



Report for Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2011-2012

Brent Local Involvement Network (LINK) is an independent network made up of individuals, community groups, voluntary sector organisations and local businesses. We work together to improve local health and adult social care services in Brent.

We do this by:

- *Finding out what people think of their local health and social care services;*
- *Giving people a chance to suggest ideas to care professionals about improving services;*
- *Looking into specific issues of concern to the community;*
- *Making recommendations to the people who plan and run services;*
- *Asking for information about services;*
- *Carrying out visits, when necessary, to see if services are working well;*
- *Referring issues to Brent Council's Health Partnership's Overview & Scrutiny Committee if it seems that action is not being taken.*

We are steered by a Management Committee, made up of 10 individuals and voluntary sector organisations. We also have five Action Groups which report to the committee, covering:

- Adult Social Care
- Primary Care
- Mental Health
- Hospitals
- Public Health & Community Services

Over the last year Brent LINK has been working to understand and to involve local residents in the changing health and social care and to put people at the heart of these changes. The Health & Social Care Act 2012 presents the biggest reorganisation in the history of the National Health Service. In Brent, this reorganisation has presented itself in several different ways:

- Establishment of Brent Shadow Health & Wellbeing Board
- April 2013 abolition of NHS Brent
- Transfer of public health responsibility to Brent Council from April 2013
- Emerging Shadow Clinical Commissioning Group (from 2012/13 part delegated responsibility for commissioning, with full responsibility from 1st April 2013).

We have also been working with NHS NW London developing the “Shaping a Healthier Future” strategy programme regarding configuration of health service across the cluster.

- Part of this programme entails Brent Shadow Clinical Commissioning Group developing a “*Better Care Closer to Home*” Care Strategy to coordinate high quality out of hospital care. Consultation on both these strategies commences summer 2012.

- Proposed merger NWL NHS Hospitals Trust and Ealing Hospital NHS Trust

Examples of LINK Work

1) *Enter and View*

In December 2011, Brent LINK conducted an announced “Enter & View” visit to Willesden Centre for Health and Care. There was no specific incident triggering the visit, other than that the Centre is extensively used by local communities.

The hospital has three inpatient wards. Robertson Ward offers a specialist neurological rehabilitation service and has 12 patient beds. Menzler and Fifoot Wards both have 20 beds and provide rehabilitation services to patients who have been inpatients in an acute hospital and who need extra care and support to help them become more independent following a period of illness.

In addition to the rehabilitation service offered to patients (‘step down’ service), there is also a ‘step up’ service for up to 15 patients who need a period of short term care. These patients may be admitted directly to Menzler or Fifoot Wards straight from the Community or from Casualty, and whereas patients receiving ‘step down’ rehabilitation may stay for up to 4 weeks these “step-up” patients stay for up to 10 days.

Willessden Centre for Health and Care is a Private Finance Initiative (PFI) building. Ealing Hospital NHS Trust Integrated Care Organisation (ICO) provides and manages the clinical services; Accuro owns the building and manages onsite facilities, with NHS West London Estates service overseeing the Estates and Facilities.

Brent LINK’s “enter and” view report highlighted that whilst, patients were happy with the staff and service, there were concerns relating to cleanliness, maintenance, health & safety and a lack of culturally appropriate menu planning. (Action Plan and update from Willessden Centre for Health is attached)

Post Visit Activity

In March 2012, Brent LINK met with Ealing ICO, Accuro and NHS West London Estates to review progress following the visit. We were advised that the visit had resulted in a hospital wide “deep clean”, followed by a review of the monitoring of the cleaning contract and improved coordination between the Trust, Accuro and NHS North West London Estate.

In addition, Willesden Centre for Health and Care has developed a service improvement Action Plan in response to the key issues identified by Brent LINK as needing attention: patient care, patient consultation, medical records, medication, safety and infection control, patient meal choice, staff concerns and ward maintenance and cleanliness.

Brent LINK commends the Centre’s Management Team for the open, communicative and robust manner in which it has acted upon our concerns.

On 31 October 2012 LINKs carried out a final review visit at Willesden Centre for Health and Care. The updated action plan (attached) was shared and discussed with LINKs, as were the measures that had been introduced over the last few months to achieve high standards of cleaning and maintenance. These were evidenced through monthly audits presented by Estates and Facilities personnel. Some of the key changes made include:

- the introduction of Housekeepers has assisted in the improved performance of Ward Domestic Staff
- the appointment of an Operations Manager, Hospitality Manager and Reception and Administrative Manager has clarified clear and accountable responsibilities
- daily, weekend and evening supervisors has made a big difference to the responsiveness of the facilities services to the wards’ needs
- A programme of refurbishment has addressed the maintenance issues
- There are improved displays of the menus on offer for patients and their visitors
- LINKs have been involved with food tasting and the process of offering culturally sensitive food on the wards.

2) Brent LINK Community Information Event *“What’s Happening Health Wise in Brent?”*

In March 2012, Brent LINK organised a *“What’s Happening Health wise in Brent?”* event.

The (then) Health and Social Care Bill proposed seismic changes to the commissioning, delivery and scrutiny of health and social care in Brent but NHS Brent and the Council had yet to update local communities on their plans and intentions.

Our event therefore allowed local people to find out about and scrutinise these proposed changes. Around fifty local people were able to hear Brent Council outline latest developments regarding the Brent Shadow Health & Wellbeing Board, which will be responsible for targeting resources to tackle health inequality, whilst NHS Brent presented on latest developments regarding the Brent Shadow Clinical Commissioning Group: the GP led partnership that from April 2013 will replace NHS Brent.

Brent LINK also presented on our Healthwatch transition plans and outlined ways for local people to get involved. Presentations were followed by a lively Q&A session where local people were able to scrutinise the proposals and highlight concerns. A Brent Council/NHS Brent facilitated evening session allowed local people to work in small groups and comment on draft Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) priorities.

Key Outcomes:

The Health & Social Care Act 2012 presents the biggest reorganisation in the history of the National Health Service. Brent LINK's event provided local people, voluntary and community groups with up to date and locally relevant information on the proposed changes to Brent's local health economy.

It also facilitated community feedback on JSNA priorities. In addition, the event enabled people to find out about and sign up for Brent LINK's five new Action Groups covering: Mental Health, Adult Social Care, Public Health/Community Services, Primary Care and Hospitals.

More details can be found in Annual Report.