**Knowledge Networks**

* Everyone knows something
* Everyone knows something that someone else doesn’t know
* Everyone learns something new every day – just by observing the world
* Everyone’s knowledge is equally important

**A Knowledge Network:**

* gathers and shares knowledge in different ways and formats for the benefit of all participants. The knowledge is varied, flexible and useful.
* uses the skills, knowledge, assets and information each individual holds, sharing them widely to benefit others.
* uses the skills, knowledge, assets and information each organisation holds, sharing them widely to benefit others.
* values all information - individual, group, professional or voluntary - all have equal merit.
* facilitates innovative networking opportunities
* links local voluntary and statutory organisations
* instigates and/or develops joint working initiatives that increase the range of support available for humans - patients, carers and professionals
* improves understanding of different health conditions in lay terms
* improves understanding of people's rights
* highlights the importance of planning and preparing for the future.

**Evidence**

Sources frequently change as resources are squeezed and most statutory services don’t provide all information required in one place, so it’s hard to navigate the maze of services within an area.

Even using the internet, it is difficult to find support in your own community, or the community down the road; especially if living with the condition reduces mobility or is exhausting.

* We link to a community partnership with open access information points (‘pop-up community cafes’) where people can drop in without first labelling themselves to be supported holistically in the community from diagnosis to end of life by peer experts.
* There is an indication that fragmentation of support and reliance on traditional services is not effective and does not reach people most in need.
* Labels are a great barrier to effective services.
* A recently held study day for 100 social care professionals with speakers from four neurological charities and information stands from 10 charities was successful. We are already being asked to run other similar events/local shows.

**Our Vision**

Our vision is to replicate the work in other local communities across our area, using a further grant to:

* publicise relevant sources of support/information
* encourage shared good practice to benefit larger numbers

* extend study days across a range of professional groups
* assist in developing crosscutting ideas/activities over all conditions e.g. end of life planning, pain control

* increase the number of pop-up community cafes (Rendezvous)

* further develop links/networks between different organisations
* encourage people to identify and use their own skills/assets to help themselves and others
* support different ways of working to maximise benefit from knowledge around

**Introduction and Background**

* Hampshire Neurological Alliance (HNA) started in 2008 to obtain the best possible care and support for people affected by neurological conditions and their carers across Southampton, Hampshire, Isle of Wight and Portsmouth (known as SHIP, we are never quite sure if it will sail or sink!).
* HNA Members are all affected by a neurological condition or work for organisations that support people with a range of neurological conditions.
* There are over 350 conditions - some very rare; most disabling - affecting mobility, speech, thinking, swallowing; often life limiting. As a result, people might need help to maintain basic skills and activities from many sources for many years – physical/mental health care, social care, housing, statutory and voluntary sector.
* An ‘Awards for All’ grant in 2014 helped us produce a local Information Booklet using our contacts to publish in one place all the information and support that may be helpful. This was well received by individuals, charities and health/social care professionals. In 2015 a grant was received to extend our work via “HNA Knowledge Networks”.

**Why a Network?**

* A Network is an informal, loose group of people and/or organisations where the emphasis is on sharing information not action
* A Coalition is a moreformal joint working arrangement of diverse organisations coming together on a single issue
* An Alliance is a long term partnerships that involve a great deal of trust and shared understanding
* A Partnership is a formal working arrangement that involves taking shared responsibility for actions and outcomes