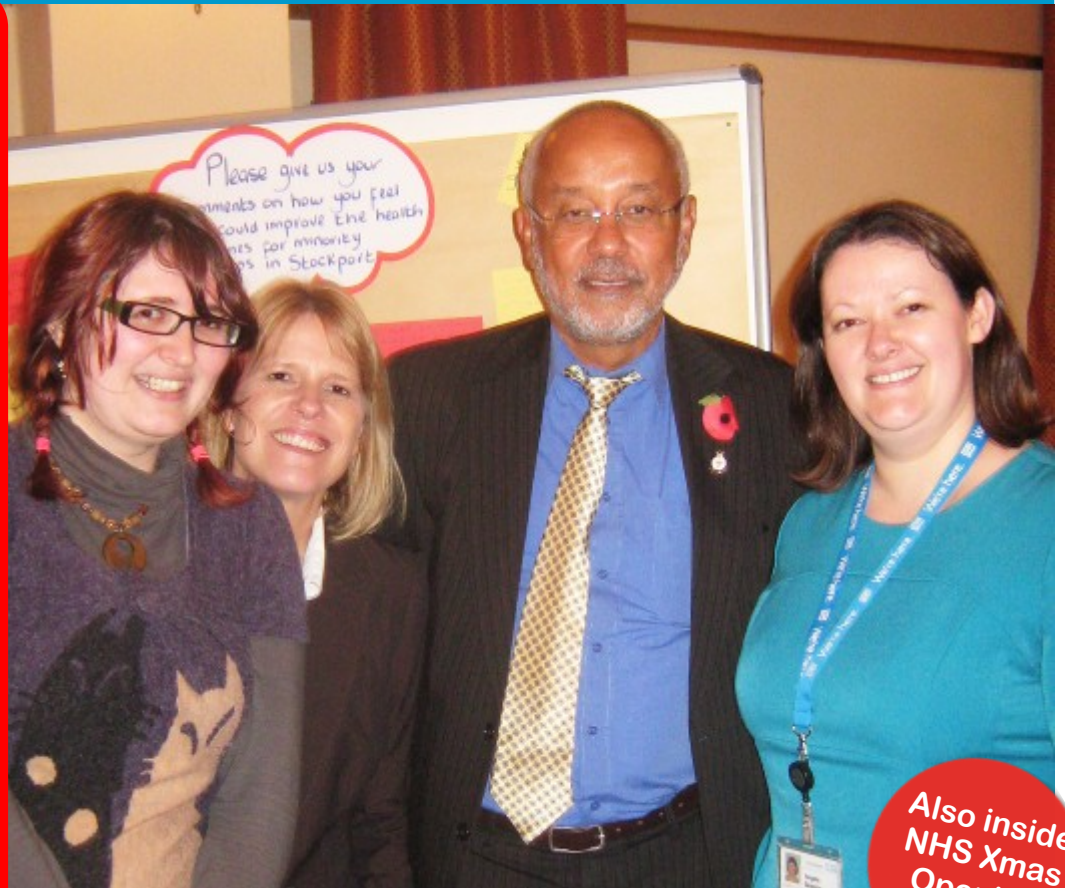


## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Editor's letter	2
What is the LINK?	2
Making Healthcare Fair	3
Behind the Scenes	3
Older People	4
The LINK Online	4
Hospital Referrals	5
Represent the LINK	5
Christmas Opening Times	6
Extending Choice	7
District Nurses	7
LINK Work Programme	8
Briefing Sessions	10
Stockport FLAG	12
Dementia Roadshow	12
Family Information	12
Age UK Stockport	13
Dentists	13
Flu Fighers	14
Council Tax	14
Events	15
Useful Contacts	15
Contact the LINK	16

LINK News

Community News



## LINK helps make health fair

**In November, LINK members worked with the NHS in Stockport to find out whether people felt healthcare in Stockport was fair and accessible to all.**

Around 50 people attended the event, including NHS staff, local residents, patients, carers, and a range of local community groups.

Overall, there was a positive recognition of the amount of work that has been undertaken in recent years to improve services for local groups and reduce inequalities. In particular, it was noted that both NHS Stockport and Stockport NHS Foundation Trust (Stepping Hill Hospital) have undertaken a wide range of engagement activities with local groups to try and ensure that all voices are heard in decision making and service changes.

Angela Beagrie, Head of Policy Compliance at NHS Stockport said, "We want our services to be fair so that everyone in Stockport has an equal opportunity to live a long and healthy life. We held the event to find out from the people of Stockport what they think about their health and their local health care services."

Also inside  
NHS Xmas  
Opening  
times

**Read more on page 3.**

## Letter from the editor



**Joyce Drummond**  
Editor and lead on  
Publicity & Promotion  
Subgroup

**Hello again!** The nights are closing in, it's getting colder and Christmas is coming - so why not sit back & relax with our newsletter.

We've been very busy at the LINK. Our lead story shows how we helped the NHS in Stockport ensure their services are fair and accessible to all. You can read more about it over the page.

I took part in a flashdance for National Older People's Day and had a great time. You can read more about it on page 4, where we also have news about ways to keep in touch.

On page 5 we have a variety of ways for you to get involved in the LINK. We're looking for feedback from anybody who has been referred to hospital and we're looking for more LINK representatives.

On page 6 we have Christmas opening times for all of your health services so you do not get in trouble over winter.

On page 7 we have news from the consultation we took part in on extending the choice of healthcare provider and news on district nurses.

We have a double page spread starting on page 8 showing you all the different

areas the LINK is currently working on.

Starting on page 10, we have summaries of the LINK Briefing Sessions from the last few months.

Page 12 of this special bumper edition of LINK News introduces the new manager of FLAG, the Alzheimer's Society update us on their community roadshow and Family info Link promote their new directory.

On page 13, we have an update from Age UK Stockport and a reminder of where to go when you need a dentist.

Please don't forget your flu jab, I have had mine and you can get yours from your GP. We have a story on page 14 about how important it is to have your jab. Also on page 14 we have news from the Council about Council tax.

As always, we have local events on the inside back page.

Please let the LINK Support Office know if you wish to have something in the next newsletter by 15th January. If you would like a LINK member to visit your group to talk, then please do get in touch.

*Joyce Drummond*

## What is the Stockport LINK?

The Stockport LINK is a grassroots health and social care watchdog made up of many groups and individuals across Stockport coming together to feed back on health and social care services. We ask people what they think about local health and social care services and provide a chance to suggest and improve them.

Anybody can join the LINK, which is made up of Stockport residents and regularly gets feedback from the community. This means that the LINK focuses on what is important to the community.

The LINK has the power to ask providers and commissioners for information about services and expect a response, make recommendations to providers and commissioners and expect a response and refer matters to the Scrutiny Committee of the Local Authority.

If you want to join the LINK please call **0161 477 8479**. Signing up to the LINK in one way does not mean that somewhere along the way you can't decide to change or look at other opportunities. Members can be involved in more than one type of activity and as much or as little as they want.



Continued from front page.

Positive feedback was received about a number of Stockport health & social care services. Efforts such as flu jabs for 'at-risk' groups and community development work were praised for their impact in raising awareness and improving health outcomes for disadvantaged groups.

The Foundation Trusts' drop-in hearing aid service at Walthew House was praised as a positive initiative, which should be more widely promoted. NHS Stockport's new information videos in sign language were also complimented and it was suggested that they should be made available at events in DVD format next to the written leaflets.

Special recognition was also given to local healthcare staff for their willingness to help patients with diverse or additional needs.

A number of attendees highlighted the need for more specialist services for patients with learning



disabilities. Men's health was seen as a key issue and it was suggested that NHS Stockport undertakes more health checks for men.

A large number of suggestions focused around prevention, through the use of regular health checks for 'at-risk' groups or those groups less likely to use services. More culturally appropriate communications were recommended to promote health issues faced by minority groups.

You can read the complete report on the consultation by visiting: [www.citizenspace.com/stockport-haveyoursay/corporate-services/edsevent](http://www.citizenspace.com/stockport-haveyoursay/corporate-services/edsevent) or you can get in touch with the LINK office, details on the back page, for a paper copy.

## LINK members work hard behind the scenes

**In addition to all the work reported in LINK News, a lot of things happen behind the scenes. Here is a snippet of some of the work that has been done by LINK members and the support team in the past 2 months.**

- LINK members have written to Stockport NHS Foundation Trust Chief Executive, Chris Burke following a report from the Care Quality Commission on Dignity & Nutrition at Stepping Hill Hospital. Since the report, the hospital has put an action plan in place.
- LINK Enter & View Representatives have visited care homes, Lea House, Lynwood and Reinbek following feedback from the public and to establish relationships with the homes.
- A letter was written to Laura Foster at NHS Stockport to raise concern around the service capacity of the District Nurses in Stockport.
- LINK members have been involved with setting priorities for Ambulatory Care Pathways.
- We are launching our youth work with a questionnaire at the Wellbeing Fair at Stockport College on December 1st.
- The LINK Reading Group have commented on information from ICAS, Stepping Hill Hospital and Central Youth helping to improve the readability of the material.
- LINK members have commented on a end of life care specification for Stockport.
- LINK members have attended Older People's Day and Age UK's Winter Warmth event. You can discover what they found out on page 5.
- LINK Enter & View Representatives have also visited St Ann's Hospice, Bluebell ward in The Meadows, Pennine Care ran Arden & Norbury wards and E3 & X-Ray B at Stepping Hill Hospital.
- The Stockport LINK Annual Report 2010-2011 is now available from the LINK office and website, [www.stockportlink.co.uk](http://www.stockportlink.co.uk).
- The Health & Care Forum are currently looking at the Department of Health consultation on NHS staff's Duty of Candor.
- LINK Enter & View Representatives took part in refresher training in October, learning more about Stockport's Dignity in Care work.

**If you would like any more information about any of these issues or want to get involved, copies of minutes from LINK Core Groups are available on our website [www.stockportlink.co.uk](http://www.stockportlink.co.uk) or you can call the LINK office, details on the back page.**

# What is important for older people?



The Stockport LINK has attended several events in Stockport aimed at older people including Older People's Day held by Home Instead Stockport & Age UK Stockport and Age UK Stockport's Winter Warmth Event.

During both events, LINK members asked older people in Stockport about their views on health & social care services. We asked people, "what health & social care services are there for older people in Stockport?".

During the event around 50 people stopped at the LINK stand. Overall, 19 pieces of feedback were gained from 17 people. There was positive feedback including several comments on over 50's group Evergreens and comments on Cale Green, Heaton Norris and Romiley medical practices.

Negative feedback included; a comment that doctors no longer come to people's homes, inability to get a dentist, people needing follow up to avoid being lost in the system and getting health workers to help improve dementia services.

During the Winter Warmth event, LINK members repeated the activity and received 11 pieces of individual feedback with several people adding to points they agreed with. There were several positive comments on the Age UK Pop-in and the day itself. Positive comments were also made about Dr Needham at Marple Bridge, Stepping Hill, Wythenshawe, Manchester Royal (B6), Stepping Hill Hospital (A12), the Community cafe run by Mottram street residents and the Wellbeing Centre.

All feedback gained from both days will feed into the LINK Older People's Work Programme.

## LINK membership update



organisations' *Follow Fridays* (recommendations to follow). As with the Facebook, the twitter is updated weekly or more if needed.

The Stockport LINK YouTube account has **194** channel views and **328** total upload views. Videos uploaded via the YouTube account are also shared on our other social networking platforms.

Since March, we have featured in **10** local Newsletters and we have had **5** articles in local press, including the Manchester Evening News, Stockport Express and BBC North West Tonight.

The LINK now has **400** individual members (up 80 on last year), who do not belong to any formalised group, but have an interest in health and social care. There are **58** community groups signed as group members of the LINK and **12** Voluntary organisations.

Having a regular article in our member's publications ensures that we regularly reach over **3500** people in Stockport, letting them know about the work of the LINK and inviting them to participate in LINK activities.

The Stockport LINK currently has **421** friends on Facebook (up **300** on last year) and regularly keeps in contact via weekly status updates. Facebook is also used to promote LINK events such as Briefing Sessions and consultations.

The *Twitter* account has **373** followers (up **248** on last year) and regularly features on other

## Find the LINK online

	<a href="http://www.stockportlink.co.uk">www.stockportlink.co.uk</a>
	<a href="https://twitter.com/StockportLINK">twitter.com/StockportLINK</a>
	<a href="https://facebook.com/StockportLINK">facebook.com/StockportLINK</a>
	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/user/StockportLINK">www.youtube.com/user/StockportLINK</a>



## Have you been referred to hospital?

In the last edition of LINK News, we asked you for your experiences of the Choose & Book process of being referred to hospital.

Following the results from this work Stockport LINK and NHS Stockport are working together to get the views of any person who has been referred to hospital in the last two years **whether they used the Choose & Book system or not.**

Mike Mayers from NHS Stockport said, "We are constantly looking for ways of improving the referral process and how the national booking system called 'Choose & Book' works. To do this we have devised a short questionnaire to capture the experiences and opinions of NHS patients."

The questionnaire is available online and should take no longer than seven minutes to complete. If you are unable to access the questionnaire online, you can contact the LINK, details on the back page and they can complete it with you over the phone or send you a paper copy. To access the survey, visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/chooseandbook>.

Posters advertising the questionnaire have been sent to all local GP surgeries and community centres in Stockport. If there is not a poster in your surgery then you can ask the practice manager to call the LINK, details on the back page.



## Would you like to represent the LINK?

The Stockport LINK are looking for LINK members who would like represent the LINK on the following service provider boards:

- Stockport Health Record
- Stockport Clinical Commissioning Pathfinder Committee
- Flu Immunisation

The role of LINK Representatives is to ensure the views of the LINK and public are appropriately represented on the Board. It is important that personal views not be aired when representing the LINK. In addition, LINK representatives will ensure that the LINK is well informed about the main issues which arise from the Board, verbally and in writing where appropriate.

The role of the representative will differ depending on the board, but in general the responsibility of the representative will be to attend the meeting, familiarise themselves with the Board papers prior to the meetings and relay the views of the LINK and the community to the Board.

The LINK Support Office can offer support to any LINK representative who wishes to sit on a Board, including spending time going through minutes, supporting you in meetings and LINK Training is also available to members to improve assertiveness. As a LINK representative you are entitled to receive travel expenses to and from the meetings.

If you are interested in representing the LINK on any of these Boards, please get in contact with the LINK Support Office, details on the back page, and request a role description for the Board.



During Christmas, the opening times for NHS services will be changing. The Stockport LINK contacted NHS Stockport to find out all the opening times for NHS services over the Christmas period.

If you have any medical problems over the holiday period, NHS Direct are open 24 hours a day 365 days a year on 0845 4647.

Make sure you have your repeat prescriptions and any medication you need by mid December – don't wait until the last minute.

## Opening times

### Your Local GP Practice

**GP practices in Stockport will be closed for the following days:**

Saturday 24 December - Tuesday 27 December  
Saturday 31 December - Monday 2 January

If you need urgent help and advice that cannot wait until your surgery is open, the GP out of hours service will be available by phoning your usual practice and following the instructions. Make sure you have repeat prescriptions and any medicines you need for the Christmas and New Year holidays by mid December.

### Your Local Pharmacy

**Pharmacies are available for free help & advice. Over the holiday period:**

Lloyds Pharmacy, 236 Wellington Road South (A6), Stockport, SK2 6NW  
Tel: **0161 480 3371**

Open: **10am-10pm every day**

Most other pharmacies will be closed on Christmas Day, however they may be open at other times. To find the contact details of your local pharmacy either go to [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk) or use the free text service. Text 'pharmacy' to **64746** and you will be sent details of your 3 nearest pharmacies free of charge.

### Social Care

If you need help from social care services over the festive period, please use the following numbers to get in touch: Adult Social Care - **0161 217 6029** or Children & Families Social Care - **0161 217 6028**

If you have an emergency, please contact the Out of Hours service on **0161 718 2118**.

### Your Local Contraception Services

Contraceptive and Sexual Health (CASH) clinics will be closed from 20 December 2011 - 2 January 2012.

The Choices Centre, 1 High Bank Side, Stockport (**0161 426 9677**) is closed for the same period but will be opening for emergency contraceptive and sexual health issues with no appointment on: Wednesday 21st December 9.30am-11.30am.

Central Youth, 1 St. Peter's Square, Stockport, SK1 1NZ (**0161 426 9696**). This is usually a service for young people, however over Christmas they will see people of any age for emergency contraception services. The opening times over Christmas and New Year are:

Mon 19 Dec - 12 noon - 5pm  
Tue 20 Dec - 1pm - 5pm  
Wed 21 Dec - 1pm - 5pm  
Thurs 22 Dec - 1pm - 5pm  
Fri 23 Dec - 12 noon - 4.30pm  
Sat 24 Dec - 10am - 12 noon  
Sun 25 Dec - CLOSED  
Mon 26 Dec - CLOSED  
Tue 27 Dec - CLOSED  
Wed 28 Dec - 1pm - 5pm  
Thurs 29 Dec - 1pm - 5pm  
Fri 30 Dec - 12 noon - 4.30pm  
Sat 31 Dec - 10am - 12 noon  
Sun 1 Jan - CLOSED  
Mon 2 Jan - CLOSED

The emergency contraceptive pill is available at all sessions. Remember, the quicker that emergency contraception is taken after sex the more reliable it is. You have 72 hours to get emergency contraceptive tablets or 5 days to get an IUD coil as emergency contraception after unprotected sex or contraceptive failure.

Most pharmacies sell emergency contraception (to over 16's only) at a cost of around £25.

**We hope you have found this information useful. Remember that NHS Direct are open 24 hours a day 365 days a year on 0845 4647. And don't forget to pick up any prescriptions you will need over the Christmas period before the services close. We hope you have a great Christmas and a happy new year.**





## Public feed back on health services

The LINK had been involved in commenting on the Government's decision to extend the choice of healthcare provider in Stockport. Any Qualified Provider or AQP means that non-NHS services may be contracted by the NHS to offer services should the patients choose it.

In addition to the LINK involvement, NHS Stockport has undertaken consultation with local staff, partners and members of the public, local GPs and members of Stockport's Health & Wellbeing Board. Overall, around 150 people gave their views on the consultation.

As reported in our last Newsletter, LINK members felt very strongly that services should remain within the NHS and that this extension of choice would allow private companies to cherry-pick cheaper and easier services from the NHS. This would leave Trusts with more complicated and costly procedures on a reduced budget.

However, faced with the reality that this extension is going to happen, the LINK agreed on areas where they felt extending the choice of provider would have the least impact on patient care and could even resolve existing issues of waiting times.

GPs felt that extending choice of provider could reduce waiting times and that choice would be good for patients, but that it would not necessarily improve services.



There was overwhelming support for AQP extension in each service area from members of the public and health care staff completing the survey online.

There was a clear view across the board that AQP could and should be used to reduce waiting times and offer more choice. However, contract measures should be sufficiently strong to ensure quality among new providers.

As LINK members will know, NHS Stockport is now part of the Greater Manchester PCT Cluster. All 10 Greater Manchester PCTs submitted their proposals for extending choice of provider to the Cluster Board, where it was agreed to extend choice to 'any qualified provider' for:

- diagnostics
- podiatry
- adult hearing services
- children's wheelchair services.

You can read the complete report on the consultation by visiting: [www.citizenspace.com/stockport-haveyoursay/consultation-and-engagement/aqp](http://www.citizenspace.com/stockport-haveyoursay/consultation-and-engagement/aqp) or you can get in touch with the LINK office, details on the back page, for a paper copy.

## New Boards strengthen public voice

**New Health & Wellbeing Boards across the country are being set up to be a forum for local commissioners across the NHS, public health and social care, elected representatives and representatives of HealthWatch to discuss how to work together to better the health and wellbeing outcomes of the people in their area.**

During 2012, the Stockport Health & Wellbeing Board will meet every two months in shadow form until the NHS reforms within the Health & Social Care Bill become legislation. By involving democratically elected representatives, patient representatives and local commissioners across health, public health, and social care, they will significantly strengthen the democratic legitimacy of commissioning decisions. They will also provide a forum for challenge, discussion and the consideration of local people's views, which local HealthWatch will help to represent on the Board.

Your current LINK representative is John Leach (Chair of Stockport LINK) and together with the Board are devising ways in which to engage with members of the public so that your voice can influence decision making. A Health & Wellbeing Board public event will be held in March next year where you will be invited to have an input into the Board's engagement arrangements and generally find out more about the local implementation of the health reforms.

Their key task at the moment is developing a Health & Wellbeing Strategy for Stockport and we will report more about this in our February issue of LINK News. For more information please contact the LINK, details on the back page.

# LINK Work Programme

**The Stockport LINK try to cover all areas of Health & Social Care in Stockport.**

In order to ensure that LINK work is representative and thorough, we use a LINK work programme, which is made up of 18 key areas. Each area is headed up by a LINK member or is made up of community groups signed up to the LINK. When an issue comes into the LINK it is signposted through the LINK Executive Committee (previously Steering Group) to the relevant area.

Any LINK member can join any work programme area, just get in contact with the LINK office. If you have an issue you think should be part of our work programme please contact the LINK Support Office, details on the back page for a *Request for Involvement* form and we will ensure that your request goes to the right place. Alternatively you can feed back to the LINK on our website [www.stockportlink.co.uk](http://www.stockportlink.co.uk) or get in contact for a paper copy. All feedback is kept anonymous.

## 1) LINK Executive Committee (previously Steering Group)



The **LINK Executive Committee** meet fortnightly to ensure effective and efficient running of LINK activity. They oversee all LINK work programme areas, plan the agenda of any upcoming LINK Core Group meetings, review LINK governance & policy, review membership & public feedback, review LINK members' reports, consider external requests and agree financial resources for LINK activities. The LINK Executive Committee is led by LINK Chair, John Leach.

## 2) Health & Care Forum

The **Health & Care Forum** meet monthly to address general and current health & social care structure concerns. They support the LINK by providing up to date information of local changes and ways to influence. They are currently working on GP questionnaires, transforming community services, quality accounts, any pharmacy requests, any White Papers and any matters arising from NHS Boards & Clinical Committees. The Health & Care Forum is led by Mike Lappin.

## 3) HealthWatch Pathfinder Task Group

The **HealthWatch Pathfinder Task Group** meet monthly to support and develop the patient & public engagement element of Local HealthWatch. They are led by John Leach.

## 4) LINK Mental Health Group

The **LINK Mental Health Group** meet to recognise and identify gaps or concerns in current service provision and ensure these issues are supported by LINK. They are currently looking at the physical health needs of people with mental health issues and employment benefit. They are led by Margaret McCausland.



## 5) LINK BME Issues Work Programme area

The **LINK BME Work Programme area** looks at issues around black and minority ethnic people. Groups signed up to the LINK that feed into this group include Indian Association and ACCA.

## 6) LINK Disability Work Programme area

The **LINK Disability Work Programme area** looks to recognise and identify gaps or concerns in current service provision for disabled people and ensure these issues are supported by LINK. Groups signed up to the LINK that feed into this area include Disability Stockport and Walthew House. LINK work carried out by this group include the recent work on improving access to breast screening units and access to services for deaf people.

## 7) LINK Older People Work Programme area

The **LINK Older People Work Programme area** looks at issues of concern for older people. Groups signed up to the LINK that feed into this group include Age UK Stockport, All Our Tomorrows Shadow Board and the Older People's Forum. LINK work carried out by this group include improving dignity in care and taking part in the Age UK *Hungry to be Heard* campaign.



# LINK Work Programme

## 8) LINK Young People Forum

The **LINK Young People Forum** is currently being set up. The aim of the group will be to ensure that young people's views are recognised and taken into account when service providers are making decisions. We are currently running a questionnaire to discover how this group will work, you can find out more on page 5. The lead for this group is Tony Stokes.

## 9) LINK Carers Work Programme area

The **LINK Carers Work Programme area** identifies issues for carers and looks to influence and improve service provision. Groups signed up to the LINK that feed into this group include Signpost for Carers, the Carers Forum and Mental Health Carers.



## 10) LINK Enter & View Subgroup

The **LINK Enter & View subgroup** carry out visits to places where care takes place including care homes, hospital wards, GPs, opticians and pharmacies to view the quality of care provided. The lead for this group is Gerry Wright and 30 LINK members are trained as LINK Enter & View Representatives.

## 11) LINK Reading SubGroup

The **LINK Reading SubGroup** ensures that literature is understandable and accessible to the general population by commenting on literature from local services.

## 12) LINK Publicity & Promotion Subgroup

The **LINK Publicity & Promotion Subgroup** meet monthly to develop the LINK publicity & promotion action plan. They ensure that LINK members and stakeholders are kept up to date with LINK activity and help to raise general awareness of the LINK. They are led by Joyce Drummond.



## 13) LINK Training Subgroup

The **LINK Training Subgroup** is overseen by Gerry Wright to ensure LINK members are supported and given opportunities to enable them to be involved in LINK activity.

## 14) LINK Activity Budget

The **LINK Activity Budget** is overseen by David Atkinson to ensure the LINK Activity Budget is spent evidencing value for money and in the interests of the local community.

## 15) LINK Discharge Procedures Task Group

The **LINK Discharge Procedures Task Group** was set up following feedback to ensure local people have a safe and timely discharge back into the community with appropriate packages of care in place if needed. The group is led by Peggy Hall and is current running a discharge from hospital questionnaire that you can access at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/XXYYLC>.

## 16) LINK Do Not Attend (DNA) Task Group

The **LINK DNA Task Group** have been supporting Stockport NHS in reducing the amount of people who do not attend clinic appointments through appropriate awareness raising thus saving patient waiting times and money. This group is led by Alan Watt.

## 17) LINK Complaints Task Group

The **Complaints Task Group** ensure local complaints systems are supportive to people making a complaint in a timely and appropriate manner and easily accessed by members of the public. This group is led by Gerry Wright.

## 18) LINK Consultations Group

The **Consultations Group** ensure members and the public can influence local and national policies and decisions about health & social care services.

**Each month the LINK invite service providers to come along to their Briefing Sessions.** Briefing Sessions are open to all LINK members, contact the LINK if you would like to attend.

## Clinical Commissioning

**presented by Dr. Ranjit Gill, Lead for the Stockport Clinical Commissioning Pathfinder Group on 21st September 2011**

Dr. Gill attended the LINK Briefing Session to talk to LINK members about the new Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Dr. Gill explained that the Government wants Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) to disappear and be replaced by Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).

These will be led by GPs and other clinicians from the area enabling clinical people to make clinical decisions. During his presentation, Dr. Gill stressed the importance of fewer but better managers in the structures to ensure that they work the best they can.

Dr. Gill explained that in Greater Manchester, there were 10 local NHS primary care trusts and now there is a PCT Cluster, incorporating them all before they are abolished and Clinical Commissioning Groups are set up. The Clinical Commissioning Groups will commission services for the local area, as the local NHS primary care trusts do now.

## Working with BME Communities in Stockport

**presented by Rashda Tabassum, Stockport Council on 24th October 2011**

Rashda spoke to LINK members about the work the Health & Wellbeing Team are doing around engaging Black & Minority Ethnic Communities.

She explained that some areas of health affect the BME community more. for example:

- South Asian communities are more at risk of type 2 diabetes & heart disease.
- The likelihood of suffering from a stroke is twice as high for African & Caribbean people. Bangladeshi communities are three times more likely to have a stroke and more likely to be obese or have high blood pressure.
- It is estimated that about 15,000 people from BME groups are affected by Dementia.

She also explained their preventative work around lifestyle issues that can be modified and changed to reduce the risks such as increasing physical activity, giving up smoking, eating healthy etc.

Rashda explained she has undertaken a number of consultations with people from BME communities in Stockport. The issues raised by residents shared concerns about health risks. Residents made suggestions of ways to address their concerns, such as having some interpreted literature however skilled Bilingual workers would be better, health awareness raising events, signposting and more.

Rashda explained that the majority of the actions raised have been delivered and are on-going such as signposting to services, collecting and dissemination literature. They have also organised Health Awareness events. Working in partnership with local organisations is underway to reach out to residents and implement the initiatives.

If you have any queries regarding the work around BME communities or would like to get involved please email Rashda Tabassum on [Rashda.tabassum@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:Rashda.tabassum@stockport.gov.uk) or call **0161 474 3570**.



## Older People's Strategy

**presented by Joan Beresford Stockport Council on 24th October 2011**

The NHS and Stockport Council are jointly working on an Older People's Commissioning Strategy for Stockport. Information from Stockport's All Our Tomorrows Partnership and their consultation events are one of the sources used in the development of this strategy.

The strategy focuses on improving quality of life for older people and promoting and supporting their independence and wellbeing. Crucial in the delivery of the strategy is partnership working between voluntary, community and statutory sector to address issues that affect older people in Stockport (e.g. housing, dementia, reablement, dignity in care, living safely at home, maintain independence). Also links to other strategies like the carers strategy and the dementia strategy will be made.

## Stockport's Telecare Strategy

presented by Maureen Hughes,  
Stockport Council on 24th October 2011

Telecare offers remote care to older and physically less able people, providing the care and reassurance needed to allow them to remain living in their own homes. Adult Social Care is working with partners to a 5 year strategy to develop telecare services.

Maureen explained that first generation telecare is where people wear a pendant alarm which they can press in an emergency should they fall or have an accident. The alarm is linked to the Carecall control centre where staff are available 24/7. When they receive an alert, staff at Carecall can reassure the service user via a speakerphone and send somebody to help.

Second generation telecare includes smoke detectors, a falls detector a pressure pad for the bed and a property exit sensor.

Maureen explained you need to be assessed as having critical or substantial needs to be eligible for the service from Adult Social Care and there is an assessed charge. People who aren't eligible can purchase pendant alarms privately and Carecall are looking at widening the range of equipment available. Adult Social Care is working with partners to a 5 year strategy to develop telecare services in Stockport.

You can visit [www.mycaremychoice.org.uk](http://www.mycaremychoice.org.uk) for more information or contact the Adult Social Care Contact Centre on **0161 217 6029**. For more information about the services available from Carecall call free phone **0500 130 585**.

## Stockport's Dementia Strategy

presented by Nicole Alkemade, Older People's Joint Commissioning Manager  
NHS Stockport on 24th October 2011

The Stockport Dementia Strategy looks at five main themes to help to improve dementia care in Stockport:

- Prevention & raising awareness
- Early diagnosis, information & advice
- Living well in the community
- End of life
- Workforce development

Nicole explained that Stockport already has some highly valued dementia care services provided by primary care, social care, secondary care and by voluntary organisations. However, she said that services could be more joined up, some are lacking capacity and/or their funding is not guaranteed. The Stockport Dementia Strategy looks at improving these issues. The Strategy and action plan are accessible through the Council and NHS Stockport's websites.

For full copies of minutes from any Briefing Session visit our website [www.stockportlink.co.uk](http://www.stockportlink.co.uk) or contact us, details on the back page for a paper copy.



## Upcoming Briefing Sessions

LINK Briefing Sessions give you the opportunity to ask service providers and commissioners questions about the services in Stockport. All LINK members are welcome to attend.

### Wednesday December 21st 10am-1pm

**10-11am:** Paul Hayes, Stockport Council updating on the 'Delayed Discharges' Vanguard project at Stepping Hill Hospital.

**11.15-12.15:** Gill Walters & Sarah Newsham, Stockport Council updating on the Health Wellbeing Board and HealthWatch.

**12.15-1pm:** An opportunity to attend the Community Health Stockport showcase of services at Pinewood House, Stepping Hill or discuss HealthWatch further at the LINK.

### Thursday 26th January 10am-1pm

**10-11.15:** Gillian Miller, NHS Stockport talking about the new 111 telephone service and out-of-hours healthcare.

**11.30-12.45:** Angela Beagrie, NHS Stockport & Sue Clark, Stockport NHS Foundation Trust feeding back on their Equality & Diversity assessment.

**Both meetings will be held at Walthew House, Shaw Heath. Please contact the LINK prior at attending these meetings details may change.**

**Stockport FLAG (For Local Advice and Guidance) is pleased to welcome Beverley Hart as its new manager.**

Beverley, who has picked up where Janet Lee left off in November, is an experienced manager from the West Midlands and is looking forward to being part of this exciting information and advice service.

"I'm really proud to have this opportunity of supporting FLAG and its team, and pleased to continue to build on FLAG's excellent reputation. We offer a very high level of informed support to FLAG's customers and I can't believe the variety of questions that the advisors get asked - people come to us to find a service for almost everything!"

Stockport FLAG offers support in finding health and social care services for all Stockport residents. It continues to respond to customer needs and requests, delivering the service across the borough.

In addition to the existing provision in the town centre and established outreach sessions, two new advice sessions are starting soon in Marple and Reddish, visit [www.stockportflag.org.uk](http://www.stockportflag.org.uk) or call the office on **0161 474 1042** for more information.



## Dementia Community Roadshow



**On 6th and 7th October the Dementia Community Roadshow rolled into Stockport and despite the dreadful weather, thunder, lightning and even hailstones at one point, over 50 people came on board for information and advice.**

Tesco are funding the Roadshow vehicles for 3 years to travel around the country visiting Tesco stores to raise awareness and reach as many people as possible. Trained staff with local knowledge are on hand to offer support to carers and families of people with all types of dementia as well as encouraging people concerned about their memory or that of their friends or relatives, to seek medical advice.

For information on local services please contact the Alzheimer's Society Stockport & Tameside, 292b London Road, Hazel Grove, Stockport SK7 4RD. You can call **0161 483 4446** or **0161 487 2945** or email [Stockportoffice@alzheimers.org.uk](mailto:Stockportoffice@alzheimers.org.uk)

## Family information services available online

**Family info Link is an independent charity, established in 1983 which provides free, confidential information to families in the Stockport area.**

They have launched the fifth edition of their directory for families of disabled children, titled 'Starting Out'.

The directory covers issues such as: money matters, education rights, health, leisure services, local support groups, transport & access and many more. Starting out is now available online on [www.familyinfolink.co.uk](http://www.familyinfolink.co.uk). It can direct you to organisations that can offer you services and explains in simple terms how those services can help you and your family.

Fiona Clear, Manager at Family info Link said, "We hope that this directory will be of interest to you and welcome any feedback you may like to share with us. For more information on useful organisations you can also look on [www.openfamilyservices.org.uk](http://www.openfamilyservices.org.uk)".

If you do not have access to the internet, the Family info Link helpline opening hours are 8.30-5.00pm Monday-Thursday and 8.30-4.30pm Friday. An answerphone operates outside these hours and on Bank Holidays. Just call freephone **0808 800 0606**.



# New quick access to Age UK Stockport

Faced with the challenging economic climate Age UK Stockport has restructured in order to continue to deliver effective and responsive services.

The restructure is built around the needs of local people with a major focus on assisting and supporting people to continue to live well and independently, which is the objective of the majority of people that the organisation has contact with. Central to the new structure is the Wayfinder Team, which is the first point of contact for people, clients and professionals and helps to ensure easy access to relevant activities, support and services.



The Wayfinder Team provides and delivers support from first contact, so increasing all round effectiveness and efficiency. All support from the Wayfinder Team is holistic in approach and provided by a team of skilled and experienced Age UK Stockport workers. Staff work individually with each person and their situation focussing on assisting people to identify what they need to remain independent, healthy and well. The Wayfinder Team provides comprehensive support to identify what is available in the short, medium and long-term, both from Age UK Stockport and via a full range of local partners.

The Wayfinder Team can be contacted through the public office on Lower Hillgate in central Stockport on **0161 477 1213** or through the community based teams on **0161 480 1211**.

## Are you struggling to find a dentist?

Did you know there is a service in Stockport to help you find a dentist? Stockport Dental Helpline is available 8am until 6pm, Monday to Friday. The helpline provides the following services to the people of Stockport:



- Arranging for patients who required urgent dental care, but do not have a regular NHS dentist, to receive care.
- Support to any Stockport resident looking to access NHS dental services by allocating them to a local dental practice with capacity to see new NHS patients.

The NHS Stockport Dental Helpline is provided by Mastercall on behalf of NHS Stockport. To access this service, please call **0161 476 9649**.

If you need to access a dentist out-of-hours, then there is a service for any patient who requires urgent dental care because of pain from their teeth or a swelling from an abscess. They are open:

### Weekdays

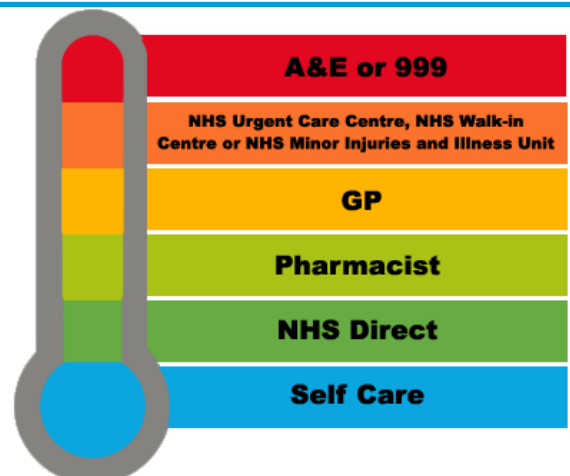
6.30pm and 8am Monday to Friday

### Weekends

6.30pm on Friday to 8am on Monday

To access this service, please call **0161 230 6029**.

**If you become unwell or are injured make sure you choose the right NHS service.**



## Carers urged to become flu fighters

**Cheadle resident Barry Parkes is urging the nation's army of unpaid carers to get their flu jab for the sake of their loved one.** Barry's wife Margaret was living a full and active life when she was diagnosed at the age of 48 with MS, 14 yrs ago.

Once the news had sunk in, they set about adapting their lives so they could cope with the changes ahead and Barry willingly took on the extra role of carer. Now he's one of the six million unpaid carers in the UK and he is very aware of the impact getting ill would have on his wife.



Barry said, "If I came down with the flu not only would I be very poorly but it would also have a massive affect on Margaret. There's no way she could get by on her own if I was bed ridden. She'd have to go into a care home while I was ill and neither of us wants that when it's not necessary. I get my flu jab as soon as I can and I'd encourage anyone else who's a carer to do the same."

Carers need to be registered as a carer with their GP practice but don't have to be receiving any benefits, to be entitled to the free NHS jab. As well as carers, the flu vaccine is free to anyone regarded as "at risk" which includes people aged 65 and over as well as all pregnant women.

It's also free to people who have diabetes, a chest problem or breathing difficulties (such as asthma, bronchitis or emphysema), a heart problem, kidney disease or liver disease, a neurological condition (such as Parkinson's or motor neurone disease or if you've had a stroke), a low immune system due to disease (such as cystic fibrosis or Crohn's disease) or treatment (such as cancer treatment) or a problem with the spleen (such as sickle cell disease) or if the spleen has been removed. The vaccine is available now from your GP. The quicker you get your jab the sooner you'll be protected. Don't wait until there is a flu outbreak this winter.

## Are you paying too much council tax?

**If you or someone who lives with you (adult or child) is disabled and needs extra space in the property, you may be entitled to Disabled Person's Relief.**



This means the council may be able to reduce the amount of Council Tax you have to pay providing the property has at least one of the following features:

- A room, other than a bathroom, kitchen or toilet, which the person with a disability uses and needs. For example, a dialysis treatment room or a downstairs room that has been converted to a bedroom.
- An additional bathroom or kitchen to meet the needs of the person with a disability, or
- Extra space inside the property to allow for the use of a wheelchair – wheelchairs for outdoor use only are excluded

It is very easy to get a quick decision on your application for Disabled Person's Relief.

- Download an application form from [www.stockport.gov.uk/counciltax](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/counciltax) and post to **Council Tax Section, Stopford House, Stockport, SK1 3XE** or
- Ring the Contact Centre on **0161 217 6014** and complete an application form over the phone which will be sent electronically to the Visiting Team or
- Collect an application form from any Stockport Direct Local Centre (post to Council Tax Section, Stopford House, SK1 3XE).

Once your form has been received, you will be contacted by the inspector who will make an appointment to visit you at your property and discuss your application. You must continue to pay your bill until a decision on your application for a discount has been made. If your application is successful you will be entitled to a refund on any overpaid Council Tax.

# Upcoming Events

## LINK Core Group dates

- About:** The LINK Core Group meet monthly to progress the work of the LINK.
- Time:** 10am - 12.30pm on 7th December and 11th January 2011. LINK Briefing Sessions will be held on 21st December and 26th January. See page 11 for more information.
- Contact:** Call the LINK on **0161 477 8479** if you would like to attend.

## Ebony and Ivory Community Organisation

- About:** This group advocates on behalf of and supports young people from African and Caribbean descent and their families. The group meet Fridays at 6pm for youth choir and youth activities and Saturdays at 10 for homework support.
- Contact:** For more information call **0161 477 1914** or **07580 104 948**.

## Age UK Stockport Carol Concert

- About:** Join Age UK Stockport for their annual carol service. Sing along with some carols and join staff and volunteers after the service for refreshments. All welcome.
- Time:** 1.30pm on 16th December 2011.
- Place:** St Mary's Church, Stockport
- Contact:** Call Age UK Stockport on **0161 480 1211** for more information.

*Times and dates are true and correct at time of going to print. Please contact each relevant organisation prior to attending events as dates may change between printing and event.*



## LINK Office opening times

The LINK Office operates between 9am and 4.30pm, Monday-Friday, but there will always be somebody in the LINK Office to answer your calls on **Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday, 10am-2pm.**

Please note, the LINK Office will be closed **21st December - 4th January.** An answer phone service will run during this time.

## Volunteer opportunity at the Stockport LINK

The Stockport LINK is looking for a LINK member to volunteer at the LINK support office.

Tasks will include report writing, letter writing and coordinating survey results. You will need to have computer skills and be able to use Microsoft Word and Excel to good level.

This position will be perfect for a person with a background in administration or a student looking to gain experience in an office environment.

If you are able to spare 3-4 hours a week to support the LINK, then get in touch. Details on the back page.



## Useful contacts



**Stockport Local Involvement Network (LINK) Support office:** Call **0161 477 8479**, email [links@pebbleenterprises.co.uk](mailto:links@pebbleenterprises.co.uk) or visit [www.stockportlink.co.uk](http://www.stockportlink.co.uk)



**For Local Advice And Guidance (FLAG):** Call **0161 474 1042** or visit [www.stockportflag.org.uk](http://www.stockportflag.org.uk) for more information.



**My Care, My Choice:** Call **0161 217 6029** or visit the website on [www.mycaremychoice.org.uk](http://www.mycaremychoice.org.uk)



**NHS Direct:** Call NHS Direct on **0845 46 47** or visit [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

# Contact the LINK

## Stockport LINK Support Team

Labyrinth House, 45 Middle Hillgate,  
Stockport SK1 3DG

**Phone:** 0161 477 8479

**Email:** [links@pebbleenterprises.co.uk](mailto:links@pebbleenterprises.co.uk)

**Web:** [www.stockportlink.co.uk](http://www.stockportlink.co.uk)



Maria Kildunne: LINK Development Manager

Kirsty Bagnall: LINK Development Officer

Michelle Sheridan: LINK Support Administrator

If you would like to find out more information about joining the LINK, please get in contact and we will send you information or a membership pack.

If you are a LINK member and would like more information about writing an article for the next LINK News then let us know.

If you need this Newsletter in large print, audio tape/CD, braille or .pdf format please contact the LINK Support Team on 0161 477 8479.

如果你需要他人為你解釋這小冊子/單張的內容，我們可以提供免費的傳譯服務，請致電 0161 477 9000 史托波特傳譯部。

If you need this newsletter in another language, a free interpreting service is available from Stockport Council. Please telephone Stockport Interpreting Unit on **0161 477 9000** or email [eds.admin@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:eds.admin@stockport.gov.uk)

W przypadku gdybyś potrzebował pomocy odnośnie tej broszurki/ulotki, dostępne są usługi tłumaczeniowe. Prosimy dzwonić do Interpreting Unit pod numer 0161 477 9000.

যদি এই পুস্তিকা/প্রচার পত্রটি সম্পর্কে আপনার কোন সাহায্য দরকার হয় তবে বিনা খরচে আপনার জন্য দোভাষীর ব্যবস্থা করা হতে পারে। মেহেরবানী করে স্টকপোর্ট ইন্টারপ্রিটিং ইউনিটে ফোন করুন টেলিফোন নম্বর, 0161 477 9000.

اگر آپ کو اس کتابچے/الغٹ کے بارے میں مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو مفت ترجمانی کی سروس دستیاب ہے۔ براہ مہربانی انٹرپرائزنگ یونٹ کو 0161 477 9000 پر فون کریں۔

خدمات ترجمہ رایگان این نشریہ/کتابچہ در صورت نیاز موجود میباشد. لطفا با شماره تلفن 0161 477 9000 با واحد ترجمہ (اینترپرائزینگ یونیت) ما تماس بگیرید.

تنوفر خدمة ترجمة شفوية انا تطلب مساعدة في فهم هذا الكتيب/النشرة. نرجو الاتصال اربن رينيول على رقم الهاتف: 0161 477 9000