

London Health Commission briefing – 15th May 2014

London Network of Nurses and Midwives

The London Network for Nurses and Midwives was set up in 1999 by Christine Beasley (the Chief Nursing Officer at that time). Its purpose was to bring together specialist nurses and midwives together to influence health policy pan London. When it was originally set up there were a large number of groups in operation.

The London Network was very active until 2006, but has reduced its activity since then. However the Homelessness group has been very successful, and continues. The group meets bi-monthly, and there are around 40 core members, with around 15 nurses attending each meeting. Specialist nurses working in all areas of homelessness are welcome. For example we have members who work with refugees and asylum seekers, homeless families, clients with TB, and sex workers.

Key achievements of the group have been producing the first Homeless Hospital Discharge guidance in association with Homeless Link, and more recently writing a Knowledge and Skills Framework for Nurses and Midwives working in Inclusion Health services.

Representatives from the group will be Justin Stephens (Chair), Maxine Radcliffe (Treasurer), Samantha Dorney-Smith (Vice Chair).

Homeless Nursing Conference

A team of volunteers from the group ran the first London Homeless Nurses conference for 120 people this year on Friday 4th April 2014. As part of the conference a brainstorming session was undertaken regarding the top perceived priorities for positive change. These were identified to be:

- A need for pan – London centralised commissioning of homeless services
- A need for integrated IT system across pan London services (creation of a 'virtual community')
- A need for a greater understanding / mapping of existing services – in order to identify areas without appropriate services, and ensure effective provision in all areas
- A need to remove blocks to housing provision (particularly related to localism agendas around local connection)
- A need for better education of health professionals and allied staff (e.g. receptionists) around homeless and migrant population issues
- A need to ensure a better, more co-ordinated response to those with no recourse to public funds
- A need for more focus on prevention with young people

These are the issues we would like to profile at the evidence session.