

Protocol for Working Relationships between Lewisham LINK & General Practices in Lewisham

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Purpose of Protocol

Lewisham LINK and General Practices including medical centres to be encouraged to work together to ensure

- Local people are involved in the planning and delivery of local health and social care services
- Local services are of the highest quality and responsive to patient needs

This protocol ensures that Lewisham LINK and staff working at GP surgeries and medical centres are supported to deliver their work effectively.

Working Together

The LINK has identified the LINK Development Manager and the Lead Practice Managers as key points of contact.

Statutory guidance highlights the importance of rigorous and systematic patient and public involvement in every aspect of the health service.

The LINK will work with individual practices with their permission to gather and share information regarding their patient's experiences of health and social care services. The aim of this process is to support the practice in improving care for its population.

The LINK will support practices to develop virtual patient panels as one model of Patient Participation Groups. Feedback from these panels will be encouraged on a range of issues including local health and social care services. Individual practices may engage with their patients who are on the panel via the LINK to consult on services.

Information provided to the LINK will be added to the LINK database. Anonymous anecdotal evidence will be shared by the LINK with the practice concerned with a view to improving care. The LINK will be happy to work with practices to find ways of harnessing patient feedback in a sensitive and appropriate manner. Practices will be given 21 days to respond to patient's feedback after which time information may be shared with NHS Lewisham, London Borough of Lewisham and others as appropriate. This information may be used to influence commissioning and service delivery. Any concerns and issues will be researched by the LINK Enter & View Team and may result in an "Enter and View" visit by the LINK. The LINK Development Manager will report back on any actions undertaken by the LINK Enter & View Team following concerns raised by patients.

The LINK has the right to undertake visits to any premises controlled or operated by the statutory sector for the purposes of enter and view. The visit can be related to the premises and/or the services or facilities contracted by the statutory sector including social care settings, GPs, dentists, pharmacists, and optometrists.

The LINK and practices to consider finding ways of linking existing and future PPGs or panels together. This "super PPG" could be useful in offering advice to commissioners in a more personal way and would mean that it did not all fall on your shoulders. It would need discussing with the Federation if such a grouping did arise.

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Enter and View

Visits will be carried out according to the **Code of Conduct** relating to Local Involvement Networks' enter and view services. Specifically:

- Only authorised representatives of the LINK will conduct enter and view activities.
- On arrival, LINK Enter and View LINK representatives will identify themselves to the member of staff in charge. LINK representatives will display their identification at all times.
- If LINK representatives on a visit are denied entry, a clear explanation of the reasons will be provided. Any concerns about refusal should be reported to the relevant Head of PPI or service.
- A member of service provider staff will normally accompany LINK representatives during a visit in order to answer any questions.
- There may be circumstances in which the visit may need to be cancelled by either the service provider or the LINK. Notification of cancellation should be given to the provider and the lead LINK representative as soon as possible. Every effort will be made to reschedule a new date for the visit at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Any potential conflict of interest must be declared and noted.

Reports

- A written report from LINK representatives at the end of a visit will be provided to the service provider within 20 working days.
- If LINK representatives request a response to the formal report, the service provider will respond within 20 working days explaining what if any action is intended as a result of the report.

Complaints and Review of Protocols

- In the event of a complaint relating to conduct on any side, the issue will be raised with the Lewisham LINK Development Manager.
- The protocol will be reviewed at least annually to ensure it assists effective joint working.

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