

Chair's Report – April 2012

It has been a very busy period on the health policy front, with the Health & Social Care Act finally being passed by parliament, despite widespread opposition. Malcolm Alexander, our Vice Chair, was centrally involved in these negotiations with the government and Dept of Health, both as a leading health activist and as Chair of the National Association of LINKs Members. With such far reaching changes in the NHS, it is appropriate that this month's meeting has this as a main topic, and Malcolm will be presenting the latest updates on the situation.

Because of concerns about the manner in which the LAS board meetings were being conducted, which were raised by me at previous Forum meetings, Richard Hunt, LAS Chair, agreed to meet a delegation from the Forum. We had a very positive and productive meeting, at which both sides put across their views and progress was made. Richard made it quite clear that the Board and the LAS valued the contribution of the Forum and wished it to play a central role as a stakeholder body in the future. I was accompanied to the meeting by Malcolm Alexander and Lynne Strother, two of the Forum's Vice Chairs and they will report back on this at the meeting.

We have also been informed that Command Point went live on March 28th and our information from the LAS is that all went well. We wait for further feedback on outcomes. The Board room at the LAS is still being used for work connected with Command Point, which is why we are having our meeting at Cambridge House in Camberwell. Hopefully everything will be back in order by May and we will be able to hold our next meeting at the LAS HQ. I am also pleased to announce that thanks to Margaret Vander (LAS Public and Patient Involvement Manager) and Janice Markey (Head of Equalities and Diversity LAS) that a hearing loop will be available for all future meetings in the LAS boardroom.

The report on the industrial action on November 30th and its impact on service delivery has been the subject of much publicity and a report is now available here http://www.londonambulance.nhs.uk/news/news_releases_and_statements/review_of_impact_of_industrial.aspx Hopefully this can be discussed at the Forum meeting.

Finally, I would like to offer my apologies for not being able to attend this meeting. I have arranged to visit my family in Ireland and will be out of the country until April 17th. I hope that you all had a good Easter break and look forward to seeing you at the May meeting.

Dr Joseph Healy