

Get involved! Help improve health and social care services in Reading.

**Reading LINK e-bulletin 4
June 2009**

- **Diabetes Event – Last opportunity to register to help shape local diabetic services**
- **Expert Patients Programme seeks volunteer mentors**
- **Find out more about Reading LINK**

Diabetes Event – An opportunity to help shape local diabetic services. Thursday 9th July 2009 10am-1pm at The Warehouse, with lunch provided.

As a result of the work Reading Local Involvement Network (LINK) have been carrying out around diabetes care, NHS Berkshire West have teamed up with the Reading LINK and Diabetes UK to host the event at The Warehouse, on Cumberland Road. Interested people are advised to register by July 1st as places are limited.

To register or for more information, please contact:

Carol Pendell
NHS Berkshire West
Wokingham Community Hospital
41 Barkham Road
Wokingham
RG41 2RE

You can also email her at carol.pendell@berkshire.nhs.uk or telephone 0118 949 2904

The event - starting at 10am with lunch provided - is aimed primarily at people with diabetes and their carers but anyone else in Wokingham, Reading and West Berkshire with an interest in the disease is welcome to attend.

Expert Patients Programme seeks volunteer mentors

Living with a long-term condition? Longing to influence health care of the future?

The Expert Patients Programme Community Interest Company (EPP CIC) is seeking people who live with a long-term health condition and who would like to take on a stimulating new role in a pioneering project in and around the Thames Valley.

After two years' study, Health and Social Care Foundation Degree students at Thames Valley University qualify as Assistant/Associate Practitioners in Health and Social Care.

EPP CIC has teamed up with South Central Health Authority (SCHA) on an exciting pilot project which aims to offer the students a better understanding of life with a long-term health condition by linking them each with a trained Volunteer Mentor.

This is a great opportunity for service user Mentors (SUMs) to use their knowledge, skills and experience to help the students reflect on their understanding of long-term health conditions and their effects on day-to-day living. The role of Mentor will therefore help to promote better practice in the future management of long-term conditions. EPP CIC offers volunteers the opportunity to develop mentorship skills by providing them with full training and ongoing support and a certificate is awarded on successfully completing the mentorship training. Commitment is key and following the mentorship preparation and expert patient training courses this year Mentors will meet with their chosen student for six mentoring sessions in 2010.

Cheryl Berry, Regional Manager for EPP CIC said, "We feel the mentoring project is an excellent opportunity for people with experience of a long-term condition to show what life is like from their point of view, rather than from a medical perspective, and would welcome volunteer representation from people living with any long-term condition".

To register your interest, please contact: Mentorship Co-ordinator Gill Stokes on: 07812 694562 or email: gillian.stokes@eppcic.co.uk ; or Regional Administrator Sue Littleford on: 01273 704955 or email : sue.littleford@eppcic.co.uk

Find out more about Reading LINK

If you would like a representative from Reading LINK to come along to one of your group meetings or events or you would like to find out more, please do contact us:

Sheena Masoero – LINK Co-ordinator – sheena@volaction.demon.co.uk

Elaine Holloway – Development Worker – elaine@volaction.demon.co.uk

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