

We were the first LINK to officially launch and held a very successful event in October.

We have developed strong and effective working relationships with our statutory partners in the Health Service and Local Government, which have led to many opportunities for our volunteers and members of the community to have their say on the design, quality and commissioning of new services.

All this has been achieved through the hard work and commitment of our volunteers, supported by the LINK staff team.

With the introduction of the Personalisation Agenda, development of Dementia Services and the Health Service implementation of recommendations from the Darzi report, there will be many opportunities over the coming year for the people of Derby to work with LINK to continue to improve health and social care services.

3. What are LINKs?

LINKs are networks of local individuals, community groups, voluntary organisations and service providers that have been set up by the Government to give local people a say in how local Health and Social care services are designed and delivered.

They have been set up as a recommendation of the 2006 government white paper 'Our health, Our care, Our say' that said that patients and the public should have more choice and a louder voice in how the whole health and social care system works.

In Derby, the LINK is supported by Derby CVS. We currently have over 30 volunteers and thanks to our work with the voluntary sector we are able to gather opinion and contributions from hundreds of different organisations across the city.

What will LINKs do?

- Ask local people what they think of local health and social care;
- Look into specific issues of concern to the community and make recommendations to the people who run and plan those services;
- Ask for information about services and get information in a specified time;
- Refer issues to the local council overview and scrutiny committee if action is not being taken; and
- Carry out authorised visits to see how services are working.

4. What we have done:

Derby LINK work June 2008 to March 2009

Derby CVS were awarded the contract as host for the LINK on 1 April 2008. Following this, meetings were held of the interim LINK membership to begin to agree policies and working arrangements. More staff were appointed in June 2008, from this point the LINK were able to begin engagement work with the public, Primary Care Trust (PCT) and City Council. A summary of the work since June 2008 follows;

GP-Led Health Centre interviews

Two members were invited to sit on the patient's interview panel for the new GP-Led Health Centre providers.

Change of Providers for Dental and GP services

Members took part in information and discussion sessions for new Dental services providers and a change of GP at Littleover.

Maternity Services

Consultation into redesign of maternity services at Derbyshire Royal Infirmary. We were contacted five days before the end of the consultation period but still managed to speak to 25 groups either face to face or by telephone, to inform them of the consultation.

Mental Health Day Services

This review of Mental Health Day services actually began four years ago. We were contacted in October and distributed a summary of the consultation to our contact list as well as speaking to 12 specific Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups.

End of Life Care and Cancer Services

Volunteers were requested to sit on a steering group looking into End of Life services and we were able to offer four volunteers.

Premises assessment panel

Volunteers were requested to sit on a premises assessment panel looking at suitability of premises for accessibility and provision of service. We were able to provide a volunteer for this post.

Equality Impact Risk Assessment EIRA

LINK was invited to get involved with the PCT EIRA by providing representative for discussion groups. We were able to provide a volunteer and staff to take part in discussions.

Dementia services

We were given an initial invitation to take part in consultation around redevelopment of dementia services, research and discussion with members. Staff helped to facilitate the initial consultation event. Further focus group work with carers is planned for June 2009.

Dale Medical centre bidder information session

Volunteers were requested to take part in questioning session for potential providers of GP services at Dale Medical centre. We were able to provide three volunteers.

NHS Direct website design and content consultation

Derby LINK worked in partnership with NHS Direct to set up a panel to consult on changes and accessibility issues relating to the new NHS Direct website. We were able to provide six volunteers, which was very well received by NHS Direct.

Pharmacy control of entry panel

A volunteer was requested to sit on a panel assessing requests from new pharmacies to set up business in an area. We were able to provide that volunteer.

Transfer of Diabetes Services from an acute to a primary setting

The LINK Action committee requested information from Derby Hospitals Trust regarding plans for provision of diabetes care, following the move to the new Derby Royal Hospital site. This was followed up with meetings with service providers and further letters. The issue is still being investigated by members, who will do a patient satisfaction survey.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSC)

We have developed excellent relationships with our local Overview and Scrutiny Commission (OSC). We present a quarterly update to the Health OSC, where we are able to answer any queries members may have. We have agreed a policy for working together and sharing information which has worked well over the past year.

In December 2008, the LINK manager and OSC officer attended a consultation event in Leicester aimed at developing ways of improving communication between OSC, LINKs and the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

Derby LINK has yet to refer an issue to the Health OSC but would feel confident of receiving the full backing of the members should we do so.

Formal requests

Our formal requests for information from service providers have been limited to our work on diabetes services from the Acute Hospitals Trust. We have made three requests to the Director of Service Development regarding how the service will look once the Jenny O'Neil clinic moves to the new Derby Royal hospital site and more care is delivered in community settings.

Two of these requests were not acknowledged within the 20 day period suggested in LINK guidance. This is something we have discussed with the services providers and have agreed policies for ensuring all future requests are dealt with promptly.

All three requests did receive replies which contained useful and relevant information and led to us to look into the issue further.

5. Committee Members and Authorised Representatives

Committee members

Of our 60 active members, 14 currently sit as committee members discussing and identifying issues, agreeing policies and setting out how the project develops. Issues are identified from public consultation, working with service providers and members own experiences. All scrutiny issues are judged using a scoring system designed to quantify need and impact. Our committee members are:

Steve Studham
Kulvinder Kang
Dionne Reid
Carol Burns
Beverley Martin
Arthur Germany
Wendy Locke
Patsy Campbell
Ciselyn Alexander
Margot Keats
Nancy Pountain
Michael Tristram
Trevor Ford
Christine Thorne

Enter and view – authorised representatives

As of 31 March 2009, Derby LINK had not selected any authorised representatives to carry out Enter and View visits. As part of our selection process we agreed that authorised representatives must satisfactorily complete Derby LINK Enter and View training. This will be held from late April 2009 onwards. A list of members will then be added to our website www.derbylink.org.uk and will be available on request from the LINK staff team. This is in line with guidance from the NHS Centre for Involvement;

“The LINK must make publicly available a comprehensive and up to date list of all of its authorised representatives.”

Derby LINK procedure for selecting authorised representatives will be as follows:

- Members must have completed the Derby LINK Induction training;
- Members must have signed and agree to abide by, all Derby LINK policies;
- Nomination for authorised representative membership must be agreed by the Action Committee; and

- Members must have satisfactorily completed the Derby LINK, Enter and View training.

Members who meet these criteria will be invited to complete a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. Upon satisfactory receipt of this, members will be accepted as authorised representatives.

6. Financial report

LINKs Project

BUDGET 2008-09

Cost Centre: LNK

Dept Code: LK1

Budget Heading:	2008/2009 Total Budget	Actual spend: Qtr1 April - June 2008	Actual spend: Qtr2: July - Sept 2008	Actual spend: Qtr 3 Oct - Dec 2008	Actual spend: Qtr 4 Jan- Mar 2009	Total Spend	12 Month Under/ (Over) spend
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
STAFFING COSTS:	81,106	19,058	20,988	20,690	20,388	81,124	-18
OVERHEADS	15,660	3,026	4,191	5,375	4,051	16,643	-983
MANAGEMENT,SUPERVIS.& TRAINING	11,326	2,505	2,754	3,513	2,554	11,326	0
COMMUNICATIONS COSTS	13,000	640	671	1,936	8,848	12,095	905
PARTICIPANTS EXPENSES	3,500	139	616	1,255	1,514	3,524	-24
OTHER Start -Up costs :Recruitment	2,000	1,596	180	0	0	1,776	224
Capital Costs- Equipment	3,000	3,103	0	0	0	3,103	-103
TOTAL Other Costs	48,486	11,009	8,412	12,079	16,967	48,467	19
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	129,592	30,067	29,400	32,769	37,355	129,591	1
Total Project Spend to date:		30,067	59,467	92,236	129,591		

7. How can you get involved?

LINKs are designed to be as open and accessible as possible; therefore we have developed a range of ways of participating to ensure everyone can get involved.

You could be a:

Committee Member - attending meetings and taking a full part in Derby LINK's activities;

Researcher – finding information about issues raised, consulting with your community and informing the Derby LINK of your findings;

Ambassador – meeting with service providers and acting as a point of contact for LINK members, representing the views of the LINK when asked to do so; or

Member – receiving information from Derby LINK about current issues and letting us know your thoughts and playing a more active role if you wish.

LINK has recruited more than 60 active members in the past year along with a further 360 groups and individuals who have agreed to receive information from us and comment on any consultation we are asked to take part in.

8. Contact us

For more information about the work of Derby LINK, to request a membership pack or let us know about an issue you would like us to look into, please contact us at;

Derby LINK
4 Charnwood Street
Derby
DE1 2GT

Tel: 01332 346266

Email: admin@derbylink.org.uk

www.derbylink.org.uk