



Hello 'Shines a Light' on Worcestershire County Council and NHS Worcestershire

Worcestershire County Council and NHS Worcestershire are celebrating after winning a 'Shine a Light' award this week for their joint commissioning of speech, language and communication services.

The 'Shine a Light' awards, a national awards scheme focused on children and young people's communication, were hosted by radio and TV presenter Vanessa Feltz in London, and were developed by The Communication Trust and Pearson Assessment as the flagship event of the *Hello* campaign (the national year of communication). 'Shine a Light' was designed to honour individuals, teams, projects, communication friendly settings and communities that have demonstrated excellence in supporting the needs of all children and young people's communication, including those with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

Judges in the Commissioning Award category praised the Worcestershire team for 'impressive evidence of the difference their joint education/health commissioning strategy is making to children' and said "They have really analysed needs across the county and involved service-users throughout the entire commissioning process."

One of the key successes of the review has been its extensive involvement of service users in the process. The team have used surveys, workshops and key stakeholder interviews, as well as questionnaires for parents to analyse how services are being used and whether there could be any improvements. The judges also found Worcestershire's strategy has already had a measurable impact on children locally and has been so carefully planned that the impact can only increase over time. The team are already sharing their work through a new website, speaking at conferences and writing for publications aimed at other commissioners.

Liz Eyre, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Social Care, said: "The bringing together of partners from health and our children's services, both specialists and non-specialists, to improve services in this important area is a great example of best practice. The approach of the team has been based on good evidence of need, a real understanding of what is going on and what works, and clarity around the redesign and allocation of resources. They are to be congratulated on all they have done and are making a real difference to outcomes for children."

Jean Gross, Communication Champion for Children and chair of the Commissioning panel said: "A huge congratulations to Worcestershire County Council and NHS Worcestershire for all of their hard work and dedication in supporting children and young people's communication development. Worcestershire is home to some of the best speech and language practice I have seen. The judging panel were most impressed with how innovative the team are and how they have involved those affected by SLCN, and their families, throughout the entire commissioning process. Fundamentally, they are making a big difference to outcomes for children and young people."

For more information about Worcestershire's speech and language service contact Emma Jordan at Emma.Jordan@hacw.nhs.uk.

Notes to editors:

From April 1st 2011, Worcestershire County Council and NHS Worcestershire have been jointly commissioning children's health services from a pooled budget. Throughout the SLCN review in 2010/11, the local authority and NHS Worcestershire have shared resources at all levels, and worked from a strategic to an operational level to inform the future commissioning of services. They have identified the requirements of the specialist and wider workforce in meeting the needs of children and young people with SLCN, and this has included a wide range of services such as speech and language therapy, specialist teacher services and health visitors.

40 judges representing some of the biggest voices in speech, language and communication were involved in 'Shine a Light'. This included Dame Clare Tickell, who recently led a Government review of the Early Years Foundation Stage, Professor Neil Mercer from the University of Cambridge, Professor Geoff Lindsay of the University of Warwick, and Jean Gross, England's Communication Champion for children.



Richard Keble, Head of Commissioning and Partnership and Emma Jordan, Project Manager for the Worcestershire SLCN review