

Worcestershire LINK

Newsletter *Launch Edition* *August 2009*



Welcome message from The LINK Chair

It is now nearly three months since we held our AGM and Launch.

During that time we have visited Out of Hours services in Worcestershire, looked at the service and made some recommendations for improvement, including improving signage, providing drinking water for patients and carers, providing further training for staff and so on.

We continue to go out on visits to groups such as Older People's forums, and to discuss issues with health and social care service workers.

These visits are really useful, as it helps us to hear about what is working for the people of Worcestershire, and what improvements are needed, or planned. To do our work we need people to help.

We have recently had three new members of the management committee. Fred Kaler will help to organise working with older people;

Sheila Neary and Jill Edwards have agreed to help with street stalls. On a sad note, our temporary Community Development Officer, Neal Palmer, will be leaving us soon. His replacement is Felicity Jones, who will be taking up the post on a permanent basis from 13th July. We wish Neal every success in his next job.

What LINKs really need is more volunteers to help with the work. We go out to talk with groups, run stalls to spread the word about what we do, investigate things on our work programme, and listen to what you have to tell us.

Would you like to join us? If you want to find out more, please contact the office on 01905 779073.

If you would like to tell us what you think about health or social care services or issues in Worcestershire either contact us on the office number or email to worcestershirelink@shaw-trust.org.uk

www.worcestershirelink.org.uk

Tel: 01905 779073

e-mail: worcestershirelink@shaw-trust.org.uk

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I have only worked for the NHS since July last year but one of the first things that anyone told me was that the only constant with the NHS was that it was continually changing.

Looking back over my 11 months this has certainly been true and patient and public involvement is probably one of the best and most obvious examples.

There have been some significant changes but most importantly I think that this is now higher up the agenda for NHS Trusts than it has ever been.

We now have an established LINK in Worcestershire, with an ambitious and varied planned work programme and some good people involved.

The PCT (or NHS Worcestershire as we are now known) have also got new systems and structures designed to give us the best chance of delivering the right services for the Worcestershire population.

There is certainly place for both and I see very much the external challenge of the LINK being an excellent compliment to our day to day involvement that we try and organise such as patient representatives at meetings and inputting into policy and documents

and the regular surveying and market research work we undertake.

What is absolutely certain is that the NHS can't afford not to be responding effectively to what the public say. We have been fortunate to go through times of growth in financial and budget terms, and health services in many parts of the system have progressed greatly in recent times.

It is foolhardy to expect this time of growth to continue though and the reality will be some tough times and hard choices ahead.

We will still have significant budgets but will need to use our resources more effectively than ever before.

Our best chance of coping with this is to make sure the public is on side with and understand their local NHS.

We need relationships with a strong LINK, and the work NHS Worcestershire has progressed gives us a much better chance of achieving that.



Simon Trickett

Head of
Communications and
Community
Engagement at NHS
Worcestershire

Tell us about your experience!

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Evesham & District Older Peoples Forum

Following recommendations from various organisations such as Help the Aged, Age Concern, rather than have 2 forums (North and South), in order to promote a local approach, agreement was reached to establish 8 older people's forums in Worcestershire and they are based in:

- Bromsgrove
- Droitwich Spa
- Evesham and District Area
- Malvern Hills District
- Pershore and District Area
- Redditch
- Worcester City
- Wyre Forest

Each forum works in a slightly different way; all forums have a constitution and a working/management committee.

Forums are independent organisations, which give collective voice to older people in order to influence matters, which impact on their daily lives.

Once the 8 forums were set up, it became clear that there was a need for a Worcestershire Partnership of Older Peoples Forums.

Once the partnership was in place and agreed to meet quarterly, each forum was invited to send 3 representatives to the partnership meetings.

The Partnership is an opportunity to exchange ideas and take forward

matters of importance to a regional or national level via representations to OPAG (Older Peoples Advisory Group) and the NPC (National Pensioners Convention) also to raise local/county issues with the appropriate councils/organisations.

There are 2 county sub groups of the WPOPF:

- Health and Social Care Sub Committee
- Transport Sub Committee

These sub groups meet bi-monthly to concentrate on issues of importance; forums have 2 seats on each of the sub groups.

On a rotation basis a forum nominates a member of its group to act as Chair for 12 months on the same basis, a forum will nominate one of its members to act alongside the Chair as Deputy, who will take over the chair the following year.

Local Forums do not receive any regular funding from the Worcestershire County Council, District Councils or Parish Councils; they along with all Voluntary groups may apply for grants.

Forums are run for older people by older people and all members are volunteers. Forums are non-party political.

Fred Kaler, Chairman EDPA
Evesham & District Older Peoples Forum

Let us have your views and ideas!

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Time4people supports individuals who are entitled to a Personal Budget to enjoy a good life and be part of the community.

One of the most powerful ways of showing how good support planning can change people's lives is by listening to their stories.

We are a user led organisation and can provide people with real experience of personal budgets to speak at events, training or meetings.

We officially launched at the In Control Big Event back in March 2009. We were inspired to help others to understand about Individual Budgets (as the road can be tricky) to help them achieve what they would like to get out of their life.

One of our first big pieces of work was for the Department of Health. We were commissioned to evaluate individual budgets in Worcestershire from a user and carer perspective. A report that is being used nationally by In Control was produced from the findings.

One of our most exciting developments that happened this month is that Both Ways have joined time4people.

Both Ways is a matching service, run by local people with a learning disability, for people across Worcestershire to find someone to share a house with.

Many people don't want to live on their own but do not know anyone that they want to share with.

They were supported to start up by Our Way Self Advocacy. As far as we are aware they are the first group offering this service in the UK.

The group offer presentations on the service they provide and are going to develop a pack to demonstrate how other people can go about setting up this service in other areas.

We focus on building partnerships with others to deliver the messages about Personalisation and get better lives for people.

We are really pleased that we are working in partnership with The British Institute for Learning Disabilities to offer some of our training and presentations.

They have been really supportive and offered us advice and information and support whilst we have been setting up and they are continuing to help us to develop as a Social Enterprise.

We can offer training, presentations and consultancy on Individual Budgets, a house mate matching service and the wider Personalisation agenda.

We have provided this already nationally as well as locally for individuals with an Individual Budget, families, professionals and providers.

Contact us to find out what we can offer you
admin@time4people.org.uk
Telephone 0759 83 99 367

www.time4people.org.uk

Raise your concerns!

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Take Control - Your Youth, Your Health

Are you aged 16-25?

If so, come along to our speed networking event.

When: 14th October 4-7pm

What: We want to hear your views and opinions on Health and Social Care — So come and speak to the professionals.

Where: Charles Hastings Education Centre,
Worcestershire Royal Hospital,
Charles Hastings Way, Worcester, WR5 1DD

Free Admission and Parking

Refreshments provided



RSVP: call 01905 779073

E-mail worcestershirelink@shaw-trust.org.uk

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This is what some carers said to us

Improve the co-ordination of discharge arrangements.

Improve the communication between doctors, district nurses and hospitals.

Increase the availability of physiotherapy.

Provide more support for carers.

Comment on proposals under consideration!

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This is what some carers said to us

Increase the availability of physiotherapy and provide more help to carers.

The Staff in the hospitals should have some sort of training in Mental Health and how to deal with any crisis that may occur.

More advice on the health situation of the person being discharged and a more positive link to social services.

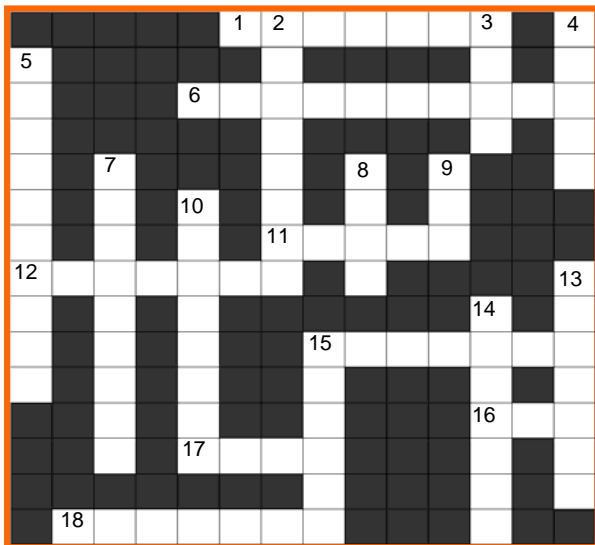
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Worcestershire Link Crossword



Across

1. having good health and not likely to become ill (7)
6. too heavy and fat (10)
11. drops of liquid that appear on the surface of your skin when you are hot (5)
12. a unit for measuring how much energy food will produce (7)
15. to train the body by physical exercise (4, 3)
16. a room or hall with equipment for doing physical exercise, for

Down

2. physical or mental activity that you do to stay healthy or become stronger (8)
3. a system of exercises for your body and for controlling your breathing, used by people who want to become fitter or to relax (4)
4. an exercise for making your stomach muscles strong, in which you lie on your back on the floor and raise the top part of your body to a sitting position (3-2)
5. a private club where people go to do physical exercises in order to stay or become healthy and fit (6, 4)
7. with a solid, strong body (4, 5)
8. a limited variety or amount of food that you eat for medical reasons or because you want to lose weight (4)
9. healthy and strong, especially

Answers <http://www.communityvoicesonline.org/LINKs/documents.aspx?id=33>

Get involved and be a participant!

RSVP: call 01905 779073

E-mail worcestershirelink@shaw-trust.org.uk



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Walk more Feel the difference!

For most people walking is the simplest and most natural form of regular exercise. As long as you can put one foot in front of the other you can always walk more and soon begin to feel the difference regarding your health and wellbeing, even if it's just managing an existing health condition better.

The Chief Medical Officer recommends that for a healthy lifestyle adults should undertake at least 30 minutes a day of moderate intensity physical activity (such as brisk walking) on 5 or more days of the week. The 30 minutes don't have to be done all in one go, 3 ten minute walks a day can be just as beneficial to good health.

As we get older and can't do as much as we used to, it's important to remain as active as we can in order to make daily movements easier and enhance quality of life. It really is a case of 'use it or lose it', so start where you're at and gradually build up.

Regular walking can help reduce the risk and effect of many illnesses and diseases, including coronary heart disease, strokes, diabetes, high blood pressure, bowel cancer, Alzheimer's disease, osteoporosis, arthritis, anxiety and stress.

It can improve your confidence, stamina, energy levels, weight control and life expectancy. Good mobility helps to prevent falls.

Before increasing the amount of activity you do you may wish to speak to your doctor first to make sure it's the right thing for you. It is not advisable to walk if you are feeling generally unwell. Stop walking if you feel pain in your chest. Always tell someone when and roughly what time you will be back. If possible walk with a friend.

When you go out wear comfortable shoes and dress appropriately for the weather. Walk at a pace brisk enough to make you feel warmer, breathe a little deeper and perhaps raise your pulse a little. If you're walking with a friend and can't continue a conversation with them then you are walking too fast. Slow down a bit and continue building up your fitness.

Walking at a brisk pace is good for your heart. Walking in a green environment, such as a town or country park, enhances your mood as nature has a positive effect on mental wellbeing.

If you don't know where to go, or would prefer to walk with someone else, why not join a health walk group? There are many groups around the County that meet at different times during the week (see details below) If there's not a group convenient to you why not consider starting one up?

Health walks are free, short, led walks over easy terrain aimed at people with, or at risk of, poor health or who do little exercise. A trained volunteer health walk leader leads the walk to set the pace and route.

A back-marker follows behind to make sure everyone's ok and no one gets left behind. Most walks finish with a cuppa and a chat so they're a great way to meet new people and make new friends.

As one walking group says:
"We don't stop walking because we age, we age because we stop walking."

Contact Alison Williams

Direct Line: 01905 768230

Mobile: 07985 104142

Email: awilliams3@worcestershire.gov.uk

Get involved, make it happen!

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Right across Worcestershire there is a local charity offering help and advice to anyone who helps look after someone.

They could be living with that person and providing practical and emotional support on a daily basis or could be popping in from time to time to help with shopping, bills or trips to medical appointments.

This person could be a relative, partner, friend or neighbour.

They may call themselves husband, wife, daughter, son, mother, father, sister, brother, friend or neighbour. We call them a carer!

The Worcestershire Association of Carers provides a free service to anyone in Worcestershire who looks after someone.

It doesn't matter how many hours per week or month they help we can help them, by providing advice, information and training. We offer:

- A telephone helpline 01905 26500 or 0800 652 3151 - available Tues, Wed and Thurs between 10am and 3pm for any questions about the caring role.
- A free handbook, full of useful information about looking after someone.

- A free quarterly newsletter, to keep up to date with what is available both locally and nationally.
- Free training, including legal and financial issues and moving and handling.
- Carer Groups across the county for support and information.
- Outings and events during the year.
- Carers Emergency Card so people can plan for those 'what if' scenarios.
- GP registration card – so the GP can support the carer's health needs.
- Links to Adult and Community Services (formerly Social Services), their services and entitlements.

For all these services please ring 01905 26500 or 0800 652 3151 or e-mail mail@carersworcs.org.uk to find out more.

Alternatively look at the website www.carersworcs.org.uk



Jill & Sheila from LINKS running a stall at one of the Carer's week Event.

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Have your say!
Get involved and be a participant!

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Help in a crisis from the British Red Cross

Most of us know that the Red Cross is always there to help during large-scale emergencies and disasters in this country and throughout the rest of the world.

You may have received first aid from a volunteer if you've been unwell at an event or attended their first aid courses to gain skills for either a job or role in a community organisation.

But a lot of the work of the British Red Cross here in Worcestershire involves helping local individuals who've had a personal crisis that's affected their ability to cope independently for a while.

The Support at Home team of staff and trained volunteers are available to lend you a wheelchair or a temporary emergency careline alarm if you need it.

They can also help for a few weeks if you're struggling with practical tasks like shopping and housework or finding it difficult to get to appointments because you've just come home from hospital or been unwell.

To find out more about how the Support at Home team in Worcestershire may be able to help those who are vulnerable or in crisis, call 01905 450400 or email: infohsw@redcross.org.uk

By Jules Wyatt

Build a better Local Health and Social Care Service

Tell us about your Experiences

Let us have your views and ideas

Find out about improvements already identified

Become a member now!

Help make it happen!

www.worcestershirelink.org.uk

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A close-up photograph of a man with short brown hair, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue shirt. He has his eyes closed and his mouth open as if coughing. His right hand is held up to his mouth, with fingers spread. The background is dark and filled with numerous small, white, dust-like particles, representing germs being spread. In the top right corner, there is a white rectangular box containing text.

**SWINE FLU
INFORMATION**

0800 1 513 513

www.nhs.uk

www.direct.gov.uk/swineflu

Germs. Out in a second, around for hours.

When you cough or sneeze, your germs go everywhere. Fast. And once they've hit a surface, they can survive for hours. Covering your mouth and nose with your hand won't stop them. But a tissue will. Catch the sneeze, then bin the tissue and wash your hands with soap and water as soon as possible to kill the germs. The current swine flu alert increases the importance of this.

Catch it. Bin it. Kill it.



Calls to this number are free from UK landlines and most mobiles.