



Wirral Local Involvement Network (LINK)
Interim Steering Group Annual Report
April 2008 - March 2009

"Growing stronger communities, by joining together many whispers become one voice."

1. Where has Wirral LINK come From, the Story so Far:
LINKs (Local Involvement Networks) were set up in England from April 2008 to give communities a stronger voice in how their health and social care services are delivered.

In July 2006, the Department of Health published plans to strengthen the ability for local communities to influence the care they get through Local Involvement Networks (LINKs).

One of the ways the NHS had listened to patients had been through Patient working volunteers, involved with local NHS Trusts helped to improve local health care services. However, changes in the way that the NHS is structured and the need for health and social care to work together, meant that new ways of involving people were needed. This is why LINKs were established across the country and the PPIFs were disbanded on 31 March 2008.

Wirral Local Authority was forward thinking in its approach, and facilitated a Consultation and Development Group (CADG) with key people thus ensuring the expertise and knowledge of Patient and Public Involvement Forums (PPIFs) and Forum Support staff was retained. The remit of this group was to ensure continuity towards the Wirral LINK. It was also recognised that Wirral

LINK needed to represent the views of marginalised Members of our Community and this should be a priority for the Steering Group.

Following an open and transparent, procurement process by the Local Authority which involved Lay Members from the Public, on 1 April 2008 - Voluntary and Community Action Wirral (VCAW), was contracted as the Host Organisation for the Wirral LINK. The Wirral LINK Support Team (LST) were immediately employed, based on their expertise and knowledge in Patient and Public Involvement, and joined the Community Engagement Team.

The Wirral LINK Support Team (LST) commenced work on 1 April 2008, by promoting the Wirral LINK and by engaging as many organisations and individuals as possible including attending Public Events, building strong relationships with the local NHS Trusts, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, other Hosts across the North West Region, Health Care Commission, Commission for Social Care Inspection and various service providers.

From 1 April 2008, the Wirral LINK Interim Steering Group was formed with the support of some of the CADG Members. The LINK needed to be able to provide evidence that it is well run and has systems in place to manage when things go wrong. Legislation stipulated that governance arrangements must be in place and published before any activity could take place.

The role of the group was therefore to draft the governance framework, with underpinning policies and procedures, develop an identity and ensure that Wirral LINK is effective and accountable exploring innovative and creative ways of running LINK locally. It was recognised by the Group that there was a need to adopt some fundamental principles so that equality and inclusiveness was built into their governance arrangements.

The Interim Steering Group was formed to be as representative of our diverse community as possible.

The ISG and LST members have worked tirelessly to bring the Wirral LINK to the strength it is to date. It is respected by Statutory Organisations in both Health and Social Care.

The Community of Wirral have supported LINK by signing up for membership and by supporting the Publicity and Promotional Events and this has made all the effort worthwhile.

I wish to thank all members of the ISG for their commitment and sterling work over the past year.

Finally, I would like to thank the LINK Support Team for all their dedication, advice and support which has made Wirral LINK a leading light in the area of local involvement.

Diane Hill

Chairman - Wirral LINK April 08 - March 09

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Membership and Structure	5
What is Wirral LINK?	6
What does the Wirral LINK do?	6
Activity 2008 - 2009	7
Policies, Reports and Useful Documents	8
Directory of LINK representation	9
Workplan and suggestions	11
Legacy Issues	12
Future Activity	14
Requests for Information	14
Finance	14
Contact Details for the LINK	15
Appendix 1 - Wirral LINK model	
Appendix 2 - Glossary of Terms	

2. Membership

The Interim Steering Group recognised the need to make the membership representative of all areas and interests.

Currently we have 199 members :

137 Individual Members (29 Active, 27 Board and 82 Informed)

62 Organisational Members (19 Active, 17 Board and 24 Informed)

Structure

The membership of the LINK is flexible and open to all! We have 3 levels of involvement:

Board Member - must attend an induction, sits on the board, prioritising the workplan, receives all the information, able to vote, can represent the LINK at meetings, get involved in Task & Finish Groups (also Enter & View), must sign up to Confidentiality and Code of Conduct. Access training where appropriate.

Active Member - must attend an Induction, receives all information, get involved in Task & Finish Groups (also Enter & View), Access training where appropriate. Both Board and Active members must be CRB checked.

Informed - receive Newsletters and can take part in Consultations by post.

Interim Steering Group

Diane Hill Chairman - Chairman (Older People)

Audrey Meacock - Vice Chairman (Cancer Services)

Barbara Moody (Primary Care Services)

Murdo Kennedy Co-opted (Mental Health)

Les Makin (Hospital Services)

Jean Maskell (Carers)

Karen Blair (Learning Disabilities - Advocate)

Tan Leong (Service Users)

Eleanor Cropper (carers-Advocate)

Jake McGee (community member)

Nurie Lamb (BRM)

Peter Barnett (representing LGBT)

Vicky Costello (representing Housing)

3. Wirral LINK:

- Is made up of Individuals and Orgs/Groups. A growing membership of over 200 people and organisations.
- Looks at Health & Social Care Services from the community's perspective.
- Looks at cross boundary issues ie Mental Health, Cancer, Ambulance Services
- Follows the individuals journey between Health and Social Care.
- Enhances and gives influence to existing work by linking groups together and identifying good practice but is not here to duplicate excellent work already being done.
- Will complement good work already being done across Wirral.
- Will look for the seldom heard/hard to find in Wirral and inform them of services and identify gaps in service.
- Is a network of networks

Wirral LINK will actively:

- Feedback what Wirral people have said about services so that things can really change for the better.
- Canvas every section of the community for their views and experiences of local health and social care services.
- Provide the community with a mechanism for monitoring and reviewing local health and social care services and the ability to hold them to account and,

operate independently but in partnership with statutory organisations such as the National Health Service and Local Authority and raise concerns of local people with those responsible for commissioning, providing, managing and scrutinising services or other appropriate regulators

4. Wirral LINK will:

- Take a research/evidence based approach to projects
- Look at Health & Social Care
- Has a seat on the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Enter & View premises (with some exclusions). Training for Enter and View has already commenced.

- Supports volunteers to carry out activities on Task & Finish Groups and the Wirral LINK Board.
- Give people the chance to say what they think about their local services - what is working well and what is not so good
- Feedback what people have said about services so that things can change for the better.

5. Activity 2008/2009:-

- Held a "Winter Warmer" Event - which resulted in 200+ attendees recruitment of 85 new members.
- Drafted Policies & Procedures for ISG which were publicised and agreed by a very well attended public meeting
- Identified Structures for Model of LINK (see below)
- Identified Levels of Involvement (Informed, Active (Task & Finish Groups) and Board level. This gives flexibility and inclusivity.
- Established Identity for LINK
- Feedback Mechanism (ie Reports from members, Newsletter and 20 day turnaround of information from statutory orgs). Also developed a Job Description for Members when attending meetings, visiting etc. LINK also recognise the need for meaningful representation and that this is a joint responsibility of both LINK and Statutory Organisations. A template was developed to facilitate ease of reporting for the LINK members. These reports are publicised on the web site and also held in hard copy with the LST.
- Promoted LINK to Statutory Bodies & the Public
- Members of the ISG currently sit on various meetings within the LA and NHS. These members are encouraged to use the feedback template for reporting.
- Sent out Newsletters to all members and stakeholders. These were also distributed widely to One Stop Shops, Libraries, Community Centres, PCT, LA, WUTHFT, CCO, Cheshire & Wirral Partnership and Voluntary and Community Groups.
- Established and maintained the web-site for the LINK, through VCAW.
- Maintained the database of membership.
- Number of meetings of ISG (14)
- Number of public meetings (1)
- Agreed and developed full training programme including :
Induction/Enter & view/Safeguarding Adults and Equality and Diversity.

6. Policies, Reports and useful documents

All of the documents mentioned in this report, and listed below, are available from the LINK Support Team and are also posted on our web site (www.vcawirral.org)

Wirral LINK Governance Framework

- Terms of Reference
- Code of Conduct
- Expenses Policy (including Expense Forms and Bacs Forms)
- Complaints Procedure
- Enter & View Policy (including Research & Visits protocol)
- Authorised Representative Document
- Confidentiality Policy (including Confidentiality form)
- Jargon Buster
- LINKs Decision Making Document
- Register of Interests for Members
- VCAW Equality and Diversity Policy
- Wirral LINK Newsletters
- Communications Strategy

Reports of meetings attended by the Interim Steering Group are :

- Cancer Modernisation Team
- Patient Environment Action Group
- Dentistry
- Transformation Programme Board
- PPI PCT Sub Committee
- Health & Well Being, Overview & Scrutiny
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Wirral Equalities & Diversities Panel
- Safeguarding Adults Board
- National Association of LINK members
- Merseyside Society for Deaf People
- Individual Budget Market Management Workstream

Reports from Events attended are also available from the LINK Support Team.

Individual LINK Board Members		
Directory of Current LINK Observer Representation		
Sector of Interest	Board Member	Representation Details
Gender	Robin Eley Jones	<u>Primary Care Trust - Dentistry</u>
Drugs & Alcohol	Stanley Mayne	
Older People	Peter Walton	
Faith	Audrey Meacock	<u>Wirral Health and Social Care Partnership</u> Cancer Modernisation Team <u>Local Authority</u> Health & Well Being, Overview & Scrutiny (OSC) <u>Primary Care Trust</u> PCT Patient & Public Involvement (PPI) Sub-Committee
Health Support & Well Being	Barbara Moody	<u>Primary Care Trust - Dentistry</u>
LGBT - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender	Peter Barnett	<u>Local Authority</u> Safeguarding Adults Board
Housing Regeneration & Homelessness	Les Makin	<u>Department of Adult Social Services (DASS)</u> Individual Budget Market Management Workstream Transformation Programme Board <u>Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust</u> Patient Environment Action Group (PEAG)

Physical Health/Disability	Sue Lowe	
Carer	Jean Maskell	<u>Primary Care Trust (PCT)</u> Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
Black & Racial Minority (BRM)	Nurie Lamb	<u>Primary Care Trust</u> Wirral Equalities & Diversity Panel
Children & Young People	Joyce Hayward	
Family Services	Val Elliott	
Advice Services	Vacancy	
Mental Health	Murdo Kennedy	
Organisational LINK Board Members		
Merseyside Society for Deaf People (MSDP)	Veronica Lewis	
Crossroads for Carers	Diane Morley	
Inner Action	Francis Cook	
Merseyside Ambulance Retired Staff Association (MARSAs)	Keith Heller	
Citizen's Advice Bureau	Alan Dixon	
Beanbag CES Limited Group (Beanbag)	Julie Johnson	
Older People's Parliament (OPP)	Diane Hill	<u>Local Authority</u> Health & Wellbeing, Overview & Scrutiny Comm (OSC) <u>Primary Care Trust</u> PCT Patient & Public Involvement (PPI) Sub-Comm

7. Workplan

The Wirral LINK made an undertaking to look at the Legacy issues left from the PPI Forums. It would be recommended to the LINK Board that a sub group could look at these issues and feedback to the public in a future Newsletter.

A high priority for the Wirral LINK's workplan was to consult the views of the public and set up Task & Finish Groups to work on issues highlighted.

8. Workplan suggestions for the Board (2009)

- To monitor local health and social care provision by identifying trends from the reports from Patient Advice Liaison Service and Complaints at all NHS Trusts and Independent Complaints Advocacy Service. The Enter & View Team, with the support of the LINK Support Team, would research evidence from CSCI and HCC (Care Quality Commission), liaise with the Contracts Team at Dept of Adult Social Services to identify issues and concerns. Also identify issues and trends through public events.
- To monitor contact made to the LINK Support Team by individuals with concerns. These issues are signposted but recorded and reported to the LINK Board at each meeting.

Issues received at our Public Meeting

- Protocols for Deaf/Blind and People with Disabilities in Hospitals and in the community.
- Concerns in relation to the Discharge Process from Hospital
- Mixed Sex Wards
- Optical Assessments for Nursing Home Patients

- Legacy Issues from the Patient and Public Involvement Forums, which are :

WIRRAL HEALTH FORUM (PPI)
PPI FORUM FOR WIRRAL PRIMARY CARE TRUST

Short-term issues - to monitor and update:

- Dentistry
- Audiology Services
- PCT's Listening Exercise on PCT's 5 year Commissioning Strategy

Medium-term issues - to develop:

- Input and influence in the Practice Based Commissioning Process In Wirral.

Longer-term issues - to campaign for:

- Impact of Practice Based Commissioning on the health and social care of the Wirral Patient population.
- GP Practice Development Proposals/Consultations
- Access to GP practices/appointments

PPI FORUM FOR CLATTERBRIDGE CENTRE FOR ONCOLOGY NHS
FOUNDATION TRUST

Short-term issues - to monitor and update:

- Overnight stay policy
- Communication
- Infection Control Survey

Medium-term issues - to develop:

- Relationship between the Trust and the public

Longer-term issues - to campaign for:

- Better outcomes for cancer patients and public health awareness.
LINKs

**INDEPENDENT PPI FORUM FOR WIRRAL UNIVERSITY TEACHING
HOSPITAL NHS FOUNDATION TRUST**

Short-term issues - to monitor and update:

- Monitor all changes proposed by the Trust ie. Extra toilet facilities on Ward 34.
- TVs on DME Wards
- Hand Hygiene Campaigns.

Medium-term issues - to develop:

- Relationship between Trust and the public

Longer-term issues - to campaign for:

- Improved and equitable older peoples services
- Effective cross boundary services for Cancer and Mental health.

**CESHIRE/WIRRAL PARTNERSHIP NHS FOUNDATION TRUST
MENTAL HEALTH**

Short-term issues - to monitor and update:

- OSC referral on the CRHT staffing shortfall in Central Cheshire.
- SHA clarification of database comparability (see above).
- Implementation of equitable access to CRHT.

Medium-term issues - to develop:

- Effective cross-boundary mental health LINKs arrangements.
- Structures which optimise a balance between involving hard-to-reach groups and preserving expertise.
- The ability to make informed comparisons and conclusions from patient experiences.

Longer-term issues - to campaign for:

- Improved and more equitable access to primary care / intermediate care/liaison psychiatry.
- Improved and more equitable Older People's Services, especially the interaction between health and social care.
- Commissioners to fund best practice across the patch, ensuring equity of provision at a high standard.

9. Future activity

Where issues are received or highlighted, the LINK Board will develop a method of prioritisation and focus their activity to achieve a timely and positive impact.

The LINK should enter the Community by holding surgeries on sites within local areas. It is recognised that people feel more comfortable speaking in "their own patch" rather than attending meetings.

The LINK Board could Co-opt new members where necessary and invite the relevant Organisations for future meetings.

10. Requests for Information

Several requests for information were made to WUTHFT and DASS during 2008/09. These were responded to within the 20 day period and published within the LINK Newsletter Jan/Feb 09 edition.

11. Finance

Staffing & Management Cost	£78280.20
Premises & Running Cost	£16648.35
Development & Engagement Cost	£8231.71
Member Cost & Venues	£5403.52
Contingencies	£8140.00

	£116703.78
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There is a considerable underspend during this financial year as the LINK contract was not signed until 17th July 2008. This meant that full support and development of the membership did not take place until after this date; although promotional work was begun by the LINK Support Team from 1st April 2008 funded by Voluntary & Community Action Wirral.

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Karen Prior and Lynda Denman
LINK Support Team

During the year, Jake McGee resigned. Vicky Costello stood down in 2008 and Eleanor Cropper stood down for February and March 2009.

This report is available in different formats and languages. If you wish to have this report in a different format, or if you have any queries or comments on its content, then please contact the Wirral LINK Support Team who will be happy to assist.