

DONCASTER LINK
ANNUAL GENERAL REPORT
31st March 2009 – 1st April 2010

Doncaster
Local Involvement Network

1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010

Address: Doncaster LINK
Doncaster Business Innovation
Unit 20
Ten Pound Walk
Doncaster
DN4 5QA

Tel: 01302 554970

Email: doncaster.admin@carersfederation.co.uk

Website: www.doncasterlink.co.uk

Hosted by: Carers Federation Ltd

CONTENTS

Introductions (Sheila Barnes – Chair)	Page 1
Doncaster LINK Executive Board Members	Page 2
Elections	Page 3
LINK Representatives in Other Organisations	Page 3
Wider Membership	Page 4
Communications and Engagement Sub Group	Page 4
Working in Partnership	Page 5
Hospital Discharge and After Care Sub Group	Page 5
GP Access Sub Group	Page 6
Training	Page 6
Cross Boundary Networking	Page 7
360° Evaluation of Host Performance	Page 7
Budget	Page 8
Future Plans	Page 8
- ICE Group	Page 8
- Care Quality Commission	Page 8
- Chiropody	Page 8
- Pharmacy	Page 8
- Ambulance Services	Page 9
Acknowledgements	Page 9

Introduction

The main task of Doncaster **L**ocal **I**nvolvement **N**etwork is to provide a channel of communication between the general public and the commissioners and providers of health and social care services and to make recommendations in order to influence improvements to service provision for the benefit of all.

During the past year Doncaster LINK members have been actively involved in engaging with the public in order to raise awareness of the LINK and its role in gathering public opinion about services provided. This has been achieved by participation in many public events such as gala days and road shows, especially during the summer months.

We have also worked with partner agencies, Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and NHS Doncaster in public events and particularly at an event, specifically to highlight carers' concerns, which was held at the Civic Theatre in October.

Since October 2009, LINK coffee mornings have been held regularly in neighbourhood venues throughout the borough.

The work of the GP Access and Hospital Discharge sub groups has now been completed and the reports are almost ready for publication.

A series of training sessions have been held to assist LINK members in their role.

Liaisons have been established with other LINKs in Yorkshire, the Humber region and Nottinghamshire.

This is not an exhaustive account, more detail will be found in the body of the report.

Members of Doncaster LINK have been well supported in all the work by the Host organisation, Carers Federation, especially by our local team, Jayne, Richard, Jan and now Donna.

Quite a lot of work has been done this year but there is a great deal more to do.

Doncaster LINK Executive Board Members



Sheila Barnes
(Chair)



Debbie Osborne
(Vice Chair)



Glyn Jones



Jackie Lewis



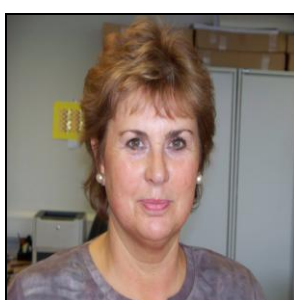
Joanne Kelsall



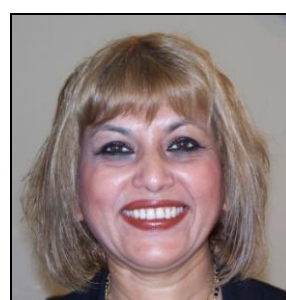
John Burke



Dennis Shaw



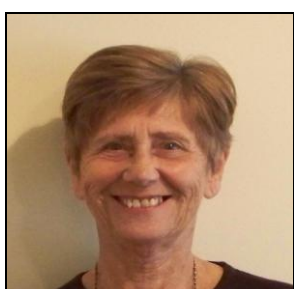
Kay Kirk



Ninda Randhawa



Paul Morton



Rita Holdsworth



Joyce Parrott

2010 Election

In February 2010 an election was held by postal vote for two places on the Doncaster LINK Executive Board. There were five nominees in total. The votes were opened and counted at the Executive Board meeting held on February 16th 2010. The results were:

- John Plant 27
- Kay Kirk 25
- Ronald Hughes 9
- Dennis Shaw 7
- Janet Turner 6

John Plant and Kay Kirk were duly elected onto the Executive Board.

LINK Representatives in Other Organisations

LINK has representation in other organisations in the health and social care field:

- DMBC Overview and Scrutiny Panel – Jackie Lewis
- Doncaster & Bassetlaw Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust – John Plant/Dennis Shaw Governors
- Rotherham Doncaster & South Humber Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust – Sheila Barnes/Paul Morton Governors
- NHS Doncaster – Joyce Parrott
- North Trent Network of Cardiac Care – John Plant/Paul Morton
- DIAL – John Burke
- Doncaster Race Equalities Steering Group – Ninda Randhawa
- Doncaster Partnership for Carers – Debbie Osborne
- Doncaster Care-4-Carers – Sheila Barnes
- Doncaster MIND – Jackie Lewis
- Doncaster CVS – Joanne Kelsall
- Doncaster Women's Centre – Ninda Randhawa
- SYCIL – Glyn Jones

These links enable effective communication between the LINK, other agencies and the public.

Wider Membership

The LINK is an independent group consisting of both individual and organisational representation with various health and social care interests from the Doncaster Metropolitan Borough area.

The current representation is from:

- Mental Health
- Voluntary Sector
- Older Peoples Parliament
- Disability Groups (Physical and Sensory)
- Black and Minority Ethnic Groups
- Social Care Advisory Groups
- Statutory Organisations
- Young People
- Community Groups

In the last year the LINK has managed to recruit a total of 100 new members.

Communications and Engagement Sub Group

As Doncaster LINK evolved it became apparent the Communications and Engagement Group needed to be reformed into a smaller group. All members were invited to become part of the new group by way of a selection process and 6 were selected to form the new smaller group whose names are as follows:

- Dorothy Head
- Mary Jones
- Deirdre Coward
- Eileen Wimbury
- Kay Kirk
- Nigel Sherburn

The first meeting took place on 26th October 2009 at which time Kay Kirk was elected Chair and Dorothy Head as Vice Chair. During the meeting it was agreed by all the group would be renamed Information Communications and Engagement Group (ICE Group).

The remit of the group is to:

- Engage with the public to gather issues/concerns/comments/suggestions about health and social care
- Raise the profile of the LINK
- Liaise with partner agencies
- Increase Membership
- Increase Members' Active Involvement
- Design LINK Merchandise/Literature

Working in Partnership

Partnership working is essential in order to achieve the benefits of high quality service provision in health and social care that meets the needs of all users and potential users of those groups.

To this aim, Doncaster LINK has been pro-active in working with the Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and NHS Doncaster at several events and initiatives:

- Health Event Day in Bentley
- Equalities in Human Rights Event at the Doncaster Racecourse
- Carers' Event at the Civic Theatre in October 2009
- Health Roadshows in Askern and Highfields
- DMBC Learning Disabilities Strategy
- Unscheduled Care Event at the Doncaster Racecourse
- Information Sharing Event at Thorne/Moorends
- Tenants and Residents Association Annual Event at the Doncaster Racecourse

Hospital Discharge and After Care Sub Group

The Discharge sub group continued to meet throughout 2009. Background information was received with opinions and assistance from many health and social care managers and practitioners who co-operated fully with the LINK.

A questionnaire was devised by the sub group with reference to communication, medicine, transport and after care.

The target group was intended to include any person who had been an inpatient of Doncaster Royal Infirmary during 2009 and who had received after care in the community. The questionnaire was placed on the Doncaster LINK website and circulated to service user groups. In addition, patients were interviewed personally by group members. A total of 108 (12½%) survey questionnaires were returned and the findings have been collated. A report will be completed in April 2010 and the findings will be made public.

GP Access Sub Group

Resulting from many expressions of concern raised by the public during the community engagement activities of Doncaster LINK in 2008/2009, work on conducting a fact finding investigation into this topic began in March 2009.

The work was carried out by members of the LINK sub group and has been completed during the past year. This involved making enquiries from NHS Doncaster, local GP Practices and members of the public. Initially members of the working group consulted with patients, using a questionnaire in face-to-face interviews, however, it soon became evident that it would take a long time to achieve a viable survey sample in this way. Therefore, it was agreed by the LINK Executive Board that the services of a professional survey firm should be engaged and the task was completed within one month.

The final report of the survey has now been produced and will be ready for publication in April 2010.

Training

In June 2009 the Host set up a training programme that all members of the LINK were invited to attend. The training plan consisted of the following modules:

- 03/06/09 – Volunteering
- 17/06/09 – Effective Volunteering
- 24/06/09 – Communication Skills
- 01/07/09 – Diversity Community and Culture 1
- 08/07/09 – Diversity Community and Culture 2
- 15/07/09 – Working as a Team
- 29/07/09 – Running Effective Meetings
- 05/08/09 – Report Writing
- 12/08/09 – Presentation Skills

Due to the positive feedback from volunteers who attended the training it was agreed the programme would run again from January 2010 to October 2010 and is open to all members of the LINK.

Enter and View

The Doncaster LINK Training Officer (John Burke) and Vice Chair (Debbie Osborne) completed training for enter and view in June 2009. The training was then rolled out to selected enter and view representatives. A further training session has been arranged for May 2010 along with refresher training to all representatives who completed the original programme.

Cross Boundary Networking

Members of Doncaster LINK have been able to establish effective liaisons with other Local Involvement Networks.

Doncaster LINK hosted a visit from members of Barnsley LINK and their Host in July 2009 to share information about how the LINK operates.

A joint visit took place with Rotherham LINK to Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber Mental Health NHS Foundation for a service information presentation in August 2009.

Representation with other LINK's in the Yorks and Humber region on the Regional Patient Safety Committee with meetings taking place every 2 months the first of which was held in January 2010.

Attendance at a Regional LINK Event organised by North Yorks LINK and Yorkshire Ambulance Service where it was agreed that Regional LINK meetings should be held regularly.

Our Host team (Carers Federation) has also networked with other LINK Hosts to share information.

360° Evaluation of Host Performance

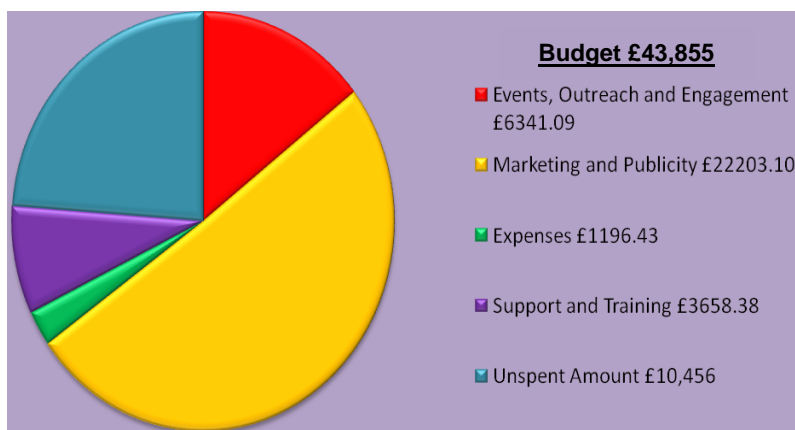
In order to assess the performance of the Host organisation (Carers Federation) the Contract Manager from Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, John Leask, issued 360° Host Evaluation forms to the following LINK members:

- Executive Board Members
- Sub Group Members
- Statutory Organisation Members
- Local Organisation Members
- Wider LINK Members

The Contract Manager informed the Executive Board the assessments had been extremely positive showing how well the LINK is served by the Host team and how satisfied members are with the level of support given, which in itself is imperative for the success of the LINK.

Budget

Doncaster LINK was allocated a budget of £43,855 for period 2009/2010. The budget was used in the following areas:



Future Plans

Information Communications and Engagement Group

During the next year the ICE Group intends to continue to increase membership, raise the profile of the LINK and identify matters relating to health and social care in the Doncaster Metropolitan Borough areas with a view to improving services.

Care Quality Commission

Doncaster LINK members are to be involved in the monitoring of residential care services throughout the borough.

Chiropody

LINK members attended an Information Sharing event on 28th January 2010 at Moorends Miners Welfare and Development Centre. During the event a number of people voiced their concerns about difficulties in accessing a chiropodist in their community. The ICE Group presented the information to the Executive Board on 16th February 2010 whereupon the Board agreed to the formation of a new sub group to look into concerns around Chiropody in Thorne/Moorends.

Pharmacy

The LINK is to be represented on the Pharmacy Needs Assessment Stakeholder Steering Group by Executive Board member Rita Holdsworth.

Ambulance Services

Following discussions at a regional LINKs event about various aspects of ambulance services, consideration is to be given with a view to undertaking a survey of ambulance activity at the local Accident and Emergency Department.

Acknowledgements

The Executive Board would like to thank all LINK volunteers, the Host team (Carers Federation) and all local agencies for their assistance during the last year and look forward to working together in the year ahead.