

APPENDIX 17d**PROTOCOL FOR WORKING TOGETHER BETWEEN THE GREENWICH LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORK AND GREENWICH COMMUNITY HEALTH SERVICES**

For the purposes of this document the Greenwich Local Involvement Network shall be referred to as the LINK, Greenwich Community Health Services shall be referred to as the Trust(s) and the LINK Host Organisation shall be referred to as the Host.

1. Purpose

1.1 It is recognised that the LINK, and the Trust(s), whilst having independent and separate identities, nevertheless have a mutual interest in ensuring that patients, carers and the wider public have an active voice in determining the shape and delivery of health services within their local area.

1.2 By becoming signatories on this document, the above parties endorse this recognition and pledge themselves to the following protocol and its associative aims. These being:-

1.2.1 To involve patients, carers and the wider public in the planning and development of both new and existing health services so that such services seek visibly to conform with the identified and stated needs of the service users and wider public.

1.2.2 To actively listen to the patients, carers and wider public and to provide valid and constructive feedback in order to satisfy them that their views are valued.

1.2.3 To provide an equal and inclusive forum where the views of all patients, carers and the wider public can be expressed without fear of prejudice or reprisal.

1.2.4 To remain sensitive to the differing needs, values and preferences of the patients, carers and the wider public and to ensure that all service provision respects and conforms to those needs, values and preferences wherever possible.

1.2.5 To ensure that patients, carers and the wider public are fully engaged in the design and exchange of information pertaining to service provision.

2. Communication

- 2.1 With the acceptance of this protocol it is understood that the development and maintenance of clear lines of communication between the LINK and the Trust is essential for each to remain true to the stated aims.
- 2.2 In furtherance of this the Trust(s) will nominate an appropriate staff member as a single point of contact in order to deal with day-to-day communication from the LINK. They will also nominate a deputy should the principal point of contact be unavailable for any reason.
- 2.3 It will be the responsibility of the nominated contacts to signpost requests to relevant Trust(s) staff. As working relationships on particular issues develop, it is expected and encouraged that direct contact with the appropriate individual will take place.
- 2.4 The Trust(s) will send communications to the Host who will copy such communication directly to LINK members.
- 2.5 The Trust(s) representatives will attend the Statutory Sector Liaison Group meetings and provide information and make input as required.
- 2.6 **In order to facilitate a healthy and meaningful interchange of information it is agreed that the following clauses are observed:-**
 - 2.6.1 A representative of the LINK shall be invited to attend all relevant Trust(s) meetings both internal and those conducted in the community. This representative to be accorded an “observer with speaking rights” status.
 - 2.6.2 All relevant documents arising from these meetings shall be distributed amongst the LINK representatives and the Host.
 - 2.6.3 A representative of the Trust(s) shall be invited to attend all relevant LINK committee meetings. They shall be accorded an “observer with speaking rights” status.
 - 2.6.4 There will be quarterly meetings between the Trust(s) Head of Service and senior Trust(s) representatives and the representatives from the LINK. The Host Development Manager will also attend these meetings to ensure continuity.
 - 2.6.5 Any representative of the LINK will provide a report in writing or verbally from contact with the Trust(s).

3. Reporting and Feedback

- 3.1 The Trust(s) will ensure that reports received from the LINK are passed on to the relevant managers.

- 3.2 The Trust(s) will ensure that the 20 working day rule for response to LINK reports is maintained except where it is agreed to be waived.
- 3.3 The LINK reports will not be released into the public domain until the Trust(s) has had an opportunity to view and comment.
- 3.4 The LINK reserve the right to not change any report but may document the Trust(s) comments.
- 3.5 Where reports have been received and not responded to, the LINK reserves the right to refer matters to the regulator and relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee if they feel matters are being ignored. This will not happen before local resolution has been exhausted.

4. Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

- 4.1 It is envisaged that there will be many opportunities for PALS and the LINK to work in partnership.
- 4.2 The PALS Service will ensure that the LINK receives a quarterly report of its activities.

5. Enter and View

- 5.1 The LINK has the right to appoint authorised representatives to enter the premises of certain Service Providers that are publicly funded, view the conditions and interact with the service users. Children's social care services are exempted from this duty to allow access (Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007). These services may include: -
 - Primary care facilities
 - Hospitals
 - Care Homes
 - Day Centres
 - Voluntary and private sector contractors who are commissioned to provide services to the Trust
- 5.2 The LINK agrees to elect representatives and to ensure that these representatives possess the necessary skills and undergo a Criminal Records Bureau check in line with section 113A of the Police Act 1997. The CRB Disclosure information will then be checked by a nominated person of the LINK who must be satisfied that the elected representatives are suitable for the task.

- 5.3 The Greenwich LINK Enter and View Policy as approved by the Greenwich LINK Executive Committee should be referred to with regard to these activities – please see attached Appendix 3 of the Greenwich LINK Governance Document.

6. Working with the Media

- 6.1 The media have a keen interest in health issues but to avoid misunderstandings it is important that both the Trust(s) and the LINK are aware in advance of material being released to the media by either organisation.
- 6.2 The LINK is committed, as stated above, that any written health related report that the LINK plans to publish shall first be sent to Trust(s) who shall be afforded a reasonable period to respond, before publication.
- 6.3 However the LINK reserves the right to publish if it considers the Trust(s) to be taking an unreasonable time before making a response, or where it is clearly in the public's interest that the report is published without delay.
- 6.4 Where the Trust(s) is releasing information to the media that relates to or impacts upon the work done or being done by the LINK, the LINK will be given a pre-briefing.

7. Public Consultation

- 7.1 The current deliberations to revise the NHS Constitution strongly seek the involvement of the patient and the public and preceding this, since January 2003 all NHS organisations have a duty under Section 11 of the Health and Health Act to make arrangements to involve and consult patients.
- 7.2 The LINK will monitor public consultation undertaken by the Trust(s), and the Trust(s) LINK nominated contact person will make the LINK aware of any public consultation it is considering embarking upon.
- 7.3 Through the established channels as documented herein the Trust will seek the views of the LINK regarding proposed consultations at the earliest possible stage and at least before plans are submitted for approval at Board level.

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1 The LINK and Host will take necessary steps to ensure that details of those bringing a concern or commenting on a service are anonymised unless they state they do not mind being identified.

8.2 The LINK will not participate in any Trust(s) confidential meetings, as this would compromise their independent status.

9. This protocol has been jointly agreed by the Greenwich LINK and Greenwich Community Health Services

Signed

Date

On Behalf of the Greenwich LINK

Signed

Date

On Behalf of Greenwich Community Health Services