



Who Cares

The health and social care involvement network for North Lincolnshire

ANNUAL REPORT

APRIL 2008 – MARCH 2009



The First Year:

Local People Working to Improve Health and Adult Social Care Services

Contents

Better together	
Foreword	3
The executive group	4
Chair's report	5
The structure of Who Cares	5
Why our work is needed	6
Important milestones	6
The launch event	
The first members' forum	
Regional members' network forum	
The JSNA consultation	
Our Work	8
Complaints handling and the primary care trust	
Improving GPs appointments systems	
Our research	9
The budget	10
The next steps	11



Who Cares

Who Cares is hosted by Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire. To become a member or to take part in our activities please contact us using the details below.

C/o Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire
4-6 Robert Street, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire DN15 6NG

Telephone: 01724 845155

E mail: greg.gough@vanl.org.uk

Or find us on the internet at:

www.who-cares-online.org.uk



Voluntary Action
North Lincolnshire

Better Together

Foreword from Greg Gough, LINK Coordinator

Who Cares is a Local Involvement Network (LINK) and has been formed with one key goal: to enable all local people to influence the suitability and quality of local health and adult social care services. The Department of Health instigated Who Cares and provided it with legal powers to enable it to function effectively. Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire (VANL) and Who Cares' members have worked together to ensure that Who Cares truly represents the composition and the aspirations of the people of North Lincolnshire. It is the ethos of VANL that Who Cares will be run by its members and that every person resident in North Lincolnshire, or who is registered for primary care services in North Lincolnshire, should be encouraged to become a member.

VANL began the LINK project on the 1st April 2008 and with the initial steering group worked industriously to ensure that it was given a firm legal and procedural basis and that it involved the widest cross section of North Lincolnshire's population as was possible. In the following months the membership grew and became more active; VANL recruited staff to support the LINK and the name of Who Cares, the health and adult social care network for North Lincolnshire, was adopted as a local identity.

The official launch of Who Cares took place on the 4th October 2008 and the members elected an executive group which would have the authority to make key decisions on behalf of the membership. In this report you will read about the work and achievements of Who Cares in its first year. We are proud of these achievements and would be delighted to speak to you about these and about becoming a member.

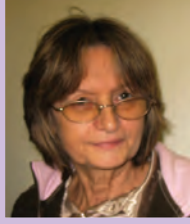


Greg Gough
LINK Coordinator

The Executive Group



Roni Wilson
Chair &
Lead on Primary Care



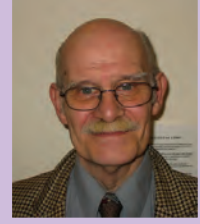
Hilary Kitchen
Vice Chair Secondary,
Tertiary/Acute Health
Care and Patient
Transport



Richard Leach
Vice Chair &
Lead on Mental
Health Provision



Melanie Petrie
Vice Chair &
Lead on Social Care
Commissioning
and Provision



**Tony Scrase
Walters**
Enter and View Lead



James Harding



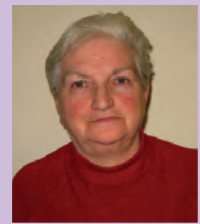
Sheila Girling



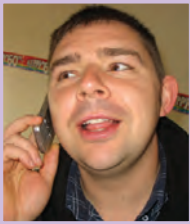
Camilla Mackrill



Claire McMullen



Sandra Lingard



Stewart Atkinson



Susan Marrison



Dali Khan



Stuart Wilson



James Allcroft



Ian McPherson



Sunil Kapil



Carole Phillips



Colin Hornsby



Jane Paine

The Host Staff



Greg Gough
Coordinator



Kristian Reed
Communications and
Research



Julie Ponting
Administration

Chair's Report

I am pleased to be the elected chair of Who Cares. I believe that Who Cares provides an important opportunity for everyone in North Lincolnshire to influence the development of Health and Adult Social Care services to better reflect the needs of our community.

I have been involved with Who Cares from the start and have seen it grow from an idea into one of the country's foremost Local Involvement Networks. This is due to the commitment of its members, to the support it has within the community, to the diversity of its membership and to the able and professional support of VANL. Who Cares has established a strong local presence and I am grateful to those members who have given their time and efforts to establish Who Cares into the successful organisation that it is today.

Who Cares is in a strong position to carry on influencing real improvements in health and adult social care services throughout the coming years and we are looking forward to the challenges that we will face and to the achievements that we will make on behalf of the people of North Lincolnshire.

I would like to thank every one of our members for their contributions and I would like to thank the people of North Lincolnshire for supporting Who Cares and for seeing its true potential to improve the health and quality of life of all. Finally my personal thanks go to the Coordinator, Greg Gough and his colleagues Kristian Reed and Julie Ponting for their dedication and hard work.

Roni Wilson
Chair of the Who Cares executive group.

The Structure of Who Cares

The members are the true owners of Who Cares, it is the members who make key decisions, carry out investigations and contribute to reports. Any person who lives in North Lincolnshire or who is registered for primary care services in North Lincolnshire can join Who Cares. There is no charge for membership and no minimum term of commitment or minimum level of involvement.

- The executive group is a body of 20 members who were elected by the ordinary members. It has the authority to make key decisions on behalf of Who Cares and meets every month.
- Subgroups will explore and investigate particular issues. Members are not committed to take part in subgroup activity and can join the groups or activities that interest them and can leave when these activities are concluded.
- The enter and view group are the authorised enter and view representatives for Who Cares. They are selected from the members through an application and interview process by a panel from the executive group. Subgroups may request the enter and view team to conduct visits.
- Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire is the host for Who Cares. This means that it is responsible for providing a range of support services that enable Who Cares to fulfil its function and for ensuring that Who Cares fulfils its responsibilities as the LINK for North Lincolnshire.
- The performance group receive performance and financial reports from VANL relating to host activity. They decide whether to commend these reports to the wider membership.

Why Our Work is Needed

The health and social care issues facing North Lincolnshire are particular to this area. Who Cares' aim is to ensure, to local peoples satisfaction, that our health and adult social care providers are taking effective and appropriate measures to tackle these.

What we know:

- The ratio of older people to younger people is greater than the national average and looks set to increase further. There will be around 1000 people aged 65+ added to our population per year between now and 2029. This presents challenges in tailoring care and providing carers to meet future needs. Who Cares wants to be assured that North Lincolnshire Council and NHS North Lincolnshire are putting in place the right plans to prepare for this growth.
- While there are no accurate figures about the number of people who are caring for another person with a health problem or disability an estimated 1 in 7 (4650) female workers and 1 in 9 (4240) male workers in North Lincolnshire are caring for someone. Who Cares wants to support carers to ensure that they receive the most appropriate and timely support.
- The health of people in all social groups is improving but there are significant inequalities in life expectancy between people in the least well off and in the most affluent communities. Who Cares wants to make sure that all people, regardless of background, social group, wealth or place of residence have equal access to high quality care.
- The leading cause of preventable ill health and premature mortality in North Lincolnshire is smoking. The lower life expectancy for people in poorer social groups is due mainly to smoking related illnesses. NHS North Lincolnshire have estimated that about 165 men and 100 women die and more than 2000 are treated in hospital each year due to smoking related diseases.
- The level of adult obesity in North Lincolnshire is greater than the national average. Many diseases accompany obesity and excess body weight and it is anticipated that the care services in North Lincolnshire will face an increased workload in dealing with these over the next decade.

Important Milestones in the Life of Who Cares

The Launch Event

On Saturday the 4th October Who Cares held its inaugural event at the Central Community Centre in Scunthorpe. This was a community fun day for people of all ages and backgrounds to promote the aims of Who Cares, to conduct the formal adoption of the constitution and to elect an executive group.

The day was an immense success: over 250 people visited and most joined as members. 40 local health and social care related organisations and community groups supported us with informative presentations and displays and our members hosted a range of focus groups and carried out research into a range of health and social care related issues.

The First Members' Forum

On the 25th March 2009 the executive group members reported their progress to date to the general members at the first Who Cares forum. These will be held every quarter and the one falling in the autumn will be the Annual General meeting.

Who Care's members' forums will have a theme and the first was "identifying members' priorities". Members decide which issues are investigated by Who Cares and those present contributed enormously to the task of identifying Who Cares' priorities. A questionnaire was circulated to all of the members who could not be present and between the two sources Who Cares has a great deal of evidence to support a number of investigations and work activities.

Regional Members' Network Forum

On 13th March 2009 external funding was obtained for Who Cares to host a regional network forum for members of the LINKs throughout the Yorkshire and Humber region. This event was themed around the role of enter and view and 60 members from 15 LINKs took part.

Who Cares members are keen to develop a regional network with the members of other LINKs so that good practice and developments can be shared. At present the LINK hosts have a regional network but we are keen to provide greater ownership and control for the members.

Who Cares is leading the way with its preparation for enter and view and our members were keen to share our progress with their colleagues. Everyone who attended had great praise for the event which certainly put Who Cares firmly on the map.

Consultation on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

On Friday 18th July 2008 Who Cares held a public consultation to respond to the JSNA, a report prepared by North Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust and North Lincolnshire Council setting out their shared strategic priorities for the future health and adult social care needs of North Lincolnshire.

The attendees were in agreement with the principle of the JSNA and with its targets. These included improving the quality of life of older people, addressing health inequalities and plans to improve public health and additionally suggested that:

- A specific priority regarding mental health care was needed to ensure earlier action in the identification, prevention and treatment of mental health issues including dementia.
- A priority should be incorporated to include accountability for the continuity of care from hospital to home.
- A priority should include access to more affordable leisure services and to generating better social networks for older people.

The next JSNA is planned to examine the needs of younger people. Our members requested that they be consulted for their views prior to the publication of this document and not afterwards.

Our Work

Our research

Who Cares has conducted research among both its members and the wider public to identify concerns with health and adult social care. This research will be used to prioritise the investigations and activities that Who Cares will undertake over the next year. The questionnaire was sent to over 1000 members and contacts in the voluntary sector and could be completed interactively on the Who Cares website, www.who-cares-online.org.uk. At our members forum a number of focus groups were held to explore the issues raised in greater depth. The report summarising this research is available on our website and can be posted to people who do not have internet access.

The things that concern our members in no particular order are:

- Barriers in accessing GPs
- Lack of Dentists
- Lack of activities for residents in care homes
- Problems in occupational therapy
- A lack of pain clinics
- Mixed sex wards
- Hospital discharge procedures
- Treatment for dementia patients
- A need for greater access to psychological therapies

In the coming months Who Cares will establish working groups to investigate these issues and to encourage providers to make improvements. Who Cares will continue to seek the views and opinions of its members about health and social care issues.

Complaints Handling by the Primary Care Trust

In October 2008 it had become apparent that North Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust had failed to meet the Department of Health's targets in relation to the time it took to deal with complaints from the public. Who Cares had heard from many people voicing their disappointment with the way their complaints had been handled.

A panel of our members held a meeting with the PCT's Director of Engagement & Partnerships to investigate this matter. Soon afterwards the PCT began to implement procedures to reform their complaints handling systems. Who Cares is very pleased that the PCT have taken steps to resolve this and that their Director of Engagement was able and willing to discuss the matter quite frankly and openly. We look forward to seeing an improvement in the PCT's handling of complaints when figures are published this year.

Investigating GPs Appointments Systems

The first major project undertaken by Who Cares is to look into GPs appointment systems. Over the initial few months of Who Cares' inception a number of members raised concerns over their ability to see their doctor and in making an appointment within three working days. These concerns were also echoed by existing Healthcare Commission research which showed that NHS North Lincolnshire (the Primary Care Trust for North Lincolnshire) was in the bottom 20% nationally in terms of people being able to make an appointment within three working days.

With this to hand the Who Cares Executive Group decided that we should carry out an investigation into GP services, and in particular access to GP services in North Lincolnshire. To do this we would go out and speak to as many people as possible to try and find the whole spectrum of views. One of the most important things to recognise about all the work Who Cares undertakes is that we are not simply here to criticise and tell the health services that they are doing a bad job. We want to work closely with them to ensure that services are improved for the people of North Lincolnshire, and we want to tell them when they are doing a good job. If a particular GP practice is providing an excellent service for their patients then we want to tell them.

The members made a conscious decision to use a type of research which was very accessible and would enable people from all backgrounds to participate. The method of research which is being used for the GP access project is Participatory Appraisal.

Participatory Appraisal sets out to assess the views and needs of the local community. It uses highly visual and engaging tools designed so that all members of the community can participate.

It is a completely flexible approach and much more open ended than other methods such as questionnaires. Participants are able to express themselves freely through written and drawn responses.

With the questions being so broad it allows the participants to set the agenda. Local people have an awareness of what the problems are in their area, and what the best ways are of solving them.

Participatory Appraisal uses a coloured coding system and monitoring map to make sure that all sections of the community are represented in the research.

Our research began in the bitterly cold weather of late January and early February out on the streets of Scunthorpe town centre. Despite the cold weather the public response to our research was excellent and we spoke to over 120 people in only three research sessions. The people we spoke to gave us their views on all aspects of their GP practice, and we were able to gather a range of opinions from many GP practices. From carrying out this initial research we have been able to see that there are three main issues which people have. These issues are:

- People's ability to be able to contact their doctor - This includes being able to get through to the surgery on the phone, as well as the attitudes of some receptionists.
- Consultation times - Having to wait long periods of time to see their doctor due to preceding consultations overrunning; this then shortens the length of the following consultations.
- Appointments - We have received a number of comments from people who have expressed issues in trying to book a same day appointment. Pre booking appointments is another issue. Not all surgeries offer this service, and people would like to see this introduced.

Now that the research is coming to a conclusion we can begin to finalise the report for circulation to GP practices and others. It is hoped that the findings from this project will go a long way to improving the standards of GP practices, helping to make a positive difference.

Who Cares Budget 1st April 2008 – 31st March 2011

The finances for supporting the work of Who Cares come from central government via North Lincolnshire Council and are managed by Voluntary Action North Lincolnshire. The table below illustrates the budget for Who Cares:

Who Cares' Budget	Spend 2008/09 £	Budget 2009/10 £	Budget 2010/11 £
Staff salaries	35,687	57,970	61,558
Recruitment	5,111	0	0
Travel and subsistence	1,561	4,100	4,100
Room rent & meeting expenses	659	2,000	2,000
Equipment	2,680	1,000	1,000
Staff training	0	2,000	2,000
Communication/Producing information	795	3,200	3,000
Contracted out detailed investigations	305	10,000	10,000
Events	187	7,000	7,000
General expenses	1,430	2,120	2,171
Total direct costs of the project	49,045	89,390	92,829
Portion of central functions costs	8,706	9,196	9,714
Portion of governance and strategic development costs	10,898	10,971	11,130
Portion of premises costs	5,705	5,886	6,055
Total costs of project	74,354	115,444	119,729

The budget plans in the years 2009/10 and 2010/11 are necessarily greater than the spend in the year 2008/09 because the host staff were recruited during the financial year and payment of their salaries did not commence at the start of the financial year 2008-09 and because Who Cares did not become fully operational until October 2008. The increased funds in the years 2009/10 and 2010/11 will allow Who Cares to:

- 1 Hold a greater range of diverse community focus group events
- 2 Enable members to attend valuable external health and adult social care related events
- 3 Provide the best training for members in enter and view, research techniques and community engagement skills
- 4 Provide a greater fund for detailed outsourced investigations throughout the three year projected period

The Next Steps

Who Cares is in a strong position to continue into the next year of its operation as the Local Involvement Network for North Lincolnshire. It enjoys the following benefits:

- It is a fully constituted and democratic body
- It is fully accountable to the public through its open membership
- It has a strong and active membership
- It is inclusive and representative of the community of North Lincolnshire
- The skills of its members are rapidly growing
- It enjoys considerable local renown as an effective and pioneering LINK
- There is a strong and accountable relationship between Who Cares and the host
- It enjoys strong support from all of the care providers in the public sector and from many voluntary sector organisations

Active subgroups

Subgroups have been formed to investigate particular issues and will be driven by our members who will set objectives to influence improvements in health and adult care services.

Enter and View

The enter and view representatives are being trained and will become active, carrying out visits of care service premises to support our subgroup investigations. They will be ready to begin enter and view activities by July.

Public involvement

We will continue to hold a range of events throughout North Lincolnshire to target communities to encourage all people to become involved in Who Cares at whatever level they choose.

Building a regional LINK members forum

We want to establish closer grassroots ties with our neighbouring LINKs in the Yorkshire and Humber region so that we may learn from each other and work better together.

Prioritising a programme of work

We will continue to seek the views of all of our members and of the wider community of North Lincolnshire and to put these at the core of what we do.

Championing public involvement

We will at all times encourage the local NHS organisations and the local authority to truly consult with the public at the earliest stage when proposing any changes in health and social care services.



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