

Sedgemoor Disability Forum

Notes from the meeting held on 22nd Oct 2009

Princess Hall Burnham on Sea

Arranged by Compass Disability Services – SAIN Project.

Welcome and introductions

Mandy Seaman welcomed everyone in attendance and gave an overview of the day and the speakers.

Item 1: Health

Heather Stanton – Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

Heather gave an overview of the PALS service and provided a presentation. Each NHS Trust has a PALS service; two people cover the PALS service for the County. The purpose is to;

- Provides on the spot help and aims to resolve issues before they escalate into serious problems.
- Act as a gateway to other organisations
- Liaise on behalf of patients/families and deal with individual cases.
- Raise awareness of PALS to NHS providers and outside organisations e.g. Social Services and voluntary organisations
- Collect data and produce reports for the Trust and the wider community
- Be impartial and confidential and work with a network of other PALS services.
- Provide early warning system to monitor problems and highlight gaps in services.
- Improve the patients experience

The presentation given illustrated the number of complaints and issues raised in 2007/2008. A copy is enclosed.

Contact Details as follows;

Your local PALS can be contact on 0800 0851 067.

FREEPOST RRKL-XKSC-ACSG, PALS, Somerset PCT, Yeovil, BA22 8HR

Email:pals@somerset.nhs.uk

Jonathan Yelland – Local Involvement Networks (LINKs)

LINKs has been running for approx. 6 months as a result of the Public and Patient Involvement Act 2007 which came in putting Health and Social Services together for reporting issues. They are funded by Somerset County Council. Each LINK is a local body made up of local members of the community to guide and oversee how the Host organisation works. Help and Care are the host organisation.

They do not get involved with individual issues, their purpose is to investigate issues and look at where problem occur. They may signpost people to services such as PALS. LINKS cover issues on the following;

- Doctors surgeries; hospitals; mental health services; sexual health; dentists ;day care; residential homes; maternity services; care at home; support for carers or any other health and social care service.

- They aim to give a voice and involvement opportunities for members of the public. They look at collating issues and feedback to the services in questions.
- They are in the process of carrying out a mapping exercise to see what has been done already and bring together information with a list of voluntary organisations.

More information can be found by contacting them on:

Tel: 0300 1110102

Or visiting www.makesachange.org.uk

Email: somersetLINK@makesachange.org.uk

In writing; Freepost RSAC-KSRE-CZCE,
Somerset LINKs
Unit 2, Bowden Business Centre
Hambridge, Langport, TA10 0BP

Geraint Jones – Patient Experience Manager, Somerset Community Health.

Somerset Community Health are keen to receive feedback on current community services, such as community hospitals, community nursing, and to use the information to help make services more responsive to the needs of the public in future.

Contact Details as follows;

Geraint Jones, Patient Experience Manager
Somerset Community Health
Charter House, Bartec 4, Lynx West Trading Estate
Watercombe Lane, Yeovil
Somerset, BA20 2SU
Email. Geraint.Jones@somerset.nhs.uk

Tel. 01935 385 146

Fax. 01935 848 221

There was then a general question and answer session to all three speakers;

Questions raised

1. It appears that all of the services presenting do the same?

Answer: Legal obligations now exist to involve members of the public in planning services. Differences between the three organisations were explained that;

LINKs is funded by Somerset County Council and does not deal with individual cases but looks at issues across the board on Health and Social Care.

PALS deal with individual cases and complaints. PALS are employed by the NHS

Somerset Community Health – looks at Community Health services only and come under the NHS.

2. How do you qualify for Hospital transport?

This is based on medical need. What is meant by medical need? We agreed to find out more on this. The following information has been obtained since the meeting and published in our recent newsletter;

Patients that are eligible for free NHS transport to hospitals are those that have a medical need. This means:

- You need prescribed oxygen to breath
- You need intravenous (IV) support
- You can only be moved by stretcher
- You can't stand or walk more than a few steps and cannot use car or public transport
- You depend upon medical equipment or aids that cannot fit within a bus or taxi
- The treatment leaves you so debilitated that you cannot use a car, bus or taxi
- You have an illness, condition or disability which stops you using a car, bus or taxi unaided

Patients also can get free hospital transport under the 'Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme'. Those patients are on a low income and receive the following-

- Income Support
- Income based job seekers allowance
- Pension Credit Guarantee
- HC2 or HC3 (low Income)
- NHS Tax exemption certificate

Leaflets are available on Hospital Transport from your local doctor's surgery. Patient Transport can be contacted on 01278 727444 for more information.

Information on how to contact PALS also been published in the recent copy of the Networker.

Item 2 Angela Farmer – Sedgemoor District Council

Angela Farmer is Corporate Project Officer for Sedgemoor District Council dealing with Equalities and also responds to Audit Commission Inspections and Self Assessments.

Angela explained that the Council were looking at their future agenda and trying to consider factors such as the ageing population. They are keen to find out how people currently make contact with the Council and how they may wish to make contact with them in future. From this they can determine what they need to do to support people in the way they deliver their services. A questionnaire was distributed giving people the chance to give their views to feedback to the Council.

Issues raised;

- Need to recognise disability more in terms of housing – Choice Based Lettings (Homefinder) may help identify suitable housing. Angela to provide an update for the next Forum
- Sheltered Housing – shower broke down, problems with who to speak to when you do not get a response?
- Angela agreed to contact one individual with a particular issue surrounding central heating which has been ongoing and has still not been resolved.
- Other issues surrounding how Homes In Sedgemoor identify your needs in terms of disability. Homes In Sedgemoor are in the process of launching a new database and should be seeking to obtain more information on individuals.
- 0845 number for Sedgemoor District Council – is expensive and can be charged at higher rate on some call packages.

- Shopmobility in Bridgwater are closing due to lack of funding.
- The new community hospital planned for Bridgwater – what’s happening about this?

Angela can be contacted directly on; 01278 435415 or Angela.Farmer@Sedgemoor.gov.uk

Item 3 Chris Trevelyan – Partnership Manager Private Sector Housing

A discussion took place surrounding sources of energy loss in the home with walls being the biggest at 33%. Cavity Wall insulation is one of the best way’s to save energy and money. Around a fifth of heat is lost from windows in un-insulated homes.

Homes In Sedgemoor are looking at boiler upgrades etc. to help with energy efficiency.

Other ways of helping to reduce energy usage included;

Boiling kettles for washing up, Keeping thermostats down, use of low voltage bulbs, draft excluders, not leaving equipment on standby, turning of sockets not in use, having showers instead of baths, insulating water tanks.

The Energy Advice Centre in Bristol can be contacted on 0800 512 012 for advice on grants available to help you make your home more energy efficient.

Copies of information distributed at the meeting are enclosed.

Other Issues

Free Directory Inquiries - If you find it difficult to use the phone book you may be eligible for our free directory enquiry service. For an application form ring the registration team on 0800 587 0195.

Once application form has been filled out and accepted, you will receive a card with a registration number consisting of 2 letters and 4 numbers. To use the card you need to dial 195 they will ask for your pin number and when confirmed will give you the information you require. The card is for personal use only.

An open session gave members the chance to think about other issues they would like to address. Each table presented their top three, we have summarised these as follows;

| Other Issues | Follow up suggestion |
|---|---|
| Access into shops – High Street Burnham on Sea, Card Shops etc. | Chamber of Trade – look at involving in future meeting. |
| £30 a year charge for green bin, Radar keys £2.75, everywhere else in country free? | Angela/Mandy to investigate. Possibly arrange speaker on waste in future. |
| Parking for disabled people at venues e.g. Fair, Market, Carnival | Richard to raise with Sedgemoor. |
| Security Guards in Angel Place not in, should start at 8:30 but start at 10:00. | Compass /SAIN to write to centre owners. |
| Main Post Office in Bridgwater has removed designated counter for disabled people. | Angela Farmers is in touch with the post office on this subject. |
| Abuse of blue badge generally, use of spaces by non-disabled people. | Suggestion for individuals to complain with individual locations. Some take enforcement e.g. Asda, Sainsburys. Depends on ownership |

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| | <p>of car park.</p> <p>Parking Services at Council – response?</p> |
| <p>Need for someone to explain - What is a disability?</p> | <p>Different passes use different criteria – need to clarify specifics at next meeting. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 states;</p> <p>“a person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”</p> |
| <p>Roads</p> <p>Parks, gardens – who is responsible</p> <p>Who is responsible for overhanging bushes in private dwellings?</p> | <p>Update from Highways required.</p> <p>Speaker on parks and gardens next time</p> <p>Report to Somerset County Council Roads & Transport on 0845 345 9155. They will report and inspect and send a letter to the landowner if they cannot speak to them, giving them 30 days to resolve the issue. If they do not cut back the hedge they can cut it and charge the landowner if it is deemed unsafe.</p> |
| <p>Transport charges discrepancies, Community charged and Slinky free of charge, there are some charges for Slinky?</p> | <p>A consultation concerning transport is planned with SAIN in the new year. Members will be kept informed.</p> |
| <p>Road markings on large roundabout coming out of Burnham Love Lane to M5 needs to be evenly distributed across lanes.</p> | <p>Highways – Individual concerns need to be addressed with Somerset Roads & Transport on 0845 345 9155</p> |
| <p>Hidden disabilities – More awareness generally, hearing, visual.</p> | <p>SAIN to do an article concerning this in a future newsletter.</p> |
| <p>Parking on pavements problem</p> <p>Cycles very fast.</p> | <p>Police – Inspector R Tolly to attend in future?</p> <p>Compass hoping to have web reporting by April/May.</p> |
| <p>Pathway in St Marys, Berrow, shingle not suitable for wheelchairs – church has written to council.</p> | <p>Angela Farmer has confirmed that the path is the responsibility of the owner which is assumed to be the church. Unfortunately it is not the responsibility of the council.</p> <p>Richard to make contact with Diocese.</p> |