

Islington LINK

improving health and social care



Annual Report

2008-2009

What is the Islington LINK?



The Islington LINK is a way for local people to have their say about how to improve local health and social care services. The LINK is an independent group.

Local people can affect how their health and social care services are planned and run. The LINK has powers to get information from those responsible for local services. It can also make recommendations to them based on the evidence it collects.



LINKs can also 'Enter and View' services. This means that trained members of the group can visit services to see how those services are delivered.

Islington LINK can choose to set up sub-groups to look at particular issues in more detail. The LINK has sub-groups looking at Young Carers services and standards in Care Homes. One sub-group is training in community research so that they can carry out some research into people's experiences of leaving hospital.

Who we are...

Any member of the local community can join Islington LINK, whether they are carers, service users, community leaders, charities, faith groups, tenant organisations or youth groups. Everyone's view is welcomed and respected.

Islington LINK is a network of local individuals and representatives from local organisations. These people have an interest in improving health and social care in Islington.

Members receive a LINK newsletter every 2 months, are the first to hear about LINK events and activities and can vote in the LINK elections. To join, you just need to let us know your contact details. You could also become more involved and join a LINK sub-group or stand for election to the Core Group.

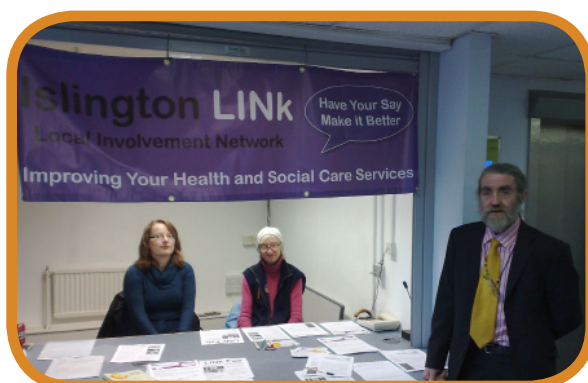
How the LINK works

LINK Core Group

Islington LINK is led by a Core Group. Anyone who is a LINK member can stand for election to the Core Group. There are 20 places on the group. LINK members elect the Core Group at the LINK's Annual Event (in March). The Core Group elects its Chair and Vice Chairs.

The Core Group:

- guide the work of the LINK
- develop and monitor the LINK Work Plan
- monitor the LINK budget
- promote the LINK and its work within the local community.



Achievements in Year One

The LINK Core Group was selected in June 2008 and LINK activity started from that point, the host organisation was appointed in July.

Since then, the group has:

- set up ways of working
- worked to make the LINK accessible and to reach people in the community
- built up relationships with local organisations, forums and decision-makers
- listened to local people's views on health and social care.

The LINK has had information stalls across the borough, at Islington Library, BME, Refugee and Faith Forums, Whittington Hospital NHS Trust (with Haringey LINK), Nag's Head Shopping Centre Circle and Anglia Housing Association Health and Well-Being Fair – Islington Service User and Carer Forum.

Since November 2008, LINK Core Group meetings have been held in public with time on the agenda for questions and comments from members of the public.

You should be able to find LINK freepost comment cards in your local GP surgery or library (if not, you can contact the host organisation – see page 12).

The LINK had its annual Fair in March. 80 local people came. The LINK held workshops to discuss priorities for 2009-10. There were also stalls promoting local services, community groups and health-living. And there were free alternative therapy and sign-language learning sessions.



LINK Sub-Groups

In 2008/09 the LINK set up these sub-groups:

GP Leaflets sub-group: To make recommendations to NHS Islington about producing GP leaflets that meet the information needs of local people. The group looked at government guidance on producing GP leaflets and developed its own further suggestions for content. These comments were sent to NHS Islington for consideration.

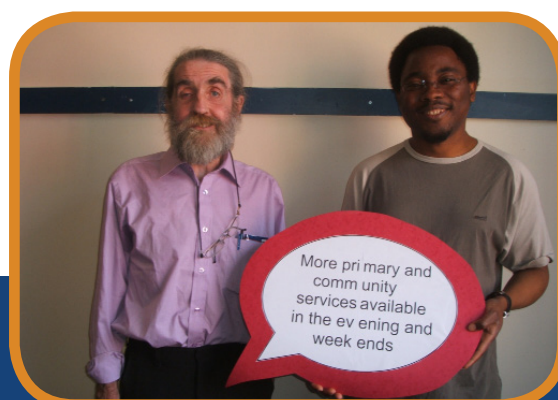
Young Carers: to investigate services for Young Carers and ways of linking Young Carers to those services. This group has now produced a report on the first phase of its work and plans to find out about the experiences of young carers.

Care Homes: to look at the standards in Care Homes in Islington. Following concerns raised by local people about the quality of care in Islington's care homes a sub-group was set up. The group is looking at how a quality service is provided and monitored.

Local patients using services at the Royal London Homoeopathic Hospital were concerned about access to services at the Hospital. They asked the LINK to write to the service provider to clarify the future support plans for this service. That response is available on the LINK web-site.

For more details of the sub-groups and reports, please contact the host.

The LINK also produces a newsletter every two months to keep the wider LINK membership up-to-date on LINK activity and local consultations. This is sent out by email and in hard copy for those who have requested it. It is also made available at local libraries, health centres, day centres and through housing associations. If you would like more regular updates on what the LINK is doing you could sign up for the weekly e-bulletin: LINK@ivac.org.uk



What you have told us

Local people have contacted the LINK about health and social care services.

- What happens to people who are not eligible for help from social services?
- The borough needs more advocacy services
- I've had very good care in the Whittington Hospital

The LINK will ensure, through the host, that comments are regularly, anonymously sent to local commissioners and providers. The LINK will continue to extend and strengthen its networks in the coming year.

We don't use the dentist because we don't understand the charges

The LINK now gives out information on dental charges at its events, information stalls and when talking to local groups

Carers need looking after too...

The LINK set up a group to look at how Young Carers are supported in Islington, this group's work is ongoing.

It's hard to get an appointment at my doctor's

The LINK hopes to set up a sub-group to look at this issue in 09/10

If you would like to send the Islington LINK a comment about a local service, please contact the host (for contact details see page 12)

How the LINK sets its Priorities

1) Listen to local people's views by:

- Hosting stalls at local venues and holding Core Group meetings in public. This gives local people a chance to tell the LINK their views on services
- Distributing comment cards and leaflets to local people
- Inviting people, in a section in the LINK newsletter, to offer the LINK their views on services by email, phone or freepost
- Holding Core Group meetings in public with time for questions from the public.

2) Hosting an Annual Event for prioritisation of issues. The event includes the Core Group elections and a report on LINK activity, as well as inviting the public to add to the issues raised during the year and then prioritise them for the year ahead.

3) The Core Group then develop the Work Plan. The Work Plan needs to be developed so that LINK research is timely, involves lots of users and has impact.

Support for LINK Members

Training and development is available to LINK members taking part in sub-groups. Contact the host to be kept informed of training available. In 2008/09 members took part in training on:

- Community Representation
- Community Research
- Project Skills for Project Management

Future Plans

Over the last year the LINK has held events and stalls to talk to local people about health and social care in Islington. You should also be able to find LINK comment cards in your local GP surgery, library and day centre so that you can tell the LINK about your experiences. You have told the LINK that these are some of your concerns:

- Access to Services
- Standards in Care Homes
- Young Carers Services
- Patient experience of leaving hospital

The LINK is setting up sub-groups to work on these issues. If you are interested in any of these issues and would like to get involved - Why not join us! For more information, please contact the LINK (see the back page for our contact details).

The LINK would be happy to come and talk to your local community group; (for example parent and baby group, faith group, lunch club). If you would like the LINK to come along to meet and talk with your group, please let us know.



The Islington LINK

Registration Form

Contact details

Title First name Surname

Organisation (if applicable)

Address

Post code Email

Telephone Number

Please let us know your areas of interest/ expertise in Health and Social Care:

- Primary Care (eg doctors, dentists, podiatry, eye tests)
- Secondary Care (eg hospitals, specialist clinics)
- Social/ Community Care (eg Meals on Wheels/Home Help/District nurse)
- Residential Care and Nursing Homes
- Emergency services (e.g. ambulance service)
- Other (Please state below)

Services for:

- Children & Young People Older People Carers
- Disabled People People with learning difficulties
- People with mental health issues Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)
- Other:

Data Protection

Any information you have given us here will be treated as confidential.

We will not share your contact details unless indicated below.

- Please tick the box to share your contact details with other LINK members



Please cut here and return to us using the Freepost address on the back page



The Islington LINK Core Group

2008 - 2009

Members of the Core Group from 08-09:

David Emmett	Chair - Individual
Olav Ernstzen	Vice Chair - Individual
Robert Dowd	Vice Chair - Individual
Pauline Anwyl-Jones	Individual
Vince Bottomley	Elfrida Society (supporting people with Learning Disabilities)
Elizabeth Jones	Individual
Peter Jones	Islington Borough User Group (for users of Mental Health services)
Tracey Lazard	Disability Action in Islington
Gerard McMullan	Individual
Richard Saffron	Individual
Doreen Scott	Individual
Theodore Spyrou	Whittington Park Community Centre
Peter Talbot	Individual
Natalie Teich	Individual
Betty Trujillo	Islington Deaf Campaign

With the following co-opted members:

Martin Bernard-Akoyon	Sickle Cell Support Group
Sue Cartwright	Individual (now retired)
Gerard Maguire	Individual
Ritu Mahendru	Individual
Margaret Moore	Individual

Finance

The Budget for the year 08/09 .

From April to June 2008, the LINK was hosted by London Borough of Islington, whilst a host organisation was contracted.

Area	Cost
Interim advisory group meetings and support	310.02
Most of these costs borne by Islington Council	
LINK conference	2,506.14
Staff costs	13,260.54
Consultancy Costs	4,200.00
Commissioned Work - mapping community groups	5,000.00
Total	25,276.70
All other costs borne by Islington Council	

From July 2008 the LINK was hosted by Islington Voluntary Action Council.

Area	Cost	
Staff	54,747.20	
Premises	5,373.68	
Administration and ICT	13,411.05	
Compliance	1,568.32	
Project Costs	13,552.04	
Total	88,652.29	
Amount of budget passed on to LINK in 08/09		28,985.00
Retained in designated fund for 09/10		19,049.85

An e-mail sub-group has been set up to monitor the budget from and to draw up a budget proposal for 2009/10. A review of spending by the sub-group will take place on a quarterly basis in addition to the monthly updates from the host at Core Group meetings.

Contact us

Each LINK is supported by a host organisation.
Islington LINK is supported by Islington Voluntary Action Council.

Islington Voluntary Action Council
Freepost RRZU-LYAR-UTHR
3 Berners Road
London
N1 0PW
020 7354 6360
LINK@ivac.org.uk
www.ivac.org.uk/link

Quote from a LINK member about the host
"I do appreciate the encouragement and support you give me."

Contact the host to arrange a visit from the LINK or to talk about an issue you think is important.

If you want this report in another format or language please contact us.

