

Press Release

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Integrated Living Network – Supporting partnerships between housing and health

The **Integrated Living Network** is a new practitioner network which aims to support organisations to plan and deliver jointly commissioned services across housing, health and social care. The network is being developed by the Northern Housing Consortium with the support of the Care Services Improvement Partnership, and would be of interest to anyone working in the field of community health, Supporting People commissioning, Social Care and Supported Housing.

Housing, health and social care are increasingly joining together to deliver social inclusion and sustainable communities. The linkages between the sectors has long been known – poor housing conditions, poverty, isolation and market decline have clear detrimental effects on health and wellbeing. Government policy sets out its vision for a radical and sustained shift in the way services are delivered, towards better prevention, greater access to services in the community, increased choice and continuing integration of housing, health and social care services. Joining up the planning and commissioning of health and social care with housing, especially for vulnerable groups is being driven by Local Area Agreements, CPA, the forthcoming National Older People's Housing Strategy and practice based commissioning are driving strong links for re-designing services that cross housing, health and social care.

But how is the housing world contributing to delivering this vision?

Sarah Mtango, Policy Services Manager at the Northern Housing Consortium explains, "Joint commissioning is about living, and the role of housing in commissioning partnerships is therefore crucial to delivering on outcomes which improve quality of life". The community based housing service, its links with vulnerable hard to reach groups, the wealth of knowledge and experience in user involvement, the choice agenda, needs and markets analysis and the delivery and measurement of outcomes are all part of the value that housing can bring to the commissioning table. The Northern Housing Consortium already has many examples of its members delivering joined up services in the community. Both as commissioners and providers of strategically joined up Supporting People services, through the Department of Health's Partnership for Older People projects and the NHS Local Improvement Finance Trust schemes, DWP Link Age Plus pilots and extra care housing developments.

The Governments recent announcement of the key findings from the Supporting People Health Pilots highlighted a number of challenges in joint working between housing and health, including a lack of appreciation of the impact of housing related support and its relationship with wellbeing. Sarah

comments, “Whilst there is a long way to go, the pilot findings show a potential for agencies and professionals to work effectively across organisational boundaries, with clear leadership, agreed goals and dedicated partnerships. Our members are very keen to forge even greater links with health and social care and the Northern Housing Consortium is helping them to do this through the development of the **Integrated Living Network**. This network aims to bring together all those working to improve the quality of life of vulnerable people through the joint commissioning of services”.

The inaugural meeting of the Integrated Living Network will take place on Friday 17th November in Wakefield. Around 100 people from across housing health and social care will come together for a series of presentations aimed to support new partnerships and initiatives such as the White paper demonstrator sites, Extra Care housing and Mental Capacity Advocacy services.

If you would be interested in attending please contact

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