



Your voice on health and social care in Devon

Newsletter



East Devon Volunteer Support Agency

Registered charity: 1070642



Stronger voice, better care

July 2008

Welcome to the Newsletter of the Devon LINK

The Devon LINK has been progressing at pace. There are now approximately 200 registered members of the Devon LINK. A further 150 groups and individuals have indicated that they wish to receive more information.

What is the LINK and how can I get involved?

The Devon LINK is a network of local people, groups and community organisations who want to help shape health and social care services in Devon. Any local community group or organisation, or any individual can join the LINK.

The LINK:

- Provides a single approach to health and social care
- Provides a strong, more independent voice
- Is more representative, amplifying the views of more groups and providing a platform for those who are seldom heard
- Makes community involvement more convenient by being a network in which everyone can get involved in ways that suits them

Contact us to find out how you can get involved or if you would like us to add you to our newsletter mailing list.

STOP PRESS... a series of LAUNCH EVENTS during September...has been announced

16th: Tavistock United Reformed Church

17th: Totnes Civic Hall

23rd: The Barnstaple Hotel

25th: Exeter Riverside Christian Centre

30th: Mackarness Hall, Honiton

Join us to find out more about the Devon LINK and have your say on how it should be shaped.

The events, all held in the afternoon, will include a **Devon Cream Tea**.

Contact the Devon LINK (details overleaf) to register your place.

Recruiting an interim LINK Steering Group

Communities throughout Devon have been telling us what they think the Devon LINK should look like. You have told us that you think the LINK should have a Steering Group made up of skilled and experienced members who can help the wider LINK to establish itself strongly and fulfil its purpose. The Steering Group will have a term of 6 months after which the LINK will review its overall structure. You may have relevant skills that could benefit the LINK, such as experience in key areas of finance, community engagement, communications & marketing, or governance. Or your organisation might represent a particular section of the community and has given you a mandate to represent them on a strategic level. The application process is being managed by a group of skilled and experienced people from within the wider Devon community. **Please ask us for an application form and more information. You must not work for Devon County Council, the NHS or DACVS. The closing date for applications is 12th August 2008.**

What is the Host's role?

The LINK is supported by East Devon Volunteer Support Agency (EDVSA), an independent 'Host' organisation contracted, on behalf of Devon Association of Councils for Voluntary Service (DACVS), to support the Devon LINK.

The role of the Host is to enable, support and facilitate LINK activity and its responsibilities includes:

- initial set up of the LINK
- provide an office based point of contact for the LINK
- advertising, promotion, and community engagement
- community mapping
- advise on, and facilitate, governance and decision making processes
- hold the finances for the LINK
- facilitate correspondence and communication activities
- develop partnerships with key stakeholders and regulators
- report progress to the Local Authority, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Department of Health

EDVSA is ideally placed to help the LINK as it is a leader in the facilitation of Patient & Public Involvement in Devon. EDVSA are also able to work with other organisations within DACVS to tap into local, Devon-wide and strategic networks and contacts throughout the county.

What's happened so far?

In the first three months EDVSA has:

- Recruited most of the Host staff team
- Talked to hundreds of people about the LINK and how to get involved through Voluntary & Community Sector forums, carers forums, PCT strategic events and more
- Invited everyone registered with their local CVS as having an interest in health & social care to join the LINK
- Started community mapping to include those groups and individuals who are seldom heard and people from other networks
- Joined with other Host organisations in the Region to share good practice
- Started to forge positive working relationships with statutory partners in health & social care
- Started to develop a website that will have a forum on which people can post their comments
- Recruited a Development Group, made up of local people from community organisations that are broadly representative of Devon to assist in establishing the interim LINK Steering Group
- Started work on governance systems and documents that will help the LINK to decide how it operates.

Share your views

The Devon LINK provides local communities with an opportunity to have their say on health and social care issues in Devon.

Is there something that you are concerned about?

Is there good practice in health and social care that should be acknowledged or rewarded?

What are your experiences of services in your area?

Share your views with the Devon LINK.

You can contact the Devon LINK:
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or by post:
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