

Malcolm Alexander

From: Sally Brearley [s.brearley@blueyonder.co.uk]
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2003 07:49 AM
To: Malcolm Alexander
Cc: Alan Hartley; chief-officer@ms.darlington-chc.northy.nhs.uk; Murray Benham
Subject: Fw: Health Voice Network Forum Posting.

Malcolm

I feel we need to discuss a possible response to this.

Happy to meet if we can fix something up.

All the best and hope you enjoyed the rest of your birthday

Sally

----- Original Message -----

From: <allmembers1@healthvoice-uk.net>

To: <s.brearley@blueyonder.co.uk>

Cc: <s.brearley@blueyonder.co.uk>

Sent: Tuesday, April 08, 2003 5:30 PM

Subject: Health Voice Network Forum Posting.

> HEALTH VOICE NETWORK FORUMS

>

> A new message has been posted to the All Members Forum

>

> ---Start of Message---

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> Title:

> Commission for Patient and Public Involvement: putting a few facts right

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> Message:

> I am writing as a Health Voice member, a Commissioner for the new

> Commission for Patient and Public Involvement, and some one who has worked

> in community development and health for the last 20 years or more. I am

> writing this in a personal capacity.

>

> There have been a couple of items of correspondence which have mentioned

> the Commission over the last three months, so I thought it would be useful

> to outline a bit about the Commission, and why we are following some of

> the routes we are and so forth.

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> There is quite a lot of mis-information around, and hopefully the

> Commission will soon have its own team in place to ensure we have clear

> information available to all, and effective, open and transparent

> communication channels both out from the Commission and into us. There

> have been three reasons for us being a bit slow off the mark. The first is

> that we have had a number of legal challenges to the role and the some of

> the things the Commission is set up to do. Whilst these are going on and

> getting sorted by lawyers, it is not always possible to say things in

> public. Secondly, the tendering process for local networks requires that

> those who will be deciding on who gets the tenders cannot talk about them

> in public or to any potential bidder (so to be seen as equally fair to

> all). Lastly, we are all new, and do not have all the communication staff

> and systems in place yet (but are getting there quickly!) which allow us

> to link to everyone who is interested in/needs to know about the

> Commission and its role and work.

>

> The Commission was only established in January 2003. At that time only the

> Chief Executive (Laura McMurtrie) had been appointed as a permanent member

> of staff. We started as Commissioners at the same time, and met for the

> first time right at the end of January. A new national office had to be

> set up in Birmingham (with all the basic things to do such as get phones

> put in, order furniture etc.). A draft budget was prepared, but not agreed
 > by the Department of Health. In fact it took nearly five weeks of hard
 > negotiation before a budget could be agreed. The proposed structure of the
 > organisation had to be re-thought several times to fit to the finances
 > available to the Commission. The model we came up with is one that both
 > fits the budget, and gives maximum opportunities for local involvement and
 > control. It consists of independent Patient and Public Involvement Forums
 > for every PCT geographical area (nb: change of name is to reflect that
 > these are about health not just patients); local networks to provide
 > practical support to, and network between, a number of PPI Forums; a
 > regional structure to provide links to training, information gathering and
 > distribution, and influencing regional agendas; a small national team and
 > office to ensure national co-ordination and a voice at national level.
 >
 > In 2003/04 the budget for the Commission is £27.25 million pounds. Of
 > this, fractionally more than a third is going directly to PPI Forum (i.e.
 > directly to support to work of volunteers and activists, to meet their
 > expenses, meeting venue needs etc.) - a total of £9.333 million. Another
 > £1.4 million has been allocated for meeting training needs in this first
 > year. The HQ office and staffing is £4.5 million (so about 1/6th of the
 > budget). In year 2 and 3 (2004/05) when the overall budget for the
 > Commission will rise to £34.5 million, PPI Forums will get £16 million; HQ
 > £5 million. I.e. the balance will always strongly be in favour of
 > PPI Forums. The remainder of the budget in all three years is distributed
 > between ICAS, and local networks. Thus an additional £9 million is going
 > in at very local levels in year 1, and £13 million in years 2 & 3.
 >
 > All this information is publicly available, in more detail than I have set
 > out here (see the Commission website and look at Financial report to
 > Commissioners 27th March 2003 paper, from the Commissioner's first Board
 > meeting). I really wanted to put the picture straight about where
 > resources are going. Myself, the Chair and the other 9 Commissioners, and
 > the staff we are recruiting, are all passionately committed to, and have
 > many years of experience of PPI as patients, and community activists, and
 > as people trying to change the NHS and improve health from the inside and
 > the outside. This is exactly the sort of principles we will build in to
 > all levels of working of the Commission. All we ask is that you understand
 > that in year 1 we are both setting up an organisation, a new massive
 > involvement infrastructure and all getting to know our roles and
 > responsibilities at the same time as all this going live. We know CHCs
 > will soon be abolished, and we are committed to the absolute minimum gap
 > between their ending and the PPI Forums being up and running, whilst at
 > the same time wanting to do things properly, so that we get as many people
 > as possible, from as wide a range of backgrounds, involved in PPI
 > Forums, and applying for paid jobs with local networks and the Commission
 > itself.
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 > All the deadlines you are seeing are about trying to keep those two things
 > in balance. Ideally we would have like more time, and to have overlapped
 > with CHCs to ensure proper dovetailing and handover. However parliamentary
 > legislation has dictated the time scales.
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 > Please do have a look at the Commission website (www.cppih.org). Contact
 > any of our information and communications staff, and apply for tickets to
 > attend our Board meetings (see website for details). We have to allocate
 > tickets to make sure we have a big enough venue and to avoid turning
 > people away who have travelled. Staff and Commissioners are now attending
 > many events and conferences, and the Commission will be moving its Board
 > meetings around the country as soon as we can, so hopefully there will be
 > lots of opportunities for information exchange, dialogue, and feeding in.
 >
 > Regards
 >
 > Jan Smithies
 > <mailto:jan.smithies@virgin.net>
 >
 > ---End of Message---

> This message has been posted on the All members forum.
 > Click on the link below to post your reply:
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