



# Manchester LINK

ISSUE 4

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## Big Tent Success!

### A View of the Day by Martin Rathfelder

It was a bit brave to set up a tent in Piccadilly Gardens to launch the Manchester LINK. When Wayne McCracken, a homeless man from Salford, interrupted the proceedings and grabbed the microphone it might have all gone horribly wrong. But we managed to keep Wayne's problems under control and generate some good publicity. Councillor Basil Curley - who of course out of all the people on the platform was the only one who is directly answerable to the public - seemed to convince Wayne that there was some help available for him. And the unscheduled intervention made much better television than an ordinary question and answer session.

We could have set up our tent in Albert Square. It would have been easier - its much bigger and flatter. And posher. Piccadilly is where the people with greater needs congregate, and if



the LINK is going to do any good that is where it ought to be. In fact we should maybe try to run a regular advice service there. The whole point about the LINK is that we should be addressing the concerns of people like Wayne who find that the many services set up to help them don't quite do the business.

That means trying to formulate the questions Wayne was asking in a way that the services can respond to them. And the other way round. Too often in the NHS involvement or consultation really means "Would you like to answer these questions we have put together?"

We may not have called all the people responsible for the NHS in Manchester to account - it was disappointing that neither the PCT nor any of the hospitals could manage to put up the Chief Executive or the Chair - but we have started from the right place.

**More about the event on page 6**



The Manchester LINK Newsletter has got a new editor, Anthony Doggett. A Farewell message to Kevin is on the Back page



Chief Executive Caroline Shaw has promised that services will not be affected

**NHS Manchester has allocated £1.5m of extra funding to improve access to dentists in Manchester**

## Christie may lose £7.5m investment in Icelandic bank

As Icelandic banks collapsed last week Manchester's Christie Hospital was looking at a potential loss of £7.5m of funds it had placed in Icelandic bank KSF.

Many local authorities, health trusts and other organisations are facing similar losses as the banking system in Iceland collapsed, seemingly without warning, last week. Christie Chairman Jim Martin said "At the time this investment was the right thing to do. We received the best advice and we were not alone." He added "We are working around

the clock to get this money back, it's vital that we do this for patients and for all our general supporters."

Chief Executive Caroline Shaw promised "business as usual" and admitted she has "hardly slept" in recent days. She also assured patients that services would not be affected. The trust plans to go ahead with its ambitious aim of building two new radiotherapy centres in Oldham and Salford and a new clinical trials centre.

*(MEN, 15th October)*

## £1.5m investment for new dentists

NHS Manchester has announced a new programme of investment that will offer thousands more dental appointments to local people.

Additional funding of £1.5m in 2008-09 will be used to offer more routine NHS dentistry services, along with

extra investment in home visits and sedation services.

There will be new contracts for NHS dental services in the three wards that currently do not have an NHS practice; namely Baguley, Charlestown and Didsbury West, along

with additional investment in a number of other parts of the city. The additional funding is recurrent and the process of procuring the new services is now underway.

We will keep you informed of any updates.

## Does your Dentist understand you?

Although a lot of work has been done to improve access there are some people who still have real problems when it comes to dental services.

The LINK team was recently contacted by a project that works with newly-arrived families. They'd helped a family that didn't speak English enrol their kids in school, register with a GP and register with a dentist. Although

the family can get support from interpreters to help with school and with GP appointments they can't get one if any of them need to see a dentist.

Manchester PCT finds interpreter support for GP appointments and for appointments with its own Community Dental Services but not with dentists generally. Have you had similar problems? If so get in touch.

## Groundbreaking families' scheme to expand

An innovative service that supports young, first time mothers will nearly double in size with new funding from NHS Manchester. Manchester is already a pilot site for the Family Nurse Partnership programme, which supports mothers aged under 21 from early pregnancy until their children reach the age of 2. Specially trained nurses visit each mother regularly to offer advice on parenting, maternal health and child health.

Manchester is one of ten areas piloting

the scheme in conjunction with the Department of Health. Early indications suggest that it is realising benefits such as: better prenatal and mental health, a reduction in childhood injuries and fewer subsequent pregnancies.

It has had positive feedback in Manchester where there are currently 128 clients. NHS Manchester will now fund the scheme until 2012, as a result of which the Department of Health will fund a second pilot for a further 100 mothers.

## Premium rate Telephone Lines

Does your GP Practice use a number starting with 0844? We are trying to find out how many Practices in Manchester are using these lines. At a recent Access to Services meeting of the Manchester LINK it was reported that this has been occurring at a number of surgeries and that it makes the cost of calling a GP to make an appointment very high.

We are told that costs to these numbers from a land line are low but 0844 numbers are not usually included in calls packages so must be paid as an 'extra'. Costs to pa-

tients who call from a mobile phone might be over 25p per minute - again 0844 numbers are not normally included in calls packages so patients could pay quite a lot extra to make an appointment.

Have you found similar problems? If so, we would be pleased to hear from you.

Call the LINKs Support Team and let us know:

Tel: 0161 214 3909

Email:

[manchesterlink@blackhealthagency.org.uk](mailto:manchesterlink@blackhealthagency.org.uk)



**Patients could pay quite a lot extra to make an appointment**

## Manchester mental health chief launches dismissal claim

Sheila Foley, the former chief of Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust, has launched an unfair dismissal claim against the Trust.

Ms Foley, who as Chief Executive triggered weeks of strike action over the sacking

of a union Official, resigned in July the day after a report, commissioned by NHS North West, criticised frequent management changes in the Trust.

The Trust currently has an interim Chief Executive,

Jackie Daniels, who has been asked to produce an action plan for turning the Trust around by next month. This follows the HCC reporting MMH&SCT quality of care as "weak", and their use of resources as "fair".



An investigation found many inconsistencies in emergency response times and out-of-hours services

*“Cancer patients in England have been struggling to pay these unfair charges for too long”*

*Ciaran Devane,  
Macmillan Cancer Support*



## Damning verdict on out-of-hours care

Almost one in five health trusts are delivering poor quality care outside of normal hours according to a comprehensive investigation into urgent services by the Healthcare Commission.

Among the findings of the Healthcare Commission were:

- ◆ The proportion of out-of-hours calls categorized as ‘urgent’ ranged from 4% to 32%, raising questions about consistency
- ◆ Only 44% of out-of-hours GP services had arrangements in place to divert calls when they were closed.
- ◆ The number of ambulances arriving on the scene for life-threatening calls within 8 minutes varied from 61% to 94%.

- ◆ The proportion of patients seeing a doctor or nurse within an hour of arriving at A&E varied from 40% to 100%.

The Healthcare Commission said it has received persistent concerns about ambulances being ‘stacked’ outside A&E departments so as not to breach the four hour target. They have called for a new, single target, covering the entire patient pathway from making the first call to emergency services to receiving treatment.

One of the main drivers of increased demand on A&E departments is poor access to GPs.

*(The Independent, 26th September)*

## Free prescriptions for long term conditions

Gordon Brown promised to end prescription charges for all patients with long-term conditions in his speech to the Labour Party Conference in Manchester.

Charges for cancer patients will be scrapped next year, with other conditions to follow afterwards, it was announced.

This will mean a saving of £102.50 per year for the thousands of cancer patients in England and will be paid for by savings within the drugs budget - more bulk-buying of drugs and increased use of cheaper, generic versions rather than branded ones.

*(BBC News, 23rd September)*

## Survey shows slow progress on patient choice

Results from the Department of Health’s patient choice survey have revealed slow progress in increasing choice.

90,000 people responded to the May 2008 survey. Only 45% re-

called being offered a choice of hospital by their GP. Of these 89% were able to go to the hospital they asked for.

This figure is well below the Department of Health target.

## Two new GP practices due to open

NHS Manchester have announced plans for opening two new GP surgeries in Manchester next Spring.

One of the surgeries will be based at Simpson Memorial Hall on Moston Lane and the other new practice will be based on the currently disused site 352 Slade Lane, Levenshulme.

Both sites, which were selected following discussions with local representatives - including elected members and with significant guidance and support from Manchester Council, will

have significant refurbishments before their opening in April 2009.

The procurement process to identify appropriate providers for these two practices is ongoing and is in it's final stages. By the end of 2008 successful bidders will be announced.

In addition to the two practices already planned, work is ongoing to secure a suitable location for a third practice, which will serve in and around Longsight.

Debbie Nixon, Director of

Commissioning for NHS Manchester, said the new practices will "compliment existing NHS Services" and "offer more choice and flexibility to local people in where and when they access health services".

To increase flexibility, NHS Manchester plan for the new practices to offer appointments at weekday evenings and on Saturdays, a choice that has come about from feedback from discussion with local communities.



## Completing the transition

Since April 2008 the LINK has been run by a self appointed board which was necessary in order for decisions to be made and some work to begin. However, this was only ever a transitional arrangement and in October the board will stand down and hand over the reins to a new, elected steering group.

The group will be made up of elected individuals, organisations and community groups reflecting the diversity of the city of Manchester. If you think you have what it takes to be a

member of the board of Manchester LINK, we want to hear from you! You need to be able to commit to 3-4 hours per week and attend monthly meetings.

The group will lead on the work of the LINK and as it is vital it is truly representative of the population, applications from minority groups are particularly encouraged.

Interested? Then send us no more than one side of A4 telling us about you, your skills and experience and what you think you can bring to the LINK. E-

mail Manchester link@blackhealthagency.org.uk

The timetable for the nomination process is-

- 21<sup>st</sup> November - Nominations with Statements to be received
- 5<sup>th</sup> December – Ballot papers sent out by email and post
- 19<sup>th</sup> December – closing date for completed ballot papers to be received
- 22<sup>nd</sup> December – vote count be external independent adjudicator
- 23<sup>rd</sup> December – people to be notified of outcome of ballot

**If you think you have what it takes to be a member of the board of Manchester LINK, we want to hear from you!**



**We would like to hear your opinions on the questions not asked**



**Have you, or someone you know used the Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Services?**

## Big Tent Event

The Manchester LINK's Big Tent Event created a huge amount of publicity and there were a lot of very interesting questions submitted for the Health and Social Care Question Time - too many in fact.

We wanted to make sure that the people, whose questions we were not able to use, were able to get an answer. We decided that we would send some of the unasked questions to our panel members.

We also thought that many of our readers would have some good ideas so we have printed the additional questions below and we would value your opinions on these. We will be printing some of the responses in our next newsletter.

The questions which we were unable to ask on the day are:

1. Voluntary organisations are getting much more involved in providing health and social care services, often in ways that are innovative and more responsive to users. How can we ensure that they receive funding on a long term basis and that they are not used as a cheap alternative?

2. How can the Manchester LINK ensure it is effective in giving local people a real say in how their services are commissioned, planned and delivered?

3. Will individuals have their voices truly heard, when many people living in Manchester may choose not to be part of the LINK? How can the LINK ensure that issues from the whole community are heard if this is the case?

4. How can those with commissioning powers be more open with their monitoring and evaluation process of projects commissioned in Manchester?

5. Why can't NHS dentists in Manchester have interpreters provided by the PCT to help patients who don't speak English, while doctors are able to access this service for their patients?

Contact us by email or post by the usual addresses.

A report detailing the questions that were asked and our panels responses will be produced and circulated soon.

## Have your say about Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment (CRHT)!

Members of the SEVA Team, MACC and the Manchester LINK have got together to look at CRHT Services across Manchester.

The group have devised a questionnaire which will be sent out to collect information about people's

experiences of using CRHT Services. This will then be used to gather information about satisfaction levels around the service. Questionnaires are available from the LINK support Team. Contact us by email, post or telephone.

## Healthcare improving, but infections and GP waiting times need work

The Healthcare Commission's annual performance ratings for 391 NHS organisations in England show that the quality of NHS care has improved 'by leaps and bounds' over the last two years.

However, it also showed that 60% of hospitals are still not dealing with superbug infections effectively and 69% of GPs are not providing patients with the easy access to appointments that ministers have demanded.

Results from two years ago showed 41% of trusts providing

good or excellent quality care, compared with 62% this year. 69% of trusts also scored well financially, compared to just 16% two years ago.

However, over half missed the Government's target to reduce MRSA by 20% year-on-year and a quarter failed to put in adequate systems of infection control.

There was also a dramatic decline in the number of PCTs meeting the 48-hour GP appointment target - just 31% compared to 80% last year. The

difference has been put down to a new assessment system which asks thousands of patients about their experiences.

Overall, 42 trusts received a 'double excellent' rating, compared to 19 last year and just two in 2006.

In a separate report MPs on the Commons Health Select Committee have called for closer scrutiny of Foundation Trusts, asking for a full evaluation of their impact.

*(The Guardian, 16th October)*

## Diabetes costs the NHS £1m per hour

According a report by Diabetes UK, the NHS is spending £1m per hour - 10% of its annual budget - on treating diabetes and its complications.

Despite advances in detection and treatment, incidences of the disease - which causes heart attacks, strokes and blindness - is spiralling.

This, according to Diabetes UK, is because GPs are still misdiagnosing the disease by missing telltale symptoms, meaning that it may go undetected for many years until irreversible damage is done.

Over 2.3 million people in the UK have diabetes, but the charity says that the number of diagnosed and 'hidden' diabetics will top 4 million by 2025.

One in 10 people in hospital in the UK have diabetes and it costs the organisation £9bn per year.

A new advertising campaign by Diabetes UK spells out the seriousness of the disease and the importance of timely detection. But it also emphasises that simple changes to diet and increased activity can help



**Type 2, the most common form of diabetes, has been linked to obesity, poor diet and lack of exercise**

prevent the Type 2 or reduce complications for those who already have it.

Only 57% of PCTs have a programme in place to raise awareness of diabetes or pick up risk factors.

*(The Guardian, 8th October)*



# Dates for your Diary

## Our Kid: Medical Manchester

A new installation, with a multi-media exhibition at its heart, traces the regions past medical breakthroughs and blows the lid on what healthcare could be like in the future.

Celebrating 60 years since the founding of the NHS was announced in Manchester, Our Kid is made up of several digital screens, packed with facts, figures and short films which follow the changes in

healthcare over the last 60 years, and look to the possibilities of healthcare in the future.

Our Kid also incorporates films made by young people from Manchester who worked with local experts to imagine what healthcare might be like in 2048.

For more information visit [www.nowgen.org.uk](http://www.nowgen.org.uk).

22nd October - 29th November in the Foyer at Central Library.

Got an event you  
want to promote?  
Send us details on  
[doggett@blackhealth  
agency.org.uk](mailto:doggett@blackhealthagency.org.uk)

INVITATION

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Thursday 13th November 2008  
7:30pm - Drinks reception and canapes  
1:00am - Carriages  
Hosted by: Mike Shaft, Vanessa Kirkpatrick  
Tickets £25  
Dress code: Cocktail  
Venue: The Place Hotel, Ducie Street  
Piccadilly, Manchester M1 2TP

Live performances from  
**Gwen Dickey**  
(former singer with Aylee Joyce, 'Love Don't Live Here Anymore', 'Car Wash')  
**Jaki Graham**  
('Heaven Knows', 'Set Me Free')  
Supporting artist **Jodie Gordon**

Special Guest DJ  
The legendary **Mike Shaft**

Photographic exhibition  
**'Challenging Perceptions'**

This event is in aid of BHA's Crisis Fund - supporting those affected by or living with HIV/AIDS in Manchester and Leeds

To purchase tickets contact Marcella Turner on 0161 875 2062 or email [marcella@blackhealthagency.org.uk](mailto:marcella@blackhealthagency.org.uk)

**This is a ticket only event**

BHA THE PLACE trans

mentalhealth  
Exhibition

Today

## Mental Health Today Exhibition

On the 11th November, for the first time, the north west will be holding the Mental Health Today Exhibition - the biggest Mental Health event in the UK.

Mental Health Today is a national event for people who care about Mental Health Well-being and

working in or with the statutory, voluntary and independent mental health services.

Further information is available from [www.mentalhealthtoday.co.uk](http://www.mentalhealthtoday.co.uk) by telephone 0870 890 108, or by email: [exhibitons@pavpub.com](mailto:exhibitons@pavpub.com)

# Community News & Consultations

## Consultation on wider use of patient information

NHS Connecting for Health (NHS CfH) is conducting a consultation with the public and healthcare and professionals on the use of patient information for purposes such as health research and managing and planning care.

The health and well-being of the population can be improved by activities such as medical research, disease surveillance, screening, needs assessment and preventative activities.

NHS CfH is keen to obtain the views of the general public, patients and other interested parties on how patient information held by the NHS should be used for additional purposes such as research.

You can complete the questionnaire online or download a copy and send it to them via freepost.

For more information or to download the consultation visit [www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.connectingforhealth.nhs.uk).



**Come and give us your views about the way we share your information**

## Have your voice heard in the ‘Annual Health Check’

Government inspectors from the Healthcare Commission carry out a nationwide checks on how NHS services have performed every year. Primary Care Trusts and hospital Trusts take their results in this really seriously and often make changes if there are issues raised.

The Healthcare Commission has its own team of assessors who look at the way services are run – and rate them against 24 ‘core standards’ set out in process. But for the next assessment they also want to have views and comments from community groups and voluntary organisations and will be collecting these over the next six months.

The Healthcare Commission is working with LINKs to help pull together as many views and comments as possible. They are very keen to have evidence

from groups whose members or service users have direct evidence of the way that NHS services work – good or bad.

The Manchester LINK team will be working to provide information about how to put your views in and how the process works. But you don’t have to be an ‘expert’ on the assessment process because LINK staff and the Healthcare Commission will be able to support and advise you about the best way to give your feedback to achieve a constructive response.

For more information contact us on 0161 214 3909 or email us at [manchesterlink@blackhealthagency.org.uk](mailto:manchesterlink@blackhealthagency.org.uk)

**LINK staff and the Healthcare Commission will be able to support and advise you about the best way to give your feedback**



## Black Health Agency

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E-mail: [manchesterlink@blackhealthagency.org.uk](mailto:manchesterlink@blackhealthagency.org.uk)

Your Local Involvement Network is your independent monitor of local health and social care services - Providing a voice for service users and enabling you to shape the future of the services you receive.

Your LINK Team is:

**Karen Tucker - LINK Manager**

**Lydia Hurford - LINK Development Worker**

**Danny Gough - LINK Development Worker**

**Anthony Doggett - LINK Administrator**

Visit the Manchester LINK website:  
[www.manchesterlink.co.uk](http://www.manchesterlink.co.uk)

## LINK Radio

**Manchester LINK has its own radio show!**

The show is your opportunity to have your say about local health and social care services. However, we are currently waiting for ALL FM to provide training for one of our members of staff. Watch this space for more information



## Farewell Kevin Peel

Finally we would like to say on behalf of the Manchester LINK and the LINK support Team goodbye and good luck to Kevin Peel.

Kevin recently left the organisation to work for Tameside 3rd Sector Coalition supporting their Local Involvement Network. As he hasn't gone far we are sure that we will see him again soon.

Thanks for all your work and we wish you all the best in the future.

This has left an obvious gap in our team so the Manchester LINK is now looking for a new Community Development Worker. If you know anyone who is interested tell them to contact our office.