

ACTION NEWS

With Best Wishes for
the Festive Season from
VOLG

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- Voluntary Sector Forum – Tuesday 4th March 2004
- VOLG recruitment – 2 Patient and Public Involvement Development Officers needed
-plus other voluntary and community sector news



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VOLG and Patient and Public Involvement Forums

You'll remember that the September newsletter outlined the contract awarded to VOLG to provide staffing to the Patient and Public Involvement Forums in the county. A reminder that there will be 9 Forums in the county, one for each Primary Care and Hospital Trust and each Forum will have members who have experience of local health services. Recruitment of these members is now underway and a number of people have been appointed to each of the Forums in West Sussex. Places remain available, however, and applications are still very welcome, particularly for Crawley and Western Sussex Primary Care Trusts and Queen Victoria and Worthing and Southlands NHS Trusts. For more details you can telephone the Commission for Public and Patient Involvement who are organising the recruitment of members on 0845 120 7115 or visit their website at www.cppih.org.

The good news is that with one exception, and more of that later, the Development Officers who will be supporting the Forum members are now in post. All the following are based at VOLG HQ and can be contacted on the usual telephone number (01798 874877) or by email as follows:-

Adur, Arun and Worthing Primary Care Trust
Worthing and Southlands NHS Trust

Gavin Maddison
gavin.maddison@volg.org.uk

Crawley Primary Care Trust and
Queen Victoria NHS Trust (until 24/12/03)

Alistair Morten
alistair.morten@volg.org.uk

Horsham and Chanctonbury Primary Care Trust and
Mid Sussex Primary Care Trust

Tracy Whittle
tracy.whittle@volg.org.uk

Western Sussex Primary Care Trust and
Royal West Sussex NHS Trust

Liz Arundell
liz.arundell@volg.org.uk

The Project Manager for the PPI Forum work is Alastair Johnston who is also based at VOLG and can be reached on alastair.johnston@volg.org.uk. The part time position of Development Officer for the Forum relating to the West Sussex Health and Social Care NHS Trust is presently unfilled. See later in this newsletter for a re-advertisement of this post.

Other Forums which cover services in West Sussex and who are looking for members include the Sussex Ambulance Service NHS Trust and Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust. Both of these Forums are supported by Age Concern in Brighton, Hove and Portslade and for further details please contact Dorothy Engmann on 01273 570732.

.....more about developments at VOLG later!



Taking over from Community Health Councils (CHCs)

Most of you will be aware that CHCs ended after many years of work on 1st December this year and their responsibilities have been shared between different organisations. As a reminder, the following gives a brief outline of who's doing what now.

- ❄ Assistance for people if they have a complaint about their National Health Service Treatment. This Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS) is now being provided by the South East Advocacy Service. ICAS can help with informal issues and formal complaints and can generally support people going through the process. ICAS can be contacted on 0845 600 8616 OR 01403 754520 (email kate.webb.icas@dsl.pipex.com)
- ❄ Visiting health premises and representing the public who have an interest in healthcare in their area falls to the Patient and Public Involvement Forums (details and contacts given on previous page).
- ❄ West Sussex County Council has formed a Health Scrutiny Select Committee which is charged with looking at health issues in the widest sense and which has taken over certain CHC powers on significant changes to local health services.
- ❄ General information about healthcare/facilities is available from ICIS Information for Life available on 0800 859929 or email enquiries@icis-info4life.org.uk. You can also search for information on their website at www.icis-info4life.org.uk.



Forum Development Officers Patient and Public Involvement - Job Opportunities

We're still looking for our fifth Forum Development Officer who we need to support the Patient and Public Involvement Forum for the West Sussex Health and Social Care NHS Trust. This post is four days a week with a salary of £17,025 and we're looking for someone with a community development/public involvement background.

We also now have another vacancy for a Forum Development Officer covering Crawley PCT and the Queen Victoria Hospital at East Grinstead. This is a full time post with a salary of £21,282 also requiring someone with a community development/public involvement background.

Both of these posts are on short-term contracts to August 2005 with a possible one year extension and might be a secondment opportunity. These jobs will be advertised in the Evening Argus on 8th January but both job descriptions are on our temporary website (www.volg.org.uk/recruitment) and we're happy to take requests for job packs now. Feel free to contact Alastair Johnston, the Forum Project Manager to discuss these posts on 01798 874877 (alastair.johnston@volg.org.uk).

VOLG AND PROJECTS - UPDATES (top of page)

VOLG - As promised in the September newsletter, we now have a VOLG Development Officer who will be taking forward a whole range of priorities including the neglected working groups. Julie Kilner is already known to a number of you from her time in the NHS. Julie will be out and about meeting as many members as possible to find out whether VOLG is providing you with the information and assistance you need and how we can improve things for you.

Apart from re-connecting with members (including organising Members' Meetings), Julie will also be producing this newsletter (first test passed), arranging events such as Voluntary Sector Forums (more of which later) and concentrating on the working groups. Transport and Quality Assurance (Q-Net) are the initial areas for work here and we are already talking to members about moving these forward. Julie can be contacted on 01798 874877, email julie.kilner@volg.org.uk.

This seems a good opportunity for VOLG to be getting on with the priorities we set ourselves last year which are largely around developing the organisation to improve the service we offer to you. Part of this is about effective communication and news follows on the continuing development of VOLG's E-Net and website.

VOLG is also currently heavily involved in a Voluntary and Community sector Structure Review with CVSs, Voluntary Bureaux, Action in Rural Sussex and others. More on this in due course.

CHYP (Children and Youth Project) - Our Young People as Trainers Programme was piloted in October this year with eight young people. The training was held over two weekends at the Earnley Concourse in Chichester. The young people are now well on their way to receiving their training certificates issued by the Open College Network.

During September and October, Forum Theatre has been very busy with productions in Brighton, Burgess Hill, Portslade, Chichester, Haywards Heath for a wide variety of agencies. We are already getting booked up for the New Year.

We have also worked with young people at project 82 on a week-long project exploring substance misuse issues, which was funded by the Drug Action Team. Workshops included Forum Theatre Workshops, video and poetry, stress management, drumming and snakes and ladders.

E-Net (email network) - We updated you in the last newsletter about the launch of VOLG's email network. Rob is continuing to develop the growing list of members on our email network (more detail in our last newsletter). If you would like to join, please contact Rob (robert.jones@volg.org.uk)

Ian Fullerlove, our new ICT Development Officer is working on the **VOLG website**. As well as improving the quality of information available on VOLG and its members, projects and services, we plan to make visiting the site a much more interactive experience. Ultimately, among other features, we hope to provide facilities to apply to join VOLG online, change your existing contact details held by us, and communicate with other VOLG members via an online forum. We will be linking voluntary organisations, public bodies and others' websites to useful local, regional and national resources. The new features will be delivered over a number of phases in the coming months.

If you would like to be notified of when the new site launches, please visit www.volg.org.uk, where there is a facility to leave your email address - we'll be sending out a notification email as soon as the first phase of the new site is implemented, so you'll be the first to know.

(Some of you will have noticed that we're in the process of moving over from www.volg.co.uk to www.volg.org.uk .org.uk will now feature on all our contact details).



Diary Date!! Voluntary Sector Forum Diary Date!!
Thursday 4th March 2004

We'll be organising a Voluntary Sector Forum meeting in March under the title of 'Thinking Together/Working Together' with the aim of understanding the key priorities facing both the voluntary/community and statutory sectors to help us work together better. The date is provisionally booked for **Thursday 4th March 2004** probably at Lodge Hill, Pulborough. More details will follow!



Other Voluntary and Community Sector News

- The NCVO have issued a consultation document called '**Compact Funding - Code of Good Practice**' which is bringing up to date the Compact Funding Code published in May 2000. Copies are available on the NCVO website and responses to the consultation are sought by **9th February 2004**.
- The Active Community Unit at the Home Office has commissioned the Voluntary Sector National Training Organisation (VSNTO) to produce a **Skills Strategy** for the voluntary and community sector.

Some initial work carried out by VSNTO indicated that sector organisations felt they had many skills but would appreciate more support in certain areas including

recruitment and retention, project management and strategic development. Consultation on the draft Strategy is open until **21st January 2004** and the document is available on the NCVO website.



- Also commissioned by the Active Community Unit at the Home Office, the Quality Standards Task Group (QSTG) has been working on a **Strategy for Performance Improvement** in the Voluntary and Community Sector. (They hasten to point out that this is not a reflection on current levels of performance in the sector!) This is clearly a meaty subject as the full draft Strategy runs to 94 pages. The full document and a helpful draft Executive Summary is

available on the NCVO website. Consultation on the draft Strategy lasts until **8th February 2004**.

If you'd like to know more about these two Strategies, do contact Julie Kilner by post, phone or email (julie.kilner@volg.org.uk)

- The West Sussex Sustainability Forum met recently and discussed the update of the **Sustainable Development Strategy** which was published in 2000/2001.

The Strategy had 13 objectives covering the main sustainability topics of social inclusion, environment and economic growth.

A key issue which emerged was the ongoing need to educate people

about what sustainability was and how they could contribute to the debate.

There will be opportunity to contribute to the revised Strategy when the draft document is circulated early next year. It's planned for the final Strategy to be ready by April 2004.



..... and remember, if there's anything VOLG can help with, just ring us or email and we'll do our best to help.



Once again, best wishes for a Happy and Peaceful Christmas from all at VOLG