

## **Gloucestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK)**

### **Equality Impact Assessment Report – August 2009**

The overall aim of the Gloucestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK) is to allow people to help influence, improve or change the way local health and social care services are planned and delivered. Gloucestershire LINK is made up of individuals, organisations and community groups who work together to improve local health and social care services. A key objective is to find out what people like and dislike about local services and to work with the people who plan and run them to help make them better.

During this early developmental stage of the LINK, the equality impact assessment encompasses the newly created policies and documents, and has also taken into the consideration the importance of engaging with the many various communities in Gloucestershire and their differing needs.

The 2001 census showed that there were 564,559 people living in Gloucestershire:-

- 49% were male and 51% female
- 24% were aged 0-19 and 17% aged 65+
- 16% had a limiting long-term illness
- 0.2% of those aged 16+ were living in a same-sex relationship
- 3% were non-white, with higher proportions in the urban districts of Gloucester and Cheltenham (7% and 3% respectively) compared with the rural districts (1% in each of Cotswold, Forest of Dean, Stroud and Tewkesbury)
- 76% described themselves as Christian, 2% of other religions and 15% of no religion; the remainder did not state their religion

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-2007 population estimates for Gloucestershire show:-

- the non-white population of the county has grown to 5% (with increases across all six districts)
- The proportion of those aged 65+ has risen by 0.5% and the proportion of 0-19 year olds has fallen by 0.5%
- Data from other sources suggests that 5% of the county's adults are registered disabled
- No additional data is available on sexual orientation or transgender

## **Methods and Outcome of Consultation**

The documents have been assessed according to whether they have a positive or negative impact. At this early development stage of the Gloucestershire LINK, the documents have also been assessed in relation to promoting good relations according to the various equality strands.

## **Recommendations**

Listed below are some of the recommendations for the LINK Stewardship Board to take into consideration.

- Important to communicate LINK success stories to all communities, reinforcing the message of influence by involvement
- Provide important LINK documents/policies in suitable formats to ensure good understanding and remove barriers
- Look into possibility of local champions/representatives of various communities of interest and geography to increase membership and understanding of LINK
- Make links with Health and Social Care students at University of Gloucestershire and utilise skills in community engagement activity
- All documents/policies to carry offer of alternative formats, i.e. language, large print, easy read, in particular the Registration of Interest form. Main LINK leaflet does not easily identify the fact that it is available in different languages and formats
- Create links with local employers to secure the interest of the working population
- Engage and widen participation of younger people through the use of social networking sites, podcasts and text alerts
- Make use of alternative venues for engagement to capture seldom heard groups, eg schools, leisure centres, workplace, local shops
- Look into Equality Impact Assessment training in relation to Enter and View

## **Conclusion**

As a whole, no negative or adverse impact was uncovered during the Equality Impact Assessment. Gloucestershire LINK has made considerable progress with the development of the documents and was perceived as positive by those who had been consulted with.

Participants of the consultation felt that the efforts made by the Gloucestershire LINK to date had been positive and some have been happy to sign up as LINK members, or to be contacted by the LINK when advice and guidance was needed.

A contact database of seldom heard groups will be given to the LINK as part of this consultation. Participants felt that future LINK development feedback in relation to the Equalities agenda is paramount for the success of the LINK as an involvement body, and the successes of the LINK should be celebrated with all the communities of Gloucestershire.

**August 2009**