



Wandsworth Local Involvement Network

## **THE WANDSWORTH LINK ENTER AND VIEW POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Local Involvement Networks were set up by an Act of Parliament in April 2008 and funded through Local Authorities in England. The Government said:

Local Involvement Networks, which aim to help communities shape local health and care services, are able (under the law) to enter certain publicly funded health and care services to see them at work.

For many years, patients and other users of health and social care services in Wandsworth have been invited to join in a range of inspection and monitoring visits carried out by various parts of the NHS and the Adult Social Services Department of the Borough Council. As long ago as 1975, Community Health Councils were given the right to visit hospitals on behalf of patients and, from 2003 to 2008, Patient and Public Involvement Forums had a right to inspect providers of NHS care in the Borough. The new LINK Enter & View scheme, therefore, is following a long tradition of public involvement but its emphasis is now on observing and assessing service provision and not on inspection.

Wandsworth LINK wish to implement Enter & View as part of its aim to give patients, carers and service users a stronger voice in helping to improve health and social care services in the Borough. This paper sets how this will be done in Wandsworth.

## **National Code of Conduct and local application**

Government has said that, if LINKs are going to do their job effectively, there are occasions when their representatives need to see services at work. With this ability, however, come responsibilities that need to be understood and risks that need to be guarded against. To ensure this process happens consistently and smoothly throughout England, the Government commissioned guidance from the National Centre for Involvement.

([http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_087285](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_087285))

At a meeting of the Wandsworth LINK Interim Executive in October 2008, it was agreed to adopt the Code of Conduct and to abide by the national regulations and develop local applications where that was permissible. Work began on developing the local Enter & View scheme in November 2008 and the scheme came, for discussion, to the newly elected Executive Committee at its first meeting on 16 February 2009.

As required under Enter & View legal regulations, this paper announces the launch of the scheme in Wandsworth and lays out, in some detail, the way in which visits will be planned, carried out, reported and followed up. Copies of the paper will be sent to all LINK members as well as being published on the Wandsworth LINK website [www.wandsworthlink.org](http://www.wandsworthlink.org). Key stake holders such as the Local Authority and local NHS bodies will also be informed of the launch and they will be closely involved in the development and implementation of the scheme. Regular updates about the development of Enter & View in Wandsworth will be published on the website and paper copies of all information can be obtained from the Host offices at WCA, Bedford House, 215 Balham High Road, London SW17 7BQ Tel 0208 696 1709

## **Responsibility for overseeing Enter & View in Wandsworth**

Responsibility for overseeing Enter & View has been delegated by the Wandsworth LINK Executive to the Resources & Governance Group. The R&G Group may need to hold additional special meetings during the early stages of establishing Enter & View procedures as there may be considerable work involved in dealing with recruitment of the panel of Authorised Representatives and developing criteria for choosing which local service providers to visit. As Enter and View develops in the future, the Executive will consider whether to leave responsibility with the R&G Group or to set up a Steering Group to reflect the wider interests and involvement of health and social care organisations such as service providers and those monitoring and regulating services in the Borough. Prime responsibility will be taken by Barbara Willerton, joint Chair of the R&G Group.

## **Management and support**

Management and administrative support for Enter and View will be provided by Wandsworth Care Alliance which is the Host organization for Wandsworth LINK. All communications should go through their office WCA, Bedford House, 215 Balham High Road, London SW17 7BQ, tel 0208 696 1709 email [Simonne@wandcareall.org.uk](mailto:Simonne@wandcareall.org.uk).

It is not possible, prior to recruitment and training of the visitors, to say exactly when visits will begin. It is hoped, however, that the first visits will be arranged during the autumn of 2009. It is anticipated that visits will take place at a monthly frequency, thereafter.

## **Recruitment of Authorised Representatives**

The procedure will be as follows:

- All members of Wandsworth LINK, in particular those who have expressed an interest in Enter and View visiting, will be sent a copy of this policy document together with the advertisement and job description for Authorised Representatives and details of the recruitment time table.
- People living in Wandsworth or registered with a Wandsworth GP and who have signed up as members of Wandsworth LINK can apply to be Authorised Representatives by completing an application form. Application forms together with copies of the job description will be available on the website or from the Host office.
- A Selection Panel will decide which applicants have the appropriate and relevant experience and skills to undertake visits on behalf of LINK. The Panel will be particularly interested in people with first hand experience as service users and carers and others who understand the needs and preferences of local people using health and social care services. Previous experience of inspection or monitoring is not essential but would be an advantage. Applicants must be willing to attend an interview, take part in training and undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check. They must also be willing to share responsibility for planning visits and producing a written report afterwards. Wandsworth LINK is aiming to select up to 12 Authorised Representatives in order to achieve a Panel with wide ranging experience and which is large enough to share the work load of visits.
- Those applicants who are selected will be invited to take part in training and will undergo a CRB check. Previous CRB checks for other purposes do not count for Enter & View.
- The final short list of people will be appointed as the Panel of Authorised Representatives for a probationary period of one year/four visits in order to monitor and assess their performance. Following satisfactory completion of probation period, the appointment will be confirmed for a further two years. As required by the regulations, the names of the Panel will be published on the Wandsworth Link website.

## **Criteria for choosing appropriate visits**

Within the Borough, there are a large number of health and social care service providers who would be eligible for an Enter and View visit from Wandsworth LINK. Because LINK resources are limited, it will be necessary to be selective about which services to visit. The LINK Executive have agreed the choice in 2009 will reflect the current priority areas identified at the LINK Executive meeting on 20 April 2009 as follows:

- transforming adult social care (the move to personalised care)
- providing timely community services after hospital discharge
- develop an effective strategy and processes for Wandsworth LINKs involvement and engagement with service users, carers and patients
- managing & inputting to Health Consultations.

The choice of visits may, however, also include services which are in the process of change or about which concern has been expressed by users and/or carers.

Based on the agreed criteria, a list of potential visits will be drawn up and arrangements made for actual dates to reflect the convenience of the service providers and the availability of Authorised Representatives. Although most visits will be arranged in advance, it is possible, under exceptional circumstances, for the LINK to make an unannounced visit; service providers also have rights to refuse visits so careful planning is essential.

### **Liaison with service providers and briefing of Authorised Representatives**

In order to achieve the best possible outcome for the visits, LINK will liaise closely with service providers in order to understand the aims of their service and to appreciate the regulations and constraints under which they may be working. It is anticipated that visits will be made by Authorised Representatives in pairs or threes but never by a single Authorised Representative alone. LINK would ideally like to have a service user or carer with direct experience involved in each visit as well as providing a briefing to others in advance of the visit. Those Authorised Representatives undertaking a particular visit will agree in advance the aspects of the service about which they are particularly concerned to see or learn more. Where possible, the service provider will be made aware of these special interests in advance. When undertaking visits, Authorised Representatives will respect the privacy and dignity of service users and not interrupt the services that are being provided.

Unless exceptional circumstances justify an unannounced visit, the time, duration and people involved in a visit will be agreed and notified in advance to the service provider who will be asked to name their contact person on site and available to the visiting team. Under some circumstances, for example where issues of language, mobility or disability arise, the Host may provide a support person to accompany the visiting team.

### **Written reports to follow up on visits**

Within 10 working days of a visit, a draft report should be agreed by the visiting team of Authorised Representatives and submitted to the Host who will monitor it for clarity, coverage of pre agreed issues and appropriate confidentiality with regard to issues identified or the identity of service users or staff encountered on the visit. At the same time, a copy of the draft report will also be sent to the Chair of the Resources & Governance Group in order to establish whether there are any wider issues arising from the visit which Wandsworth LINK need to consider. Having taken into account the views of the Host and the R&G Chair, the draft report will be sent to the service provider within a further 10 working days and they will

have 10 working days to raise any concerns about perceived inaccuracies. If the service provider challenges the draft report, it will be necessary for the Authorised Representatives to meet with the Host and the R&G Chair to agree if changes can be made; if the provider's comments should be added; or if the report should stand in its draft form.

It is hoped that visits and the follow up reports will be positive and build on existing good services but it is recognised that, from time to time, queries may arise or aspects of the service may be seen as inadequate or inappropriate. Every effort will be made to deal with such points in a tactful but direct manner in order to achieve positive outcomes. Except in exceptional circumstances, a final report will be sent to the service provider within 10 working days of receiving their comments on the draft. If a delay is expected, the service provider will be notified. A copy of the final report will be sent, as required, to the commissioner of the service as well as the provider.

In response to the report findings, service providers and/or commissioners will be expected to provide a written response identifying any proposed changes or developments and the timetable for achieving them. The LINK may consider that a follow-up visit after a negotiated interval may be beneficial to identify whether proposed improvements have been implemented.

### **Wider implications for service provision in the Borough**

It will be the responsibility of the Resources & Governance Group to consider follow up action after a visit and to decide whether the LINK Executive needs to be made aware of any wider issues connected with the visit including recommendations to the service provider and commissioners. The R&G Group will also recommend to the Executive if a report needs to go to an Overview & Scrutiny Committee and/or to the relevant regulator.

The LINK Executive will review both the operation and the outcome of Enter & View visits on a regular basis with a view to maintaining the quality of visits and ensuring that any outcomes lead to improvement in health and social care services provided in Wandsworth.

Monday, June 29, 2009