

Reading LINK e-bulletin 33  
January 2012

Reading LINK team wishes you well for the New Year Ahead.

- **Women's Health Day - Sat 28th Jan 2012**
- **Reading LINK "Get Connected" Telephone Network Group**
- **Did you know about ..... NHS Choices Website?**
- **Diabetes Care in Reading.....LINK Feedback**
- **Royal Berkshire Hospital – THINKGLUCOSE..... Award Winning Work**
- **Local Healthwatch receive funding boost**
- **' South Central Ambulance Service 'Ambulance Trust of the Year Award'**
- **Stop calling 999 for non-life threatening reasons – message from Director of communications and Public Engagement**
- **Reading Borough Council – Working Better with You – Keeping in touch**
- **Healthy Living Event – 8th Feb 2012**
- **Patient and Public Involvement Programme Consultations - Autism in Adults; gastrointestinal bleeding, Neonatal infection**

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- **Women's Health Day - Saturday 28th January 2012 from 1 to 5pm**

Reading LINK are organising this free event for Women - At the Warehouse 1A Cumberland Road, RG1 3LB. (This is particularly aimed at Nepalese women. Nepalese interpreters will be available for translation). Come along and get a free health check, meet local health and social care services.

Children are welcome.

Also don't miss: Free massage, Nail Bar and Nepalese Food.

For more information please contact the LINK Team on 0118 902 3912 or email

[info@readingink.org.uk](mailto:info@readingink.org.uk)

- **Reading LINK "Get Connected" Telephone Network Group**

Reading LINK are working in partnership with Community Networks (A charity set up to provide telephone befriending groups. Funded by RBC this service is for people aged over 50 living in Reading, to set up a pilot discussion group to enable people who may be isolated within their homes to get involved with LINK.

It will involve:

- 6 sessions occurring once a week - (each Tuesday morning 10am) **FIRST SESSION ON 7th FEB**
- Each session to last no more than 1 hour
- No call charges incurred by participants (totally free)
- Sessions to consist of a mix of information sharing about LINK and local health/social care services and opportunity to feedback about local services
- Group will consist of 6 people supported by a facilitator from LINK.

Why should older people join the group?

- An opportunity to interact with other people
- An opportunity to find out more about your local LINK
- An opportunity to find out more and Have Your Say about local Health & Social Care services

Please pass this information on to people who might be interested in taking part and ask them to call Reading LINK on 0118 902 3912.

- **Did you know about.....NHS Choices Website?**

NHS Choices is the UK's biggest health website. It provides comprehensive health information. The site helps people to make choices about health, lifestyle such as smoking, drinking and alcohol as well as help with finding and using NHS services in England. The site is designed for members of the public not doctors. Most of the website pages can be translated into more than 50 languages simply by clicking on the translate button and selecting the required language.

To find out more click here <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

- **Diabetes Care in Reading.....LINK Feedback**

One of the first pieces of work Reading LINK carried out, was around diabetes care in Reading, a number of recommendations were made around the availability of insulin pumps for appropriate patients, timely retinal eye screening and education sessions for newly diagnosed diabetics. NHS Berkshire West and Royal Berkshire hospital responded positively to the LINK report. Recently LINK sought an update on diabetes services from NHS Berkshire and they have told us that more patients have been able to benefit from the use of insulin pumps. All patients with diabetes are offered an appointment for retinal screening annually, usually at their own GP practice and appointments may be available on Saturdays or evenings (if you haven't had your annual eye screen, contact your GP or Berkshire Diabetic Eye Screening service on 01189 495 152). The results from these screening tests should be sent to all patients within 6 weeks of the screening. Education sessions are also available for newly diagnosed diabetics, which GP's can refer patients to attend.

- **Royal Berkshire Hospital – THINKGLUCOSE..... Award Winning Work**

As a result of the work LINK carried out into Diabetes care in Reading, Reading LINK were invited by Royal Berkshire Hospital NHS Trust to be involved in a project called THINKGLUCOSE, which ran during 2010/11. This project was an initiative from the Institute for Innovation and Improvement to improve the management of patients admitted into hospital but also had diabetes. Several workgroups were set up to take work forward and as a result the project achieved a number of rewarding successes:

- A large increase in referrals of patients with diabetes to the diabetes specialist team, which ensured that patients got fast and appropriate diabetes care. 90% of all patients seen by the diabetes specialist team also had a discharge plan of care to ensure smooth transition back to GP care after discharge.
- Evidence was gathered which showed improvement in positive patient experience
- More knowledgeable nursing staff across all departments as a result of a 6 month education programme delivered to nursing staff
- Length of stay beginning to be reduced as a result of better diabetic management.

As a result of this positive work patients are benefiting from improved care and we are pleased to report that the Diabetes Team at the Royal Berkshire Hospital have won several awards in recognition of their work to improve care for inpatients with diabetes. The Quality and Care Diabetes Awards included the Best NHS Team of the Year working in Diabetes, Clinical Service Redesign and Best Emergency Inpatient Care initiative – Congratulations!

- **Local Healthwatch receive funding boost - Department of Health news release for information**

From next year, an additional £3.2m will be made available to local authorities to establish Local Healthwatch, the new local health bodies set to replace Local Involvement Networks. In addition, funding of over £370,000 will also be made available until the end of the 2011/12 financial year for 75 Healthwatch Pathfinders – a partnership between Local Involvement Networks and local authorities to test out the role of Local Healthwatch – and can be used in any part of their development. This could include spreading best practice, engaging more in the community, and financially supporting volunteers.

Local Healthwatch is a vital part of our plans to give people a stronger voice and drive improvements in health and social care services across the NHS. This funding approval is a further sign of our commitment to support the dedicated staff and volunteers who are driving this forward. It gives them the support necessary to carry out their important work in shaping the future of local healthcare.

Local Healthwatch will give patients, members of the public, and carers a real say over how their local health service is run. They will drive up local involvement in the community and ensure patients understand the choices available to them in a modern NHS. Following feedback from local authorities and local involvement networks, they now have until April 2013 to work with local health experts and volunteers to establish the new Local Healthwatch.

Healthwatch England will be established in October 2012, ensuring that the learning and experience taken from each of the 75 Healthwatch pathfinders will support and create consistency amongst Local Healthwatch ahead of the new April 2013 deadline.

More at <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2012/01/local-healthwatch/>

- **'Ambulance Trust of the Year' award**

In December, at the 2011 Health Business Awards ceremony, at the Emirates Stadium in London, South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SCAS) won the 'Ambulance Trust of the Year' award.

SCAS were put forward for the award this summer because NHS figures showed that SCAS was the best performing ambulance trust in England in terms of response times. The award also recognised that SCAS continued to improve its non-conveyance rates, and is the national leader in the field with 42.5% of patients being treated without having to be transported to hospital - an increase of 3.9% over last year.

The other trusts nominated for the 'Ambulance Trust of the Year' award were: West Midlands Ambulance Service, South Western Ambulance Service and London Ambulance Service. Speaking about the awards, CEO Will Hancock said, "This award is for all our staff, stakeholders and partners. The achievement of 'Ambulance Trust of the Year' award is a testament to your commitment to continually strive to improve patient care. I would like to thank you all for your efforts this year and congratulate everyone for winning this well deserved award."

To find out more about the awards visit <http://www.hbawards.co.uk>

- **Stop calling 999 for non-life threatening reasons - Campaign**

South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) has launched a campaign in a bid to stop people calling 999 for non-life threatening reasons. With the service receiving 1,235 hoax calls and many more inappropriate calls from January 2011 to October 2011, this is an increasing problem that is putting people's lives at risk. A hard-hitting video shot in the style of a movie trailer, which showcases interviews with paramedics, real life emergencies and re-enactments of inappropriate calls and the impact they have, is

available to view on [www.999southcentral.co.uk](http://www.999southcentral.co.uk) <<http://www.999southcentral.co.uk>> as well as on YouTube.

#### Misuse costs lives

South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust (SCAS)

<<http://www.southcentralambulance.nhs.uk>> is here for you when you need them most.

However, 40% of the 999 calls we receive are from patients who do not need to go to hospital. An ambulance attending a patient who could have used more appropriate healthcare services is not available to go to a person in a life-threatening emergency. Just think - your life, or the life of someone you care about, could be put at risk.

On average, there is only one ambulance per 23,000 people during the day, and one per 35,000 people at night available in our region. So, make sure you need us before you call. To help you understand when you should call us or use an alternative healthcare provider, please consider the following:

For medical emergencies, such as

- Chest pain
- Severe breathing difficulty
- Severe blood loss
- Choking
- Blacking out

#### Dial 999 immediately

For other illnesses and injuries

Call NHS Direct on 0845 46 47 for advice, alternatively visit their website

<<http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk/>> or the NHS Choices website <<http://www.nhs.uk>>

- Contact your GP or out-of-hours GP service for other illnesses. Check your symptoms at [www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk)
- Make your own way to your local A&E, minor injuries unit or walk-in centre for minor injuries
- Seek advice from your pharmacist for self-care

#### • **Reading Borough Council Working Better With You – Keeping In Touch**

Since the launch of the programme in July 2011, local people have been taking advantage of a range of opportunities to have their say and to encourage people to get involved in new ways of working with the Council. Some of the feedback was presented at a recent community event 'Working Better with You – The Future', at the Town Hall. Please use the following link for feedback that has been published:

<http://www.reading.gov.uk/council/consultations/2011consultations/wbwyweneedtotalkfeedback/> to find out more. You can also register your ongoing interest on a particular theme if you want to continue to be involved with the campaign. If you would like to have a copy of the feedback booklet 'you've talked, we're listening' that has been published, please call Reading Borough Council on 0118 9373737.

The Council is committed to making sure this continues to happen, so please look out for future updates. Coming soon is a Let's Talk Health campaign to be launched later this month.

#### • **Healthy Living Event – Wednesday 8th Feb 2012 from 10:30 to 1:30pm – Council Chamber Civic Offices, Reading.**

Physical Disabilities and Sensory Needs Network invites you to their Healthy Living Event.

Information and advice for people with long-term conditions who may be affected with diabetes, stroke, breathing problems and joint pain. Free health checks including screening for diabetes and blood pressure, and Health and lifestyle presentations from:

- 10.30: "Making Life Better" - Citizens Advice Bureau
- 11.30: "Coping with Arthritis" - Arthritis Care
- 11.30: "Living with Diabetes" - Diabetes UK
- 12noon "Life After Stroke" - The Stroke Association
- 12.30 "Being Healthy and Active" NHS Berkshire West

For more information or to book call Nina Crispin on 0118 937 2383 or email

[HousingCCStrategyTeam@reading.gov.uk](mailto:HousingCCStrategyTeam@reading.gov.uk)

- **Patient and Public Involvement Programme (PIIP) from the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence– 3 consultations Jan to Feb 2012**

PIIP recommend you register as a stakeholder or you contact the registered stakeholder organisation that most closely represents your interests and pass your comments to them. Note that the provisional recommendations presented do not constitute the Institute's formal guidance on this topic. The recommendations are provisional and may change after consultation.

**1. Title: Autism in adults: guideline consultation**

Summary: A clinical practice guideline on Autism in adults is being developed for use in the NHS in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This guideline covers the recognition, referral, diagnosis and management of adults on the autism spectrum

Consultation closes: 5pm on 27 January 2012

Please click here <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG/Wave23/1/Consultation/Latest>

Consultation dates: 2 December 2011 - 27 January 2012

**2. Title: Acute upper gastrointestinal bleeding**

Summary: Acute upper gastrointestinal bleeding is a common medical emergency that has a 10% hospital mortality rate. Despite changes in management, mortality has not significantly improved over the past 50 years. This guideline offers best practice advice on the care of adults and young people aged 16 years and older with acute variceal and non-variceal upper gastrointestinal bleeding. Please click here

<http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=folder&o=57570>

Consultation closes: 5pm on 14 February 2012

**3. Title: Antibiotics for neonatal infection**

Summary: Early-onset neonatal bacterial infection (infection with onset within 72 hours of birth) is a significant cause of death and serious illness in newborn babies. This guideline offers best practice advice on the care of newborn babies with early-onset neonatal infection.

Please click here: <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/index.jsp?action=folder&o=57699>

Consultation closes: 5pm on 27 February 2012