

Oldham LINK

Newsletter

FREE!

“Have your say for a stronger LINK to health and social care”



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Welcome from the Host Team

Welcome to the first edition of the Oldham LINK Magazine.

Firstly, we would like to say a huge big 'thank you' to all members of the LINK for their dedication and enthusiasm, especially those involved in the early stages of establishing the LINK and setting the structures and processes needed to move forward. Without your involvement the LINK would not exist!

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. Everyone can be involved, as little or as much as you would like.

You can be involved by one of the Host Support Team coming to see 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 making a priority, please let us know.

Oldham LINK Host Team



***(From left) Jade Czuba – Administrator,
Ursula Hussain – Manager,
Laura Chidgey – Development Worker***

What are LINKs?

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) are funded by the Department of Health. Each local authority (that provides social services) has been given funding and is under a legal duty to make contractual arrangements that enable LINK activities to take place.



Run by local individuals and groups and independently supported - the role of LINKs is to find out what people want, monitor local services and to use their powers to hold them to account.

Sometimes the people who use services don't feel they have a strong enough voice to change aspects of their health or social care. The introduction of LINKs is part of a wider process to help the community have a stronger local voice.

Your views, experiences and suggestions will make a difference. You can:

- tell us what is working well and what is not
- check how services are planned and run
- identify gaps in services
- influence those who make decisions about new or existing services
- suggest ideas to improve services
- feedback to the people who are responsible for providing and delivering health and social care services
- raise the concerns of local people
- influence those who make decisions about new or existing services



The LINK has been given certain powers that can help make things happen. It can:

- make recommendations and request information from services and expect a response within a set amount of time
- refer matters to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee when action is not being taken and get a response
- it can enter specific health and social care services and view the care provided to improve services

The Story So Far...

Gaddum Centre was appointed as the Host Organisation responsible for the establishment/support of the Oldham LINK on 1st April 2008. An Advisory Group and Governance Sub-Group were formed to develop and agree the governance framework and begin setting the LINK structure. The LINK was formally launched in September 2008 at an event at the Link Centre, Oldham.



The LINK Transitionary Board agreed its initial priorities and set their work plan; following this four working groups were convened to address these issues. During this time the Host team were busy mapping the local area to establish what was going on in the borough and building relationships with key stakeholders.

Since then the Oldham LINK has worked with members to address local issues and is working with its newly elected governors to ensure the LINK can proceed.



Please help us to keep our costs down

Oldham LINK magazine is a vital way for us to communicate with our members and the wider community. However, the production and distribution of the magazine will be ever increasing as our database continues to grow.

If you are able and would like to receive this magazine by email, please let us know, as this will save on both printing and postage costs.

Many thanks!

Members Stories



Peter Bennett, LINK Governor – Mental Health (Individual)

“I have been involved with the Oldham LINK since the Host was appointed and have been a very active member. I was previously part of the Patient and Public Involvement in Health (PPIH) Forum for Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust which is the predecessor of LINKs. I have developed and delivered Induction Training for new LINK members with the Host Team and have been a member of the temporary Governance Group so that the LINK could begin its work. I was Chair for two years at Tameside & Glossop MIND (now Tameside, Oldham and Glossop MIND) and am actively involved with Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust as an Elected Member Councillor. As a past user of mental health services, this has given me a passion to bring about real changes.



Fozia Amin, LINK Governor – Mental Health (Organisation)

“MIND has been actively involved with the LINK since the very beginning. The organisation was a member of the LINK Advisory Group and as such has been integral to the LINKs establishment. MIND is a key voluntary organisation working in the field of mental health and is well placed to collate people’s experiences and present them to the LINK”.



Paul Benedek, LINK Governor - Adults & Older People (Individual)

“I worked with Oldham Council to appoint the LINK Host Organisation, and worked as part of the early LINK Advisory Group to develop the LINK Governance arrangements and have also been a member of the temporary Governance Group. I was a Registered General Nurse for many years until I became disabled. I was previously part of the Patient and Public Involvement in Health (PPIH) Forum for Oldham Primary Care Trust which is the predecessor of LINKs and before that a member of the Community Health Council”.

Each edition we will include more members stories, if you are a member of the LINK and would like to include your story /profile please contact the Oldham LINK Host Team on 0161 622 5700.

LINK Activities



Member Development Day Thursday 23rd July 2009

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) from the Greater Manchester area held a joint Member Development Day on Thursday 23rd July. LINK members from Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport, Bolton, Bury, and Tameside were invited to take part in an event to help identify the training needs of LINK members in relation to aligning members' capabilities with those needed to achieve the aims of the LINK. This was a great success, we hope the report will highlight important training needs so the host team can ensure LINK members are well supported and can achieve their goals. This will enable the Work Plan to be enlarged, members to have more autonomy when facilitating Working Groups and more people to be involved with the Oldham LINK.

The day was facilitated by Cath Broderick, who has a background of working in the NHS and in community development. The event also gave members an opportunity to meet members from other areas and share ideas and experiences.



Community Road Show @ The Spindles Shopping Centre 3rd – 9th August 2009

In August Oldham LINK was on the big screen in the Spindles Shopping Centre! A big thank you to everyone who took the time to sign up and become either a member or participant. We are currently in the process of getting touch with people who took part.

LINK Activities

The Oldham LINK currently has three active working groups; we will keep you up to date with the groups' developments. If you would like to get involved with any of the LINKs working groups please get in contact with the Oldham LINK Host Team on 0161 622 5700.

Dental Practices' Accessibility under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) Working Group

The Working Group began by revisiting the PCT's Dentistry Action Plan agreed at the end of the Patient and Public Involvement in Health (PPIH) Forum. This Action Plan was based upon the recommendations of the Stainton Access Report 2003, to implement low cost high priority recommendations to dental practices, as stated in Clause 65a of NHS Oldham's Standard General Dental Services Contract. The Group engaged with the NHS Oldham's Dental Practice Advisor to look at the Trust's progress and found that the Action Plan had not been formally implemented.

A survey has since been distributed to over 83,000 households in Oldham as an insert in the Oldham Advertiser newspaper to ascertain the extent of the issue of disability access in NHS contracted dental practices. The group have now produced a report of their findings and a series of recommendations for NHS Oldham. Many of the surveys have indicated other issues around dentistry services that are felt need to be addressed. This report will be published and sent to NHS Oldham in October.

Mental Health Day Service Provision Working Group

The group's early work has focused upon determining the current position with regard to day services and whether or not there are any plans for change. It has become apparent that the Local Authority and Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust are holding talks around the possibility of the Rock Street Resource Centre coming under the umbrella of Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust. There is no formal proposal for this at the moment.

The Local Authority have confirmed that in no way will any change to the management of the centre impact on services or self help groups that currently take place at the centre.

Respite Services Working Group

The LINK received feedback that semi-emergency respite services are not available and that there is a need for a more flexible service. This was initially prioritised for action, although a new emergency respite service that was to be developed was subsequently announced. For the LINK to proceed would have resulted in duplication of work, so this item is currently 'on hold' until it can determine if the new service will sufficiently address the issue.

LINK Activities

Patient Environment Action Team (PEAT) Assessments

PEAT is self assessed and provides a framework for inspecting standards to demonstrate how well individual healthcare organisations believe they are performing in key areas including:

- food
- cleanliness
- infection control
- patient environment (including bathroom areas, lighting, floors and patient areas)

NHS sites and NHS trusts are each given scores from 1 (unacceptable) to 5 (excellent) for standards of environment, food and dignity and privacy within buildings.

Assessments are carried out by NHS staff (nurses, matrons, doctors, catering and domestic service managers, executive and non-executive directors, dieticians and estates directors).

Patients, patient representatives and members of the public are also part of this assessment process. Several Oldham LINK members have been involved in the assessments with Pennine Acute Hospital NHS Trust and shortly with NHS Oldham.

In Control – Self Directed Support Working Group

In Control is the system used by Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council (OMBC) to deliver Individual Budgets. Individual Budgets are a model of enabling social care service users to themselves purchase and design their own social care packages. Oldham has been one of the pilot test grounds for the scheme, which has since been adopted as the method of delivery. Information brought to the LINK however indicated that there were a number of difficulties with this system.

The group have now split into two separate sub-groups focussing on the issues that specifically affect older people and carers of those with a learning disability.

Annual Review 30th June 2009

In June we held an Annual Review session jointly with Voices 4 Wellbeing (Rochdale Borough LINK) as this LINK is also supported by Gaddum Centre. The session focused on what the LINK has achieved over the past year and how the LINK would like to progress.

Election Results

The LINK Governors have a role to guide the work of the LINK and ensure the LINK is fair and equitable. Each governor is committed to and has relevant experience with the interest group they represent.

In May members of the LINK were given an opportunity to nominate themselves for the role as a Governor of the Oldham LINK. There were 10 places available on the Board representing the five themed groups:

Adults & Older People
Young People
Disability

Carers
Mental Health

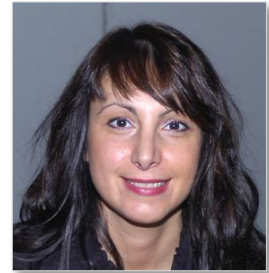
The election took place in June and we have great pleasure in announcing the Oldham LINK Governance Group members as follows:



Tracy Sims
Imagine Act Succeed
(Disability)



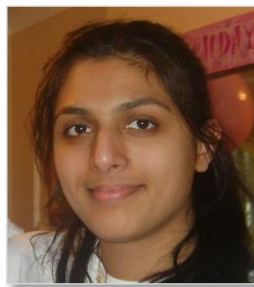
Angela Wellon
First 4 Disabilities
(Young People)



Miranda De Blasio
Princess Royal Trust
Oldham Carers Centre
(Carers)



Peter Bennett
Individual
(Mental Health)



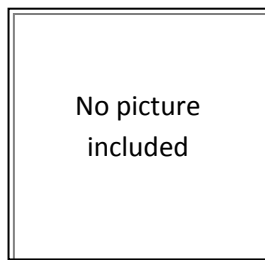
Fozia Amin
Tameside, Oldham & Glossop
MIND
(Mental Health)



Terence Booth
Individual
(Disability)



Nicola Shore
Age Concern
(Adults & Older People)



Jean McGealy
Individual
(Carers)



Paul Benedek
Individual
(Adults & Older People)

News and Events

Get Moving Roadshow

Time to Change is England's most ambitious programme to end the discrimination faced by people who experience mental health problems. Oldham is one of just 12 sites the Time to Change Roadshow will visit across the country throughout September and October.

The Time to Change programme has teamed up with Tameside Oldham and Glossop Mind, NHS Oldham, and Oldham Council, organisations responsible for making sure everyone in Oldham has access to the health services they need.

The aim is to engage people in Oldham and neighbouring areas to change attitudes and join the national campaign supported by celebrities like Stephen Fry, Ruby Wax and Patsy Palmer.

The Time to Change Roadshow will be at **Market Place, Oldham** (outside Spindles) between **11 am and 4pm on Sunday 4th October 2009**, and invites the public to get involved and add their face to the biggest 'visual pledge' ever seen in England.

This is a free event

Volunteers needed to help on the day

For more information please call Ian or Fozia at Mind on 0161 620 0123

Mental Health and Wellbeing Network

Friday 9th October 2009

Rock Street Resource Centre

10:30am – 3:00pm

Please ring Tameside Oldham and Glossop Mind on 620 0123 or email Oldham@tgmind.co.uk to book your place.

'Talking Sense' 2009 Annual Conference

Health and Wellbeing awareness event

for people aged 50 and above living in Oldham

This is an annual event to raise awareness of services and support available for people aged 50 and above living in Oldham. There will be a showcase of dance and drama. Guest speaker Tricia Stewart (original Calendar Girl) will be giving an inspirational speech! There will also be an opportunity for you to have your say in developing services for an ageing population.

Thursday 5th November

Queen Elizabeth Hall

10.30am – 2.00pm

Lunch provided

This is a free event

For further information or to register your place please contact Eve Edwards on 0161 770 3443 or Christine Wilson on 0161 770 8119.

Oldham LINK Website

The new Oldham LINK website was launched in August and we would like to know what you think; everything you need to know about the LINK and its activities will be updated here regularly.

New members can sign up to the LINK using the 'JOIN THE LINK' form or you can just tell us your views about local health and social care services by using the 'HAVE YOUR SAY' form.

Have a look and tell us what you think!



www.oldhamlink.org.uk

Contact the LINK

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Laura Chidgey – Development Worker
Jade Czuba – Administrator

Phone: 0161 622 5700
Mail: FREEPOST OMB LINK
Email: info@oldhamlink.org.uk
Web: www.oldhamlink.org.uk

If you would like to find out more about joining the LINK, please get in touch and we will send you information pack.

If you would like to include an article or information about an upcoming event please get in contact with the LINK support team.

If you require this newsletter in another format, please call the Oldham LINK Host Team on 0161 622 5700.