

Contact LINK:MK to find be kept informed of all PPG Network news as well as our wider role in patient participation.

LINK:MK (Local Involvement Network, Milton Keynes)

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A Stronger Voice
for Better Care

www.miltonkeyneslink.co.uk



Network events take place approximately four times a year and give anyone with an interest in Patient Participation Groups the opportunity to share experience and learn about new initiatives in Primary Care both locally and nationally. If you have any questions or would like further information about PPGs, the network, or LINK:MK, please contact the LINK:MK Support Team on emma.linkmk@ageukmiltonkeynes.org.uk or 01908 266696



A stronger voice for better care

The Community Health Services Infection Prevention Control (CHS IPC) team are keen to share information with Patient Participation Groups' and members of the public, but would first like to know what you would like and how you would like it. We would be happy to include something in your Newsletter, or talk to groups, or develop an IPC newsletter with you, and would welcome your ideas. Would you like to know about specific infections, or infection rates in Milton Keynes, or about antibiotics, or antibiotic resistance?

The IPC team would like to receive your suggestions by the end of February. You can contact the team on julie.uglow@mkpct.nhs.uk or you can give your feedback to the LINK:MK Support Team who will pass this on.

Issue 3, Winter 2011

PPG LINK:MK Network News

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LINK:MK are delighted to announce that from January 4th you will be able to hear us in a regular hour long programme on Secklow Sounds! You can hear LINK LIVE on this new Community Radio station every Wednesday evening between 7-8 pm at www.secklowsounds.org on 87.7fm and directly from the LINK:MK website. A small working group is forming to plan and present the shows, and any member, including our PPG participants, who'd like to be involved is invited to contact the LINK:MK Support Team. There will also be opportunities to present the show, or host an interview. The first programme included an interview with Maggie Weston, a LINK:MK member from Stantonbury Health Centre PPG who also leads the local Macular Disease Society

Support Group. The second programme, on Wednesday 11th, will include a feature about the PPG LINK:MK Network.

As a Community Radio Station, specifically for Milton Keynes, Secklow Sounds closely reflects the ethos of LINK:MK and we are looking forward to working together to reach even more local people.

Secklow Sounds defines itself as, "A Community Station that will foster the participation of citizens, defend their interests and reflect their views; it will truly inform; it will help resolve the problems of daily life; it will allow all ideas to be debated in its programmes and ensure all opinions are respected; it will allow cultural diversity to be stimulated and celebrated; it will ensure everyone's word is valued, without discrimination."



You are invited to the PPG LINK:MK Network Meeting on Wednesday January 18th at the Peartree Centre (AGE UK), Peartree Bridge, Milton Keynes. The event starts at 5.15pm with a light buffet and refreshments.

See inside for more information or contact the LINK:MK Support Team on 01908 266696 or emma.linkmk@ageukmiltonkeynes.org.uk

Last PPG LINK:MK Network Meeting

LINK:MK hosted the last PPG LINK:MK Network Meeting of 2011 in October at the Peartree Centre. Members from 15 Milton Keynes Surgeries attended and guest Speakers included David Carrel (PPG Chair, Ashfield Medical Centre) and Gaynor Young (Practice Manager, Stantonbury Health Centre) who came along to share their very different experiences of setting up and maintaining a Patient Participation Group within their practice. Both were able to bring different views of how the group worked with Practice staff, the benefits this had produced and the issues they faced, and this opened up some interesting discussion from all attendees. Jeannie Ablett (Chief Operating Officer, MK Commissioning) also gave an update on progress within the newly merged Clinical Commissioning Group and a very brief discussion on how Patients would be represented on the CCG Board. This led into the Group Discussion and Feedback section of the agenda which focussed on "How do you think patients in Milton Keynes can be best represented on a single Commissioning Group?", and produced a lively debate. Since then, LINK:MK have received numerous comments regarding development of the CCG and its intentions for Patient Engagement, and will therefore revisit the subject in future agendas.

LINK:MK are pleased to have launched our upgraded website. Please take a look at www.miltonkeyneslink.co.uk where you can sign up as a member, read our news and find out about events. There is also a new section for PPGs. More developments are taking place, so keep coming back!



Next PPG LINK:MK Network Meeting

LINK:MK will host the next PPG LINK:MK Network Meeting on Wednesday January 18th 2012, at the Peartree Centre in Milton Keynes. The event will open with the usual buffet and refreshments at 5.15pm and all are welcome. The event is open to **anyone with an interest in Patient Participation Groups**. You don't have to be a LINK member, or a PPG member to attend and there is no need to book.

Come along to find out what the network is, and isn't, about and to meet with other PPG members from across Milton Keynes to share experiences, or just to find out more about PPGs and LINK:MK in general.

The agenda for this event is available now from the Support Team or on the website, but includes the launch of a new guide and an opportunity for attendees to set the agenda for the network for the forthcoming year. We'll also be discussing recent changes in Health and Social Care services in Milton Keynes, and looking at some of the issues our members and participants have brought to LINK:MK recently.

Patient Representation through LINK:MK - Guidance and Support Workshop

LINK:MK are pleased to announce the date for the next Guidance and Support Workshop on Monday March 26th. The workshop is aimed at members and participants who represent patients through LINK:MK, or may be interested in doing so, but we are pleased to hear from anyone who has an interest in patient representation and would like to attend, as long as space allows.

The guidance in this workshop has been revised for this and future workshops. The workshop will be in two parts, with the first offering an introduction to LINK:MK, patient representation and local health and social care structure and the second part aimed at support and sharing experience. Lunch will be provided.

A full agenda will be available shortly. Please look out for further information in our e-alerts, newsletters, radio programme or online, or contact the LINK:MK Support Team to book a place.

Accessing Health and Social Care for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired - your GP Surgery

You may be aware that LINK:MK prepared a report, "Accessing Health and Social Care for the Deaf and Hearing Impaired", for local health services providers, including the Clinical Commissioning Group. The report was a result of a work programme project with local Deaf and Hearing Impaired patients who brought their issues to LINK:MK. The issues ranged from difficulties in booking appointments and accessing health information, to interpreters not being booked for GP and hospital appointments and misunderstanding communication regarding medication and aftercare. Recommendations for service improvements were also made, including the use of "Signtranslate", which can, at short notice, provide online interpretation through a webcam when an interpreter is not available. LINK:MK were pleased to receive positive responses and action plans from all commissioners and providers which have now amalgamated so they can be monitored by patient representatives and our Deaf and Hearing impaired members. Some of the actions agreed included the installation of Signtranslate in some GP Surgeries and a commitment to increasing staff training and awareness. LINK:MK have also encouraged GPs to ensure they have working hearing loops and a text relay service, as well as signs that let Deaf and Hearing Impaired patients know what is available to them. Please look out for these services in your own surgery and support your practice to improve access for their Deaf and Hearing Impaired patients. More details about the project are available on our website; look out for news of further developments in our e-alerts and newsletters.

Please let us know what your own PPG has achieved or is working on and how it is benefitting the practice and patients so we can share it here.