



Medway LINK – Authorised Panel of Visitors

Introduction

Authorised visitors are LINK participants who are responsible for visiting NHS and / or Social Services premises in order to gather information or carry out investigations on behalf of the Medway LINK.

Role of a LINK Authorised Visitor

1. The role of an authorised visitor is to undertake and report on visits / reviews of health and / or social care premises in accordance with direction from the Medway LINK / a LINK project group / LINK interest group or as identified in the LINK's annual work programme.
2. That the outcome of the work of an authorised visitor is to:
 - a. aid fulfilment of the LINK's role to influence local health and social care decisions
 - b. support the work of the LINK
 - c. add value to the LINK's work
3. All authorised visitors are required to receive a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check before they undertake any visit / review of service.
4. The minimum number of authorised visitors to be appointed to the panel is 10 and the maximum number is 20.
5. That the numbers and roles be reviewed annually but in the first instance reviewed at the annual meeting of the LINK in 2010.
6. That initial appointment to the panel of authorised visitors is for a period of one year with a review that will recommend to the LINK's annual meeting in 2010 either a continuation of the process or a change to improve its effectiveness.

Status of a LINK Authorised Visitor

Being a member of the Authorised Panel of Visitors is a voluntary unpaid position. Travel and other agreed expenses will be paid to Authorised Visitors Panel members working on behalf of the LINK, according to the LINK's Reimbursement of Expenses Policy (where travel is by private car and the driver will be reimbursed at 40 pence per mile; where the total time taken on a visit including travel time exceeds 4 hours meal costs will be paid against receipts up to £5; all claims should be submitted on the appropriate form within three months).

Central Office

*KMN, Unit 24 Folkestone Enterprise Centre,
Shearway Road, Folkestone, Kent, CT19 4RH*

Tel: 01303 297050

E-mail: info@kmn-ltd.co.uk

Office Hours: Monday – Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm

Local Office

*The Medway LINK, Avenue Business Centre,
17 New Road Avenue, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6BA*

Tel: 01634 821135

E-mail: info@kmn-ltd.co.uk

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 8.30am – 4.00pm

(Answerphone available out of office hours)

Personal Attributes

That a LINK participant selected to be a LINK representative should have:

- a. Communication skills
- b. Listening skills
- c. Negotiating skills
- d. Interest in and knowledge of health and / or social care services
- e. Ability to gather and disseminate information
- f. Analytical skills
- a. Confident, objectivity and impartiality
- b. Ability to feedback in a concise manner (bullet points)
- c. Awareness of role and committed to the LINK
- d. Confidentiality awareness
- e. Diversity awareness
- f. Team worker
- g. Ability to work with and relate to a diverse range of people
- h. Commitment, time and capacity for the LINK and to undertake a minimum number of visits in a given period
- i. Willing to be accountable and comply with the LINK's code of conduct.

That a LINK participant selected to be a LINK authorised visitor should undergo appropriate training.

Process

That each request to a LINK participant to visit a health or social care unit includes:

- a. The name of the unit and details of the contact person
- b. The services provided in that unit and in the context of its owning organisation
- c. The reason for the LINK visit / review
- d. The requirements of the visit in respect of information gathering and giving and dissemination, including seeking public views and experiences as required
- e. Feedback mechanisms – timing, how and to whom, such as the initiating project or interest group, the whole LINK
- f. Possible time and effort, commitment needed
- g. The need or not for a deputy visitor and how that may work and who it will be.

That the authorised visitors are accountable for reporting to and taking instructions from the relevant LINK interest / project group. Visitors will be supported by the LINK's interest group through a buddying system with relevant support from KMN.

Standards in public life

All members of the Panel are expected to observe the LINK's code of conduct and to observe the seven principles of public life (known as the Nolan Principles). These are a useful basis for understanding the role of LINK Visitors:

- **Selflessness**
Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefit for themselves, their families or their friends.
- **Integrity**
Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.
- **Objectivity**
In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.
- **Accountability**
Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.
- **Openness**
Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest demands.
- **Honesty**
Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- **Leadership**
Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

*Quoted from Centre for Excellence in Leadership
http://www.fegovernance.org/nolan_committee.html