

## Early Adopter Project (EAP)

### Information to date:

- A local network of organisations and individuals interested in health and social care
- 152 LINKs based on local government boundaries with social care responsibility
- Support procured by 3<sup>rd</sup> party by local Government
- Money given to local government by Department of Health (DoH) via Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003
- Local in nature, limited central direction and expected to be strategic

### What might Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) do?

- Promote and support the involvement of people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of health and social care services;
- Obtain the views of people about their health and social care needs;
- Gather the views of people on their experiences of health and social care services; and
- Convey those views to organisations responsible for commissioning, providing, managing and scrutinising health and social care services, and making reports and recommendations to those bodies on how services may be improved;
- Work with other LINKs on health and social care services that have cross boundary implications e.g. mental health, ambulances, specialist acute services and so on

### What might LINK support do?

- Initially establish the LINK;
- Attract membership to the LINK;
- Support the establishment of the LINK's governance arrangements;
- Provide premises and equipment to the LINK;
- Provide professional and administrative support to the LINK

### Proposed LINK Powers

- The right to request information from health and social care bodies, and those bodies will be required to provide that information
- The right to a response from health and social care bodies to any report or recommendation made by a LINK
- The power to make a referral to a local authority overview and scrutiny committee and to receive a response
- Enter and view health and social care facilities – DoH developing a Code of Conduct

### Early Adopter Programme

The nine EAP sites are Hertfordshire, Medway, County Durham, Kensington and Chelsea, Dorset, Manchester, Doncaster, with the South West Peninsula and Leeds / Bradford being run by the Healthcare Commission.

This publication outlined the Government's proposals for citizen and user engagement in health and social care. Views were sought on ways in which the new proposals should be developed. The Government's response to 'A Stronger Local Voice' summarises responses given to the key points and sets out further detail on how the Government expects the LINKs to work.

### **Local Government & PPI Bill introduced to Parliament December**

This Bill discusses the abolishment of the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) and the creation of LINKs.

### **House of Commons Committee inquiry into PPI in the NHS**

An inquiry into PPI in the NHS was announced on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November by the Health Committee. The terms of reference for this inquiry have been issued and the questions the Health Committee will be looking include:

- What is the purpose of public and patient involvement?
- What form of public and patient involvement is desirable, practical and offers good value for money?
- Why are existing systems for patient and public involvement being reformed after only three years?
- How should LINKs be designed?
- How should LINKs relate to and avoid overlap with:
  - Local Authority structures including Overview and Scrutiny Committees
  - Foundation Trust boards and Members Councils
  - Inspectorates including the Healthcare Commission
  - Formal and informal complaints procedures
- In what circumstances should wider public consultation (including under Section 11 of the Health and Social Care Act 2001) be carried out and what form should this take?

The Health Committee (HSC) report on its enquiry into PPI in the NHS was published on April 20<sup>th</sup> 2007. A copy of the full report is available at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmhealth/278/27802.htm>

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