

July -September

Oldham

LINK

Oldham LINK

MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Local Involvement Network

Newsletter Issue 4

“Get involved, shape the future and make friends”



Dementia Discussions



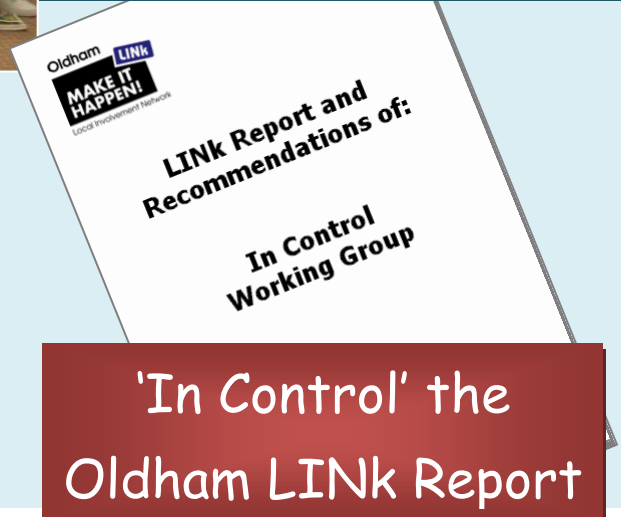
Accessibility of Dental Practices the Oldham LINK Report



Oldham Standing Conference



Working in Your Group



'In Control' the Oldham LINK Report

GADDUM CENTRE

Welcome from the Host Team

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Oldham LINK Newsletter

The Oldham LINK is an independent network bringing together local people, organisations and groups who want to improve health and social care services in the borough.

The LINK will give you the chance to say what you think and should represent the whole community and everyone can be involved, as little or as much as you like.

You can be involved by one of the Host Team coming to meet you or your group, by completing surveys, coming along to events or by becoming an active member that would contribute to working groups on specific issues.

Your ideas will start to influence changes to services used either by yourself, your family and friends so that they change for the better.

You will also be able to find out what has happened as a result of your involvement.

The LINK is able to bring about real change. The more people that get involved the stronger and more influential the LINK becomes.

If you feel there is an issue that the LINK should be prioritising, please let us know.



Left-right: Jade Czuba (Administrator) Ursula Hussain (Oldham LINK Manager) Laura Chidgey (Development Worker)

Oldham LINK Host Team

Working in Your Group Training

Working in Your Group Training

Friday 21st may 2010

The LINK Host team is committed to creating opportunities for members to develop their skills. Since the New Year the Development Worker has organised a training schedule which began in March. The second instalment in this training programme was the 'Working in your Group' training. It was a 1 day course and saw members participate in workshops to illustrate the importance of addressing the needs of the group, in order to effectively complete tasks. The external trainers brought interesting concepts that provided insight into the dynamics of a working group and the implications of not fulfilling individual and group needs. These should be met in order to form a cohesive and effective group. This is highly important within the LINK as many people do not know each other and only convene when a particular piece of work interests them.



The training highlighted the effects of certain behavioural traits such as nurturing, energising and relaxing that determine the type of role a person will play in the group. A group made up of people possessing a variety of these traits will most likely lead to people feeling valued, secure, and remain focused and productive.



In addition the art of note taking was covered, the importance of producing reports relevant to the audience and, the most popular topic, which project planning advice.

The day was a huge success with very positive feedback.

The host team is looking forward to observing how the training assists LINK members in effectively forming and working in groups.

If you are interested in joining the LINK to take full advantage of future training opportunities please get in touch, anyone is welcome to attend. **Contact details are on the back of the Newsletter.**

Oldham Standing Conference

Oldham Standing Conference 7th May 2010

The main aim of the Standing Conference is to capture the views of those people affected by mental health issues and the current service provision within Oldham. The Conference is hosted by ourselves Oldham LINK and supported by Tameside, Oldham & Glossop Mind. It promotes constructive scrutiny of services and the identification of gaps as well as good practice.

Over the past months the conference has evolved, by listening to the feedback of the attendees the Oldham LINK have tailored the Conference to suit the needs of the service users, carers and the public. This has led to the borough's first themed Conference focusing on Dementia. Additionally professionals have been invited to attend and the promotion of relevant services was available throughout the day.

General Issues

One of the main general issue arising from the day revolved around the end of transportation to day care provision in the borough, people felt that consequently if the service was not reinstated then the diminishing number of people then attending day services would lead to services ceasing to exist. It was said that many people rely on day care to be socially active.



One of the groups at the Conference discusses the issues surrounding long-term management & treatment for those with dementia.



A lady speaks of her own experience of dementia in its early stages

Rock Street Centre Resolutions

Some issues were raised from the conferences. One of the main issues from February's event regarded Rock Street Resource Centre and the confusion regarding service change following changes in the management structure. The LINK worked with the staff and service users to help resolve this and has lead to the manager agreeing to make information more freely accessible to prevent future confusion, as most of the changes were down to health & safety issues and staff changes.

Supported by



For better
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Dementia Themed Afternoon



Left: Alison Bradbury brings the realities of dementia to the forefront of people's minds from a personal perspective

Right: Attendees get involved with shaping the future of Oldham's health and social care services by sharing their ideas and experience of dementia



Dementia Afternoon

The first themed Conference focused on Dementia issues in the second half of the day. This allowed for a diverse range of people to get involved in discussions. The workshops reflected techniques commissioners use when deciding on service changes to be made and the timescales they should be completed within. This will enable commissioners to view the expectations of people who took part and can be incorporated into the planning and design of future services. However, the exercise was hard to execute as the background details of the service reform was unknown (such as costs & time). This led to a utopian approach to planning the changes and will now give decision makers a true view of the expectations purely based on need which is what the Conference aims to emphasise.

The key issues to arise from these dementia workshops included:

1. There is a lack of intermediary care for people when integrating back into society after leaving an institution; people felt that once people left a hospital they were on their own.
2. There is lack of specialist knowledge amongst GPs' knowledge around mental health in general as well as dementia issues. One of the main issues was the delay in diagnosis and signposting.
3. There is a lack of knowledge about dementia in the wider community, some people merely see it as a foregone conclusion to getting old and therefore do not seek treatment. This was mainly seen as a need to publicise the illness, the signs and the procedures to receive an early diagnosis.

Local Implementation Team (LIT) Elections

LIT Election Results

May 2010

The Local Implementation Team is vital in the structure of service reform using a bottom-up approach it allows service users, carers and the public to represent people with similar issues. Due to the popularity of the Standing Conference as a mechanism to collect views of these groups of people, the LINK & attendees found it useful to have people that represented service users, carers and the public at the LIT meetings so they could raise issues following the Conference. In a bid to ensure the elected representatives were fairly appointed a ballot was sent to all members of the Oldham LINK and beyond. The results are as follows:

Carers: Miranda Deblasio & Diana Davies

The main aim of this representative will be to advocate for those who care for people with mental health problems and to highlight the implications of full-time caring on carers' health.

Service Users: Paul Birkbeck & Rowland Urey

These representatives will attend the LIT with a service user perspective and create insight into the issues brought forward by those at the Conference and elsewhere.

Public: Enid Firth & Philip William Bagley

These representatives will ensure the views of the general public will also be taken into account at LIT meetings.

The responsibilities of LIT Representatives

Key decisions should represent a range of stakeholder opinions in order to help services reflect the needs of the wider population and not just current service users.

The LIT Representatives' responsibilities include attending 3 LIT meetings a year. Training will be provided to build on the representatives' own knowledge and experience to truly hone in on the skills they possess. This will enable them to provide the LIT with invaluable insight from all stakeholders, in a manner which will be well received in a view to build strong relationships to encourage positive change.



Miranda Deblasio



Diana Davies



Rowland Urey

Oldham

LINK

**MAKE IT
HAPPEN!**

Local Involvement Network



For better
mental health

Oldham Standing Conference Mental Health

September 2010

Date to be Confirmed

Link Centre, Union Street, Oldham, OL1 1DZ

10am-3.30pm

Call 0161 622 5700 or email in August to find out more

**Public, service users and carers voice your
opinions about**

Early Intervention, Diagnosis & Support when mental health deteriorates

To book your place, contact the Oldham LINK Host Team on 0161 622 5700,

e-mail info@oldhamlink.org.uk or mail FREEPOST OMB LINK

Disability Discrimination Act

Accessibility to Dental Practices

The Accessibility of Dental Practices in Oldham was highlighted to be an area of health care the LINK should look at in the Oldham LINK was launched. The research was conducted with a view of identifying problems disabled people faced when attending a dental practice, and those practices not compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. This enabled the LINK to make recommendations based on the remit of the Act which is to make low cost, high priority improvements to practices if necessary.

Aim

The aim of the DDA Accessibility of Dental Practices Working Group was to establish if the issue of physical accessibility to NHS dental practices was still present in Oldham.

Objectives

The LINK Working Group intended to go about this by:

- Looking at how accessible dental practices are for disabled people
- Conducting a survey of people with disabilities and their carers to gather accurate information on this
- Consider whether the 8 out of 32 accessible practices in Oldham already low cost, high priority compliant, do indeed meet the needs of disabled patients
- Develop a number of recommendations to improve the situation

Research method

The LINK host team piloted the questionnaire using a smaller group of people. Then the final questionnaire was sent to approximately 83,000 households via the Oldham Advertiser, as well as to groups within the LINK membership.



The questions included:

1. Do you have a dentist?
2. If so, is it an NHS or private dental practice?
3. Do you have a disability? If so please give details
4. Have you seen your dentist in the past 12 months?
5. And; have you any other comments

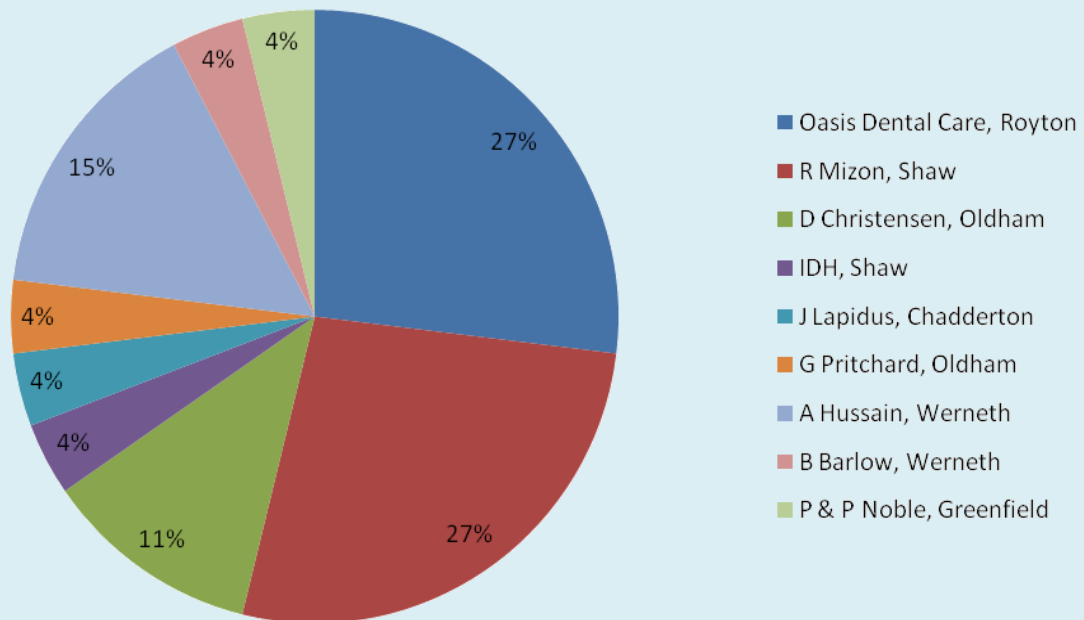
Results

The results directly related to the purpose of the research underlined that the accessibility to dental practices for people with disabilities was not a wide scale concern within the borough. However, there were a few accessibility issues highlighted regarding a minority of practices which included them having steps up to and narrow entrances, heavy doors, and treatment rooms that were located up steep staircases.

In addition some people highlighted it was difficult to identify a dental practice which was accessible when registering, as the information was inadequate.

In Dental Practices in Oldham

Survey comments relating to DDA Accessibility



The above chart identifies the main dental practices that people noted as being difficult to access

Recommendations made by Oldham LINK to NHS Oldham

- NHS Oldham to reassess/undertake visits to ascertain if the accessibility issues highlighted in this report can be rectified.
- NHS Oldham to consider how current compliant practices can prioritise disabled patients. The group would also suggest that information about accessibility should be kept on the overall dental practice list, so that in the first instance disabled patients are signposted to a dental practice that can meet their individual needs.
- Awareness should be raised and better information provided with regards to how the residents of Oldham can find out which dental practices are currently accepting new NHS patients – information needs to be made available about this in a variety of formats.
- In particular, NHS Oldham responds to the Oldham LINK about how homeless people are able to access dental treatment in Oldham.
- In particular, NHS Oldham responds to the Oldham LINK about whether or not there is a home visiting service available in Oldham for those people that are housebound.
- NHS Oldham sets a realistic timescale for achieving DDA compliance and considers whether these practices have met their contractual obligations as detailed in the NHS General Dental Services

In Control Report

The LINK host team supported LINK members to convene a group focusing on the newly established In Control initiative piloted by Oldham Council. This pilot has now been incorporated borough wide and will be the mechanism for people to take control of their own social care budget, called an Individual Budget. However, there have been some difficulties facing people and carers affected by these changes and this is what the LINK has addressed and consequently made recommendations to the Local Authority (LA) to suggest small changes that will hopefully make a big difference.

Aim

To look at some of the practical difficulties of using In Control, in particular for older people and for people with learning disabilities and their carers.

Objectives

Convene a LINK Working Group of varied membership to determine what the specific issues were

Conduct consultation with service users and their carers to gain robust evidence

Liaise with relevant statutory agencies to gain information and clarity on the criteria of funding streams accessed as part on an Individual budget

Develop a set of recommendations for consideration by Oldham MBC and others where relevant.

Research method

The LINK host team supported the In Control groups. The groups were then involved in an immense amount of information gathering. The information was sought by:

- Inviting professionals to answer questions
- Research existing information already available
- Sharing information in the group as some members had personal experiences of Individual Budgets



In Control is a social enterprise set up to implement the Individual Budget initiative throughout the country



Making choice real for disabled people

The Independent Living Fund is a governmental organisation which provides people with severe disabilities from 16-65 with extra funding to pay for their personal care needs.

Results

- Not enough appropriately trained Personal Assistants (PA's)
- Incompatibility with the Independent Living Fund (ILF), which many In Control customers must access as part of their Individual Budget (IB).
- Lack of emergency provision (in the event of PA absence etc)
- Unavailability of services to purchase within the borough
- Need for more regular reviews, rather than just annually, as a means of providing support
- Lack of information available (the little that is provided is out of date)
- Results of appeals should be given in writing
- Confusion amongst professionals (training needed for professionals) – many service users and carers are being given incorrect information
- Parent carers often having to take on the responsibility of IB in the case of users with learning disabilities.

Final Report

Recommendations to the LA

- The Local Authority website and Fact Sheets need to be updated, as information relating to Individual Budgets dates back to 2007 and is very limited – this now appears to be happening but it is proposed that a review process is put into place with regards to communications. A suggested timescale for this would be 6 monthly.
- There appears to be a need for a ‘guide’ booklet/information pack for service users and carers in relation to managing an individual budget e.g. employer’s liabilities, insurance requirements, training, provider list etc. It has become clear that this would be an extremely useful resource.
- At present Brokerage Services are not required to hold any kind of registration/licence to set up a business in this field. People in Oldham feel that there should be a system place to ensure Brokers are practising legitimately.
- Incompatibility with the Independent Living Fund (ILF), which many In Control customers must access as part of their Individual Budget (IB). ILF is also not available for people 65 year of age or over.
 - Unavailability of services to purchase within the borough.
 - Need for more regular reviews, rather than just annually, as a means of providing support – some people have told us that sometimes this hasn’t happened on an annual basis.
- There is no formal appeals process but results of panel decisions around reviewing indicative amounts should be given to service users/carers in writing.
- Confusion amongst professionals (training needed for professionals) – many service users and carers are being given inaccurate information. There needs to be a consistent message going out to both service users and carers.



Oldham
Council

Adult Services,

People, Communities & Society

The Adult Services, People, Communities & Society Department within Oldham Council, is the department which social workers work. They work closely with a lot of people with disabilities the department endeavours to provide care to people when it is needed, whether it is short-term help of long term help for those who are permanently disabled.

The main aim of the department is to either meet the needs of people in a social care setting, or signpost them to the correct place to access thus services.

This is the department responsible for implementing the In Control initiative and so the report has been sent to the interim Executive Director of the service, Sheelagh Connolly.

What happens next?

The LINK has sent the report to the appropriate Local Authority department to inform them of the problems associated with In Control and the suggestions for improvement & awaits a response.

Where can you view the full report?

You can view the full report at www.oldhamlink.org.uk (search for: in control report) or request a copy by telephone, email or post (see back for contact details).

Summary Care Records

Who
Sees
What?

The Electronic Patient Records system (EPRs) could possibly transform the relationship between patients and the NHS and to potentially deliver improvements regarding information availability between different Trusts and departments within the NHS.

However, since the consultation Oldham LINK Host Team held earlier this year, the LINK has been informed of a halt to the Summary Care Records (a synopsis EPR) programme which was rolled out to 4 GP practices in Oldham as an initial pilot (Phase 1).

The second phase of the scheme is on hold until further guidance has been issued from Government. Letters to patients of GP practices in phase 2 (which were to be contacted at the end of this month) are on hold and will not be sent out until further guidance is received.

The initial purpose of Summary Care Records was to contain basic information like prescriptions and allergies, potentially they could have been useful in emergencies and when patients were being treated by professionals other than their regular GP or consultant. However, there were issues highlighted surrounding privacy & the scale of the proposed changes.

However, the main reason the initiative has been postponed is due to Governmental change and the White Paper regarding Electronic Patient Records will be disclosed on the 5th July 2010.

For more information visit: www.nhscarerecords.nhs.uk

Contact Details

If you require this newsletter in another format, would like us to include an article, or want to know more about the LINK please contact us with the details below

Contacts: Manager, Ursula Hussain: Development Worker, Laura Chidgey or Administrator Jade Czuba

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