

Lambeth Local Involvement Network (LINK)

Lambeth LINK Engagement and Involvement Strategy

1. Introduction

This document sets out the initial strategy we will use to engage and involve people in Lambeth's health and social care services. Once the LINK membership is formed we will review and develop the strategy with the members of the LINK.

2. Principles

The principles underpinning this strategy are:

1. Balance in consideration of health and social care issues
2. Balance in consideration of local, regional and national issues
3. Valuing every individual
4. Giving a voice to those less able to do so themselves
5. Reaching out to hard-to-reach groups and occasional users
6. Diversity of membership and accessibility of activities
7. Flexibility in the methods used
8. Development of positive relations with commissioners, regulators and providers of health and social care services to achieve maximum effectiveness of the LINK
9. Provision of feedback on work done, findings and successes to members of the LINK and the public and to commissioners, regulators and providers
10. Recognition that developing effective engagement and involvement takes time
11. Realism about resources and targets

3. Informing people

We will develop a range of methods for keeping the community informed of the LINK and its activities. Appendix 1 notes some of the forms these may take. Initial communication will explain the LINK and its purpose and will invite involvement. Existing forums and community groups and our existing networks will be used to disseminate this as well as local press and information sites. Thereafter, we will keep people informed of the subjects under review, how they can become involved; findings; the responses of commissioners, regulators and providers and; the outcomes of work done.

4. Mapping communities

We will map the different local communities, using work already done, to identify those groups that we need to reach to find out their needs, views and

experiences. These communities may be geographical or any of a wide range of communities of interest such as faith, needs or user groups.

5. Mapping services

We will map existing services, in particular for social care for which there are more providers, to identify patterns or gaps in provision.

Mapping existing activity

We will map the existing activity of forums, groups and the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee to ensure that our work plan does not duplicate work already completed, in progress or, in the case of the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee, is already planned.

7. Identifying first issues

We will use the work done by the Lambeth LINK Transitional Steering Group to identify the first issues for the work plan. This will be built on through the work of mapping communities, services and activities and the identification of issues at regional and national levels where these are not already covered.

8. Setting the work plan

The Lambeth LINK Transitional Steering Group has already identified issues and started work on a work programme. These subjects will form the basis of the first work plan with further work on each dependant on the briefing papers, the scope for action, the resources available and the wishes of the LINK members.

9. Forms of engagement and involvement

The Lambeth LINK will encourage the engagement and involvement of people in the work of the LINK through the methods listed in Appendix 1. The Lambeth LINK will aim to set up different work groups and committees for separate projects for effective working and to maximise the range of people involved in the LINK, whether for the short or long term. Initially, this will be in two ways:

1. Involvement in planning the governance of the LINK.
2. Involvement in work on the subjects identified in the first work plan.

In both of these, the Lambeth LINK will draw on the work and experience of the Transitional Steering Group as well as seeking information from other forums and LINKs.

10. Training

The Lambeth LINK will assess the training needs of those involved in the LINK and provide or arrange training on the subjects identified at the level and in the form most appropriate for participants.

11. Learning from experience

The Lambeth LINK will review projects and activities and the experience of other LINKs to learn from what works and what does not so that we can become progressively effective.

Appendix 1

Forms of engagement and involvement in and contribution to the LINK

1. Information

Flyers for community and service locations

Leaflets, translated as appropriate and using easy read methods

Letters to community groups and organisations

Newsletters

Presence at community events

Local radio, including ethnic radio stations

Local press, including ethnic and specialist publications and newsletters such as for tenants and user groups

LINK Website

Items on websites of Lambeth Council; Lambeth PCT; community organisations and service providers together with links to the Lambeth LINK website

Text messages and social networking sites such as Facebook and Bebo

2. Engagement

Surveys: - written; face-to-face and telephone
quantitative and qualitative

Consultations:-

on specific issues

on experience as a service user

on needs and ideas for improvement

with different individuals and groups

in localities

Focus groups

Video booths

Events

Open days, fun days and sports events

Events for specific groups

Attendance at existing groups events and meetings

3. Involvement

Forms of involvement:-

short-term and long-term
general and for specific issues
on governance structures

Empowerment

Training for individuals in specific communities to share about the LINK

Training for those involved in governance of the LINK

Training on communication, use of IT, meetings, decision making, chairing etc

Contribution

Committee work

Dissemination of information

Practical help

Design of questionnaires, communications

Providing understanding of specific communities needs & how to reach them

Using and training experts by experience