

Gloucestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK) Communications Strategy 2011- 2012

MISSION

The Gloucestershire LINK will help influence, improve or change the way local Health & Social Care services are planned and delivered

Introduction

The Gloucestershire LINK is a network of local people, groups and community organisations who want to help shape health and social care services commissioned and provided in Gloucestershire. It is a mechanism for gathering the views of people throughout Gloucestershire communities so that these views can be made known to health and social care commissioners and providers. The Gloucestershire LINK aims to be inclusive and will not discriminate on the grounds of the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. The Gloucestershire LINK has statutory duties and powers and will act in accordance with the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

This document sets out a strategy to communicate with and involve/engage the people of Gloucestershire and gather their views about local health and social care services

Aim

- To ensure that individuals, groups, organisations and key stakeholders including the seldom heard know about Gloucestershire LINK and are given every opportunity to engage with it

Objectives

- To continue to develop a network of networks providing Gloucestershire with an 'amplified' voice, allowing individuals, groups and organisations to have their say
- To promote the LINK during its transition into Local HealthWatch and inform people about ways to participate and get involved, in whichever way suits them best
- To ensure that the work of the LINK is accessible, transparent and accountable to the public
- To meet the different accessibility needs of Gloucestershire's communities
- To maintain effective communication and relationships with those who plan, develop, deliver and regulate health and social care services in Gloucestershire
- To maintain effective communication and relationships with the media

Approach and Implementation

The LINK and Host team

The Host team will continue to work with the LINK to ensure effective internal and external communication with its members and the general public as part of its contractual agreement with the Local Authority.

Key communication routes will be maintained with the general public, service users, patients and carers, commissioners and providers of health and social care services, health and social care regulators and the Health, Community & Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee (HCCOSC)

Other voluntary groups and organisations

Working in partnership is crucial to the success of the LINK. Gloucestershire LINK will promote and publicise its activity as widely as possible using all external channels available. The LINK will also, where appropriate, attend partners' meetings and events, to promote, engage and encourage wider involvement.

Methods

Website

The Gloucestershire LINK website is currently under further development to encourage more active participation and feedback from the public and its members. The LINK intends to make full use of a range of consultation methods as part of this development, including possible use of social networking.

Accessibility

The LINK offers a number of alternative formats including Easy Read, large print and audio on request.

Gathering Views from the public

The LINK's primary function is to gather the views, opinions and experiences of Gloucestershire's residents in order to shape, influence or change the way health and social care services are planned and delivered in the county. It will continue to do so through its public events, stands at partner events and shopping arcades, website, surveys and consultations.

Feedback to the public and other key stakeholders

The Gloucestershire LINK will continue to provide regular feedback to the public and other key stakeholders via its public events, website, the LINK newsletter, e alerts, the Annual Report and local media.

Media

The LINK continues to engage successfully with the local media and will continue to do so during the transition year.

June 2011

To be reviewed: March 2012