



## **We Were Not Protected In The Recession And We Are Being Side-Lined As Our Economy Is Recovering**

Taoiseach Enda Kenny stated in the final Leaders Debate on Prime Time, before the last general election, that disability was his number one social justice priority.

The 600,000 disabled people and their families across this country do not consider that they were protected or that they were the priority social justice area over the past four years. I have recently written to both the Taoiseach and Tánaiste Joan Burton about this. I have also written "Recovery must be felt by those with disabilities" in the Irish Times on 25<sup>th</sup> February.

Our economy is recovering, but the policies that have worked for many people have not for disabled people. They and their families have been left behind in this period of economic recovery.

The financial uncertainty of recent years has brought constant worry and fear to disabled people and their families. We were not protected in the recession and we are being side-lined as our economy is recovering.

The Government is predicting full employment by 2018, but that is for people who are not disabled. As yet the much promised "comprehensive employment strategy" for disabled people has not seen the light of day. Disabled people have no hope of getting into employment, and in some cases are not even entitled to participate in employment activation programmes. This needs to change.

We have been landed with 'promises' since 2008 - we now need to hear about concrete and fully funded delivery from this Government in their final year in power. The outcomes of these plans need to be experienced by people with disabilities in every village, town and city in this country.

Across the disability movement there is deep and justified concern that the economic recovery will not address our long standing exclusion. This is our simple and straightforward position.

Now is the time to be active and to engage with the politicians. We see others putting down markers for tax cuts or pay increases. We need to be active in the election "market place" and clearly make the point that as people with disabilities we are resolved that there will be "No Recovery Without Us." Each one of us, each family and every organisation needs to be out and active from now on.

The “economic” recovery will continue as it is going unless we succeed in turning it into one that includes people with disabilities. Otherwise it is more of what we have been experiencing for the past seven years.

- John Dolan, Chief Executive



## DFI News and Events

### Final Operational Plan for Implementation of Strategic Plan 2011-2016 Announced

**DFI have recently announced our final operational plan (OP) for the implementation of our Strategic Plan 2011-2016.**

DFI’s Strategic Plan is built around four strategic priorities, with specific aims being developed in the OP for the coming period. The objectives we have set out were developed based on the Strategic Plan and our experience of implementing it to date.

We have now defined six programme areas, and in addition to reporting on our work in general, we will communicate and report to you to achieve greater engagement and understanding with you of what DFI does. The programme areas are:

1. Children
2. Adults of Working Age
3. Older People
4. Health
5. NDS Implementation at Local Level
6. UNCRPD / International

Throughout the next two years we also plan to deepen our quality and governance and seek to broaden the reach of our work to more organisations. We will be proactive in our engagement with the Oireachtas and in engaging with the broader community and voluntary sector to promote the mainstreaming of disability services and supports.

This final Operational Plan offers us an opportunity to adjust to the changes brought about through the updating of our Memorandum and Articles of Association and the development of our Growth and Sustainability Plan, and will inform us as we prepare the next strategic plan for DFI.

If you have any questions or comments, don't hesitate to contact John Dolan or your Support Officer, contact details are on our website here <http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=18>

### DFI Success in Grant Application

**DFI, together with our network partners, are delighted to announce the success of our recent application for grant aid to support a programme of training and capacity building in Galway and Limerick under The Wheel's Training Links Grant Programme.**

We applied for the grant to support our work in training and capacity building in the context of local government reform. With the development of Public Participation Networks (PPNs), local community representations from the three sectors (Community & Voluntary, Social Inclusion and Environment) can come together in a new way, and organisations are being tasked with representing beyond their own remit.

There is a need for training on the concept of representation and setting of priority goals to accommodate diversity and differences. This requires

- confidence to bring forward issues into local planning in an arena populated by other members who have previous experience and familiarity with the system
- to effectively feedback learning at representative level to the existing structures
- inform and consult the key interest groups our network members with a community development ethos who will train to empower other members of the group thus enhancing their own experiences.

In these new and developing structures, the need for capacity building to facilitate engagement is currently not supported or financed. This capacity building needs to focus on individuals as well as groups, and it needs to go beyond those already representing and spread out to those who express an interest and an aptitude to represent in the future so that public participation can become sustainable.

This network is operating in an environment of reform and within the context of broader representation and participation opportunities in local decision making. Key local and national structures are essential to the inclusion of people with disabilities and other marginalised persons in the community are under reform. Organisations engaged in the

network are community and voluntary (C&V) organisations with a common objective to secure engagement, social inclusion, and participation in areas of environment and community and voluntary organisations by their target groups locally.

This funding will now help to address the training and capacity building requirements of the network to inform and build capacity towards meaningful engagement. Training will be delivered in a range from entry level capacity to empowerment and advocacy with 'Train the Trainer' awards being offered as part of the sustainability of the programme. Developing strong representation and structured feedback mechanisms which will sustain into the future will be challenging, as will securing the embedding of this process in local government operations for the future.

Our network partners are: Galway Centre for Independent Living, Galway City Partnership, Hospital Family Resource Centre – Step forward Disability group, Limerick City Community Development Project, Limerick Centre for Independent Living, Carers Association, Muscular Dystrophy Ireland, ÁT Network, Lámhlinn, NCBI. DFI looks forward to working together for the benefit of the whole community.

For further information contact Toni Gleeson, email [tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie](mailto:tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie)

## **DFI Offers Free Update Seminar on Employment Law and Human Resources**

**Adare Human Resource Management (HRM), in conjunction with DFI, will present a free Update Seminar, entitled 'Employment Law and Human Resources', in DFI's Boardroom on Wednesday, 22nd April 2015, between 11am and 1pm.**

This seminar will highlight what all organisations need to know about key employment legislation surrounding terms and conditions of employment, unfair dismissals and redundancies, and how to protect your organisation against employment claims, as well as general points of interest. The session will focus on the relevance of the above to Community and Voluntary organisations.

Derek McKay of Adare HRM, who will present the seminar, will already be known to many of you as DFI's product partner in the Human Resource and Employment Law Support Services product (<http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=49>).

Tea, coffee and pastries will be provided before the session and a light lunch will be provided afterwards. As numbers will be limited to 25, please contact Anthony at [anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie](mailto:anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie) if you are interested in reserving a place.

## More Than Half of People with a Disability or Illness of Working Age Live in Enforced Deprivation

**DFI issued a press release in January, citing concern over increasing levels of deprivation experienced by people with a disability.** This information came to a fore as outlined in the CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) data released in January.

The data indicates that 53% of people who are not at work due to disability or illness experience enforced deprivation, an increase of over 30% since 2008. Yet DFI believes that these statistics under-estimate the real economic cost of living with a disability in Ireland, and that the situation of people with disabilities is far more severe than reported.

The reliance on income levels to measure poverty means that the level of poverty is underestimated, as where there is a disability in a household the standard of living is reduced due to the extra costs associated with having a disability and the decline of disability supports.

Examples of these costs include prescription charges, vital therapies such as speech and language therapy, as well as paying consultant fees in order to get applications for benefits over the bar.

### SILC Data Released 21 January 2015

- 53% of people who are not at work due to disability or illness experience enforced deprivation. This figure has risen from 36% in 2008.
- 37% of children experience deprivation, which is up from 18% in 2008.
- A quarter of the population cannot afford to heat their home adequately, (up from a tenth in 2008).
- While the “at risk of poverty” rate has not changed significantly, this can be accounted for in part by the fact that the threshold of 60% of median income has dropped by almost €2000 per annum. Someone is considered to be at risk of poverty where their income is 60% below the national median income.
- The number experiencing ‘consistent poverty’, i.e. those below the at-risk of poverty line who experience deprivation, has doubled since 2008 to 8.2%.

## Assistive Technology

**Technology has come to define the society in which we live. It has moved into every aspect of social, political, economic and cultural life.** Digital skills are core skills and are on par with literary skills for functioning and participation in society now and in the future.

DFI believes that assistive technology (AT) could be given more attention and importance in policy on people with disabilities and older people, as well as in policy on wider issues facing the health & social care system. Assistive technologies need to be specifically identified as an important dimension in all relevant policies and programmes and this needs to be followed-up with concrete action to ensure its impact.

The value for money that public expenditure on AT may represent, and its potential to contribute cost-savings through reduced demand for more expensive services, is increasingly being recognised.

In the current economic climate it is important to take into account the potential for assistive technologies to deliver both substantial value for money eg. in terms of gains in quality-adjusted life years and better educational and labour market outcomes for users of AT in itself as well as cost-savings in other areas of public expenditure that can accrue from spending on AT.

DFI would like to hear from members on their strategies and plans in the area of AT or from anyone that is interested in this area. Please contact Pierce Richardson [piercerichardson@disability-federation.ie](mailto:piercerichardson@disability-federation.ie)

### Video of DFI Chair Pat Clarke

**Áiseanna Tacaiochta (The ÁT Network) have kindly sent us over the link to the videos from their Realising Equality through Active Participation (REAP) event last December.** The event examined the lived experience of Independent Living and Direct Payments for people with disabilities in Ireland.



Pat spoke on a range of topics, such as disabilities and unemployment, as well as acquired disabilities and those which may develop with age. He commended the ÁT Network on their hard work towards independent living environments for people with disabilities, and spoke again about the importance of the UNCRPD and its ratification in Ireland, which we at DFI are constantly working towards.

Watch DFI representative and board member Pat Clarke speak here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1aVPQPvokLc&index=11&list=PLsLDQ3gM2Duw3wAm52FoCcQDJXUh8E4S>

Or visit their website to find more videos, presentations, photos and information about the event <http://www.theatnetwork.com/news-events/realising-equality-through-active-participation-at-annual-event-2014/>



**DFI are now on Facebook! You can find us at [www.facebook.com/dfiireland](http://www.facebook.com/dfiireland)**

We are excited to announce we have set up a Facebook page and we would be very grateful if you could all give us a like and spread the word! 😊

We use our social media mostly to raise awareness of various disability news and issues, connect with our organisations, promote events, and of course socialise and interact with you!

However we like to keep the tone quite light and casual, so if you have any particular issues we ask that you contact your support officer or the DFI office as usual.

Don't forget you can also find us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/disabilityfed](http://www.twitter.com/disabilityfed). Thank you to our 1000+ followers so far, we hope more of you can join us!

If you have any tips or anything you would like us to discuss, or you would like us to promote anything on either our Twitter or Facebook you can email [philippabrennan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:philippabrennan@disability-federation.ie)



### Changes to Companies Act

**The new Companies Act 2014 will replace the previous legislation and will come into effect from June 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. The new act aims to modernise the existing act, reduce administrative burden on businesses and ensure good corporate governance.**

Key changes include:

- From June all CRO forms will change; older forms will not be accepted and new forms will be available on the CRO website

- All existing private companies currently registered as a Private Company Limited By Shares can choose to convert to one of the two new company types from June; either a LTD or DAC.
- There is a changeover period for 18months for LTD and 15months for DAC.
- The conversion process is free, more information is on the website
- Other changes also apply, such as directors and secretaries must be aged 18 or over.

For more information read this flyer

<https://www.cro.ie/Portals/0/Directors%20Flyer%20Final.pdf> or visit [www.cro.ie](http://www.cro.ie)

## Human Resource Management - Dignity at Work

**Adare Human Resource Management provide HR and Employment Law Support Services to a large number of Organisations within the Community and Voluntary Sector.**

Disability Federation of Ireland, in conjunction with Adare Human Resource Management, has in place a support structure for member Organisations to avail of discounted Human Resource and Employment Law Support Services exclusively for DFI members.

**The right to dignity at work is a fundamental employment right.** Every Employee has the right to a work environment which is free from bullying, harassment or sexual harassment. Such behaviours can have an enduring detrimental impact on the Employee/ Employees and the Organisation as a whole, which may result in high levels of absenteeism, stress-related illness, loss of key talent, reduced morale and lowered engagement levels.

The Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2012 set out a framework to uphold equality in the workplace. The Acts set out to prevent discrimination against Employees, Agency Workers and Applicants for Employment. All types of Employee are protected by this prohibition, including full-time, part-time and temporary Employees, those employed in the public private, and not for profit sectors.

### Adare's Employment Law and HR Services at a Glance

- **Contracts** of Employment & Employee Handbooks containing policies & procedures - drafting / review / update
- **HR Helpdesk** – provision of on-going access to Phone / Email HR Advice and Support
- **Representation** at Workplace Relations Commission, Rights Commissioners, Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) and other external employment bodies
- **HR Consultancy Services** – Recruitment / Investigations / Dispute Management.



The purpose of the Acts is to eliminate discrimination in relation to employment and to provide a framework of enforcement to achieve this aim. The legislation sets out the 9 grounds on which discrimination is prohibited, and sets out complaints procedures for a person to make a claim in relation to any act of discrimination to which they are subjected. The legislation protects persons complaining of discrimination from victimisation, and prohibits employment related harassment and sexual harassment.

It is important for Employers to be aware that they are obliged to provide a work environment free from harassment and bullying. Where an Employer fails to do this, they can be held vicariously liable for the effects of harassment or bullying on Employees. In order to reduce the risk of exposure to liability, the Employer must be in a position to demonstrate that reasonable steps have been taken to eliminate bullying or harassment. Where these issues arise, the Employer must be able to demonstrate that appropriate steps are taken to prevent any further recurrence. This type of behaviour may be carried out by other Employees, or a person who an Employee comes into contact with during the course of employment.

An effective means of promoting a positive working environment and preventing the occurrence of bullying, harassment and sexual harassment is to have a Dignity at Work Policy in place in the Organisation. This places a responsibility on each individual to maintain and contribute toward an environment which respects the right to dignity of all individuals.

An Employer should refer to the Codes of Practice on Harassment and Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying in order to become at ease with the steps they should take to reduce potential exposure of liability for acts of bullying and harassment in the workplace. These steps should promote a positive work environment thereby improving Employee morale, reducing absenteeism, and encouraging improved productivity amongst the workforce:

- The Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work 2007
- The Code of Practice on Sexual Harassment and Harassment at Work 2012

If you have any questions relating to Dignity at Work, please do not hesitate to contact us. For further information on the HR Support Services provided click on the link below:

<http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=50>



HEALTH

## Health Matters

### Value for Money: Head of Operations and Service Improvement Value For Money and Policy Review and Disability Services Update – February 2015

The following sets out the specific actions that will be completed by each of the working groups during 2015 as part of the Value for Money and Policy Review. There is also an update on the main areas that disability services will be progressing over the coming months

- **Working Group 1: Person-Centred Model of Services and Supports – Strategic Planning**

By March 2015 the group will have identified the required range of data been sought in order to develop methodology to conduct a national forecast of further needs within the disability sector.

By September 2015 the group will have developed a report on the volume and nature of future service needs and will have identified a number of individualised support services in liaison with Work Group 2 / sub Group 1 & 2 which will be used in the evaluation of best practice delivery sites across day and residential services.

By December 2015 the group will have identified an implementation tool to carry out the evaluation process. The evaluation will include sites where new policy recommendations have been recommended and those that are in the process of commencing work in this area.

- **Working Group 2: Person-Centred Model of Services and Supports – Implementation, Oversight and Support**

- **SUB GROUP 1: TIME TO MOVE ON FROM CONGREGATED SETTINGS**

The Group will ensure that each of the 9 CHO's will have completed a housing needs assessment for individuals living in congregated settings in their area.

By June 2015 the group will ensure that each CHO has in place an implementation structure with standardised Terms of Reference.

By end of September 2015 the group will ensure that each CHO will establish the closing date for all congregated settings within their area and that structures are in place with appropriate authorities for the delivery of appropriate housing that meets the needs of people with disabilities. The group will also have completed the implementation framework to support services in de-congregation and the development of community inclusive services.

By end of December 2015 the group will have overseen the movement of an additional 150 identified service users across the 9 CHO areas to community living. The group will also have a plan in place in respect of the transition of all those living in congregated settings to community living 2015 to 2019.

Confirmed data now identifies less than 3,000 remain in a congregated setting. Significant issues continue to arise in relation to data collection with year-end returns from 4 of the 80 sites still outstanding. The revised master dataset templates and housing data templates have been agreed by the Sub group.

A guidance document has been drafted and the process of pre-populating data and formatting prior to circulation is underway. Several agencies have agreed to test the template prior to national circulation at the end of February 2015.

There has been engagement with Working Group 5 with regard to data requirements and a comprehensive submission made. The subgroup are also due to link directly with the Planning and Business Information Unit, within the HSE, in February with regard to the development of additional KPIs in 2016 that will capture more meaningful data on congregated settings and other residential services.

Consideration is being given to a process, to identify the breakdown of Area Targets into individual Service Provider targets. This is required to enable accurate tracking and to ensure the subgroup prioritise supporting the specific service providers as needed.

In relation to the establishment of a supporting structure at local and area level, a proposal has been drafted and submitted to the Working Group 2 Chair for onward escalation. A critical dependency for the Congregated settings subgroup is clarity on the communication and operational pathways and the realignment of the previous regional and local structures into new area-based implementation groups.

A number of individuals who were involved in the transition process were delayed at the end of 2014 due to housing issues. These issues have now been addressed through the allocation in November 2014 of once-off funding from the Department of Health (DoH) and the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DoECLG) towards the purchase of properties and to meet essential adaptation costs. The Subgroup worked with the Housing Agency on the allocation of these resources in keeping with the Congregated Settings policy. The moves are now being progressed and tracked and it is estimated they will all be completed by the end of Q2 2015.

Work is ongoing to review all the residential services and collate a report that identifies the issues with the classification of some services/placements that need to be addressed and signed off. These include: exclusions agreed locally for new- builds; intentional communities; nursing home style services; community clusters; inappropriate placements in other congregated settings (nursing homes/ mental health/ private providers etc).

- **SUB GROUP 2: NEW DIRECTIONS**

The process of distilling the content of from the 460 submissions received on the Draft Interim Standards is underway and targeted for conclusion by end of February.

By end of March 2015 the finalised Standards will be submitted to the HSE for ratification.

By the end of June the group will have developed a process to implement and monitor new standards for day service delivery, it will have revised the benchmarking tool following the piloting process and it will arrange for the dissemination of the finalised tool to all service providers. The

group will also have collated examples of good practice which will be communicated to Work Group 1 sub group 2 for the evaluation process.

By end December 2015 the group will arrange a learning event to demonstrate areas of good practice and promote a process of shared learning. The group will also have developed an implementation structure for CHO's with standardise Term of Reference..

A Workshop was convened with the Occupational Guidance service in regard to the recommendations contained in New Directions that relate to that service. Specific work streams have been identified arising from that Workshop that now need to be progressed and it is intended to have this work located in a subgroup of our National Group.

The group have agreed the most appropriate response to the very strong issue of Family/Service User involvement on the National Group that arose during the Information sessions carried out in the latter part of 2014. This strategy will be finalised at our February meeting with a view to Family/Service user representatives joining the group in March or April ( subject to approval from Programme Manager)

A mapping exercise is being completed to support the development of the New Directions Implementation structure at CHO level.

The development of guidance and support tools has been agreed by the National Group and although not included in the Operational Plan targets, it is planned to produce a minimum of 6 documents in the course of 2015. Those prioritised for immediate work are:-

- Person Centred Planning
- The Concept of Community.
- What is a hub
- Positive Risk taking.

A T/C was convened with DOH to discuss the recommendations contained in New Directions that the department have a lead role in progressing. The implications of the outcome of this T/C will involve a review of critical recommendations in New Directions.

- **SUB GROUP 3: PROGRESSING DISABILITY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (0-18'S)**

The Specialist Services Report and the draft National Access policy has been submitted to the Department of Health for consideration.

Both HSE Legal and Primary Care are also reviewing the draft Access Policy. Work has also begun on an interagency agreement for sharing information.

Project Manager for implementation of Outcomes for Children and their Families Framework: job description being drafted to be filled by way of an Expressions Of Interest. Commitment given to have all 2014 posts filled as soon as practicable.

General meeting with IMPACT outlining the Disability reform programme. Concern expressed by some about waiting lists and staff are under resourced, under supported and

lack clinical supervision whilst others reiterated their full support for the programme and its implementation but to recognize

- the preparation required prior to reconfiguration
- the role of the Social Worker
- learn from those gone ahead

Subsequent meeting with IMPACT agreed a protocol for engagement on the reform programme.

LIG/Governance Group Review Programme commencing Feb 4<sup>th</sup>, with objective to drive standardization of policy implementation and sustainability across all CHOs – completion end of Q2

Specific targets have been set for each community healthcare organization to achieve full reconfiguration of children's disability network teams supported by new staff appointments. Each area have also been requested to utilize innovative approaches involving statutory, non-statutory and private providers to achieve targeted reductions in waiting lists

National Policy for Team Waiting List and Prioritisation – subgroup commencing.

- ***Working Group 3: People with Disabilities and Community Involvement***

By the end of March 2015 the group will have established a reference group to devise a national participation framework for service users with a disability.

By end of June 2015 the group will have designed a process of engagement and will inform, educate and gather feedback in relation to the participation framework.

By December 2015 the group will have in place a plan for national consultation and engagement with relevant stakeholders.

- ***Working Group 4: Quality and Standards***

By December 2015 the group will have developed a quality framework and associated self audit tool which will underpin the delivery of person centred services for people with a disability which will be based on agreed suite of outcome measures

- ***Working Group 5: Management and Information Systems***

By the end of June 2015 the group will have determined the business and information requirements for disability services which will be enabled by a suitable IT support system.

By December 2015 the group will have developed and implemented a web based system which will act as signal point of information and advice for people with a disability and their families. The group will also have reviewed the methodology for setting key performance and output focused performance indicators for disability services.

The group between January and December 2015 will work with the relevant HSE divisions in relation to the introduction of the unique identifier and the implementation of appropriate financial coding systems

- **Working Group 6: Governance and Service Arrangements**

By end of September 2015 the group will have developed and options appraisal approach for the implementation of efficiencies within the disability sector, this approach will include pay issues such as skills mix, rostering, management structures, it will also include non pay issues such as procurement of goods, heat, power, light, insurance etc., it will also develop a framework for services to explore the possibility of streamlining back office activities or the completing of full mergers where appropriate.

By end of December 2015 the group will oversee the implementation of the new Service Arrangement 2015, it will develop a national approach to Service Arrangements across multi site agencies, it will review Part 1 and Part 2 of the Service Arrangement to assist the National Director of Social Care in relation to any required changes to the agreement in 2016 and beyond. The group will have identified by December 2015 any further additions to the IT based system in order to provide a good quality National and CHO Service Arrangement information.

## **At the February Value for Money steering group meeting the Social Care Directorate provided the following disability services updates which may be useful to some organisations;**

- 1) **DISABILITY ACT COMPLIANCE**
- 2) **SCHOOL LEAVERS AND REHABILITATIVE TRAINING (RT) EXITS**
- 3) **NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE ON RESIDENTIAL SERVICES (6 STEP PROGRAMME)**
- 4) **SERVICE IMPROVEMENT TEAM**

### **DISABILITY ACT COMPLIANCE**

The Disability Act 2005 provides for an assessment of the needs of eligible applicants occasioned by their disability.

This assessment must commence within three months of receipt of a completed application and must be completed within a further three months.

1,348 applications for a disability assessment were received by the HSE in Q4. 44% of these applications were from children aged 5 and over.

Nationally 775 assessment reports were completed in Q4 and 36% of these were completed within the timelines as provided for in the regulations; a reduction on Q3 where 43% was achieved. HSE West completed 77% of assessments within the timelines.

The HSE is aware that a significant number of applications are overdue for completion, however, overall activity has increased year on year.

Each CHO has been targetted to achieve 100% compliance with the Disability Act 2005 requirement by year end

### **SCHOOL LEAVERS AND REHABILITATIVE TRAINING (RT) EXITS**

Planning has commenced in respect of the 2015 School Leavers / RT exit process to ensure that needs are identified and appropriate services are provided to young people with disabilities and that they and their families are advised of these places by the end of June, 2015.

By the 31st January a total of 1551 individuals had been identified as requiring a service response. This is an increase of 200 individuals on the 2014 number. The requests have now to be validated as insufficient information has been received in many cases. Many requests are also seeking multi-disciplinary supports as well as respite care. Work is ongoing to validate the full year costs of the 2014 service provision to inform cost bands for 2015.

By the end March 2015 the group will identify the capacity to deliver the supports from within existing services.

By end of June 2015 the group will have completed a mapping of support needs and resources available to meet these needs from within services, the CHO's will have reported on any additional resources required to meet unmet needs.

Based on the above Disability Social Care will be in a position to communicate the allocation of resources to CHO's.

By 30th June all service users and families will be informed of their service provider and location .

Issues emerging;

physical capacity

transport

additional supports e.g. respite, .

## **NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE ON RESIDENTIAL SERVICES (6 STEP PROGRAMME)**

### **1.National Implementation Task Force**

A system wide programme of measures is underway to begin to address the quality and safety of residential services for individuals with disabilities regulated by HIQA.

A national task implementation Task Force has been established chaired by the National Director Social Care. A project manager has been appointed.

### **2.Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse**

National office has been established

Training needs analysis underway

Standardisation of documentation already commenced

### **3.Implementation of an Evaluation and Quality Improvement Programme**

In collaboration with the Quality improvement division Social care Disability services is devising a quality improvement plan to support the sustainability of good practice throughout the country.

### **4.Development of a National Volunteer Advocacy Programme**

Plans are being finalised to hold a workshop with advocacy groups to establish how best to develop this model of advocacy. Discussions have commenced on setting up service user/

family councils in residential settings. These councils will be independently chaired and will focus on quality development based on service user needs.

### **5. Assurance Review**

A full assurance review has been commissioned of all units in Aras attracta under the independent chairmanship of Dr Kevin McCoy assisted by 3 experts within the field and independent of the HSE. The output from the review will help inform a system –wide programme of improvement and assurance in residential settings for people with disabilities.

### **6. National Summits**

Planning is now underway for the next National summit to be held at the end of march 2015. This summit will build on the previous summit and will have an update on progress on each of the above steps.

## **SERVICE IMPROVEMENT TEAM**

In 2015 the Service Improvement Team will build national capacity to support evidence based decision making: linking funding provided, to activity and outputs, cost, quality and outcomes.

The service Improvement team is currently establishing task oriented work streams that will have specific expertise, drawn from an expression of interest process, across the statutory and non-statutory sector.

## **NEURO-REHABILITATION STRATEGY – IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

Draft strategy is being finalised by the Steering Group and will then be circulated to wider group of stakeholders for consultation.

If you have any questions please contact Joan O'Donnell at [joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie](mailto:joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie)

## **Progressing Children's Disability Services 0 - 18 years**

**This national project to re-structure services to Children with a Disability is called by many names: the reconfiguration process, the EITs and SATs, the 0-18's, Sub group 3 of working group 2 of the VFM process. However, no matter what the name, the aim of this programme has always been to have Children's Disability Network Teams throughout the country, so that all children and young people with complex needs will have access to the services of their local team as needed.**





A Children's Disability Network Team (Early Intervention and School Age Teams, or one team for children from birth to 18 years) provides services for all children with complex needs and their families in a given geographic area, regardless of the child's diagnosis, the category of their disability (physical, intellectual, autism etc) or where they go to school. This programme is not just about access to services, there are other important aims regarding how a team works to include a child and family in the process of planning, delivery and review of services to ensure that they meet the needs of that child and his/her family for best results.

From the outset the intention should be at all times to ensure that the family is seen as a vital and participating member of the team. With this involvement comes the recognition and understanding that the family is the primary and most essential carer and influence in the child's life, and as such contributes to the health and wellbeing of the child in all matters including service planning, delivery and maintenance.

An interdisciplinary team, therefore, includes that family in its makeup. As such the team will share and align the objectives of service delivery and progression with the vision of the child and his/her family, aspiring to achieve the best outcomes for both, but primarily for the child. There are many elements to developing and maintaining a fully functioning and effective team, but core to its maintenance are values such as respect, dignity, equality and participation together with commitments to clarity regarding roles and responsibilities and opportunities for communication both informal and formal as required. The aim of the service is to support the family in nurturing their child's development and this is documented in an Individual Family Service Plan.

### **Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs)**

An Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) is a written plan agreed by the child/young person as appropriate to their age and understanding, their family and the team, with priorities and desired outcomes and the identified services which are needed to support the achievement of goals. The reasons for having an IFSP may seem challenging or unnecessary for families who may have many other demands, however the plan is where we can find the evidence that a family has been and continues to be included in the service planning and delivery process. It provides written guidance for all members of the team and balances the child and family strengths and their priorities and aligns them with the needs for intervention and services.

An IFSP can also be used to identify future service needs that are truly responsive to the child and family needs. Agreeing and reviewing an IFSP does not have to be a tedious process for either staff or family and it can be done informally such as over the phone or in conversation with a team member or key worker.

We are all more than aware of financial constraints and the impact they continue to have on service development and delivery, but a system that finally treats each child as an equal member of society and ensures that they are included in future planning needs has proven valuable from the point of view of planning for future development. The attention to this process of working has, even in a time of recession, yielded success evidenced in the allocation of 80 posts in 2014 and a further 120 posts to come on stream in 2015.

For further information contact Toni Gleeson, email [tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie](mailto:tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie)

## Service Arrangements

**DFI, along with the Not for Profit Business Association and the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies met with the HSE at the end of February to review the clauses in the revised Service Arrangement Part 1 for 2015.**

Good progress was made at the meeting with regard to the following areas:

- Access Rights - Clause 12.3.
- Governance arrangements - Clause 16.3 and 16.4.
- Reorganisation and restructuring – Clause 20
- Content of compliance statement - Clause 9.4.
- Change and modernisation of health and personal social services - Clause 2.2
- Procurement – 2.3 (i)
- Clause 2.4
- Indemnifying the HSE - Clause 8.3
- Strategic reviews of services - Clause 2.5
- Performance issues - Clause 14
- Termination of Expiry - Clause 34.3, 34.4, 34.10, 34.5, 34.7
- Effect of termination - Clause 35
- Notifications in the case of fraud/misappropriation - Clause 4.6
- ICT - Clause 9
- Audit and information - Clause 9

The HSE has agreed to further progress these areas internally. Other issues needing further discussion included differences for S. 39 organisations, organisational autonomy, co-funded organisations (including by non-public funding sources, S.39 employees not being State employees, data protection (other than related to a statutory function)).

The abovementioned umbrella organisations are in an on-going process to reach agreement on the provisions of the Service Arrangements.

For further information please contact Joan O'Connor at [joanoconnor@disability-federation.ie](mailto:joanoconnor@disability-federation.ie)



## Focus on Europe

For further information on any of the below articles please contact Pierce Richardson, email [piercerichardson@disability-federation.ie](mailto:piercerichardson@disability-federation.ie)

### European Parliament Disability Intergroup Elect New Bureau

**The Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament recently held its first meeting after its re-establishment.** During the meeting, the Bureau of the Disability Intergroup was elected, and now it consists of 4 co-presidents and 8 vice-presidents. This new broad structure will allow the Disability Intergroup to effectively promote the rights of persons with disabilities inside the European Parliament and in Europe.

Irish MEP Marian Harkin, a long advocate on disability issues, has been appointed as one of the vice presidents of the Disability Intergroup, and DFI wishes her success in her role and looks forward to working with her into the future.

#### *What is the Disability Intergroup?*

The Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament is an informal grouping of MEPs from all nationalities and political groups who are interested in promoting the rights of persons with disabilities at the European Parliament, as well as at national level.

The Disability Intergroup is the only body which focuses on disability and allows for a regular dialogue with persons with disabilities and their representative organisations. It has been a key ally in both advocating for and advancing the rights of persons with disabilities in the European Parliament. It also contributes to enabling participation of persons with disabilities in decisions that concern them. It remains for the moment the only grouping of disability-friendly MEPs.

#### *Key Priorities for the Next Period*

The Disability Intergroup is a very important group as one of its aims is to ensure that the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) is implemented by and within the European Parliament and across Europe.

This year is a critical year for people with disabilities, the European Parliament and all EU institutions. The UN CRPD Committee will examine the progress that the EU has made since it ratified the UN CRPD. It is the first time that any human rights body examines and makes

recommendations to a regional organisation. DFI hopes that the Disability intergroup will actively contribute to all stages of the dialogue between the UN CRPD Committee and the EU including through report and plenary debate.

DFI, through its membership of the European Disability Forum (EDF), also looks forward to working closely with the European Parliament on the review of the European Disability Strategy and Europe 2020, as well as on the adoption of the European Accessibility Act and of the general anti-discrimination directive.

## Employment For All Award 2015

**The European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) is organising the second edition of the [Employment for All award](#), promoting the best practices on Social Corporate Responsibility and inclusive employment for persons with disabilities in Europe.**



EASPD would like to promote better employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, and your help is needed. EASPD invites you to share your best practice, model, method or tool by participating in the EASPD Employment for All Award.

### **The nominees and the winner**

There will be two categories in which nominees will be selected from.

1. The first category is for businesses/employers who promote better employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.
2. The second category comprises of social services and support providers who exhibit exceptional qualities in their practices in the employment field for persons with disabilities.

Three nominees from each category will be invited to the annual EASPD conference in Croatia; their best practices will be presented during the conference, and they will participate in the final award ceremony.

### **Sample Criteria: Your Best Practice**

- has proven its merits in improving support conditions for integrating work and career opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- is an active and on-going practice and it has positive prospects for future activity.
- is about support leading to improvement of employment opportunities, including promotion of autonomy and an environment that is empowering.
- it can be part of support-processes built around the person.

The EASPD conference: "Persons with Disabilities in Employment: Inclusion through Jobs - Making it Real" will take place in Zadar, Croatia on May 7th and 8th 2015.

For how to apply and more information please go to:

<http://www.easpd.eu/en/content/employment-all-award-2015#sthash.gnd3wmNO.dpuf>

Please note the deadline for applications is Saturday **14<sup>th</sup> March 2015**.

## EDF Meet With Newly Appointed European Commission First Vice-President

**Last December, the European Disability Forum (EDF) met with the newly appointed European Commission First Vice-President, Frans Timmermans, together with other non-discrimination organisations.** During this first fundamental rights roundtable, we called on the Vice-President to show clear commitment on strengthening the EU fundamental rights and equality framework and ensuring its enforcement.

In particular, the European Commission has been key in giving life to the principle of equal treatment for all, positively influencing the development of national legislation and practices.

Yet six years after the Commission's proposal for new legislation to ensure equal treatment on all grounds of discrimination listed under Article 19 TEU, the proposed Equal Treatment Directive has not been adopted by Member States, due to strong resistance from a few countries. At the meeting, we urged the Commission to keep pushing for the swift adoption a strong anti-discrimination Directive with a broad scope of application.

We also urged First Vice-President Timmermans to use his leading position to promote an overarching internal human rights strategy as an effective watchdog mechanism to enable the EU to respond to human rights violations within its own borders. It is now crucial to improve processes to ensure that Member States are accountable for their human rights commitments, including under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the EU treaties, the EU Charter of fundamental rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

## DFI Host EU Public Procurement and EU Grants & Funding Event

**DFI hosted a capacity building event and information session on the topics of new EU Public Procurement and EU Grants and Funding, on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2015 in DFI's Dublin office.** Public procurement is very relevant to people with disabilities as the procedures and outcomes in such processes have a direct impact on their health and well-being.

The key note speaker for the event was Dr Gabriella Gyori, a specialist in EU law who has wide experience of public procurement and EU funds. Following graduation in EU Law, Dr Gyori started working as a legal associate at a private law firm specialising in EU contract law. She has a comprehensive knowledge of the EU framework of public contracts and the related procedures, and good understanding of the ESI funds and Commission grants. Her main field of interest is the issue of sustainable procurements.

Dr Gyori has been working with DFI in the area of public procurement and EU funding, and at this event she gave in-depth information about the processes and the opportunities for engagement, by clarifying the key elements, timeline, and strategic actors of the new process, as well as giving links and suggesting different ways of involvement. Participants found this event very informative having obtained a greater appreciation of the different aspects of the process.

The concept of social responsible public procurement in relation to the assessment and awarding process of tenders was discussed at this event.

This concept takes into account one or more social considerations and not only the clear cost-effectiveness of the decision. This is achieved by highlighting opportunities that emphasize the importance of quality (rather than just price) in the decision making procedure and this is hugely important to disability services. Social responsible procurement may cost more in some cases, but only in the short term.

Overall, the combination of using the quality/price ration as the award criterion, and applying the principles of 'socially responsible procurement', will demonstrate that public decisions are contributing to social integration and this is hugely important to people with disabilities.



### **The 2015 Annual Social Inclusion Forum**

**This year's Social Inclusion Forum (SIF) will take place on Wednesday 25th March 2015.**

This event is part of the institutional framework put in place by the Government to support the development of the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016.

**Social Inclusion Forum Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> March 2015,**

**9.15am – 3.45pm**

**Croke Park Conference Centre, Dublin 3**

***Theme: Social Policy Innovation for Social Inclusion***

The event provides a forum for wider public consultation and discussion on social inclusion issues between officials from Government Departments, Community and Voluntary Organisations and people experiencing poverty in relation to NAP inclusion.

The Forum has ensured that people who are directly affected by poverty and social exclusion and those who work with them have a voice in the development of the policies that directly affect them, and in the ways that the policies are implemented.

*DFI recommends people with disabilities attend this forum and have their voices heard, especially those who may be experiencing poverty. This is particularly important as many people with disabilities are suffering greater amounts of poverty, as outlined in the recently released SILC data (which you can read at the start of this newsletter).*

If you wish to express an interest in receiving the link to the booking facility please email [social.inclusion@welfare.ie](mailto:social.inclusion@welfare.ie) at the earliest opportunity. For further information contact Joan O'Donnell [joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie](mailto:joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie)



### UCD Master of Science in Rehabilitation & Disability Studies

**This two-year part-time postgraduate programme is designed for individuals working or interested in working in the Irish disability sector.**

A key outcome for graduates is detailed and specialised knowledge of issues which are at the forefront of the Rehabilitation and Disability fields in Ireland and internationally.

The MSc in Rehabilitation & Disability Studies draws on relevant theory, research and practice, with modules delivered by professionals with significant experience in the sector. Teaching approaches include lectures, small group work, practical tasks, case studies and individual projects.



Modules Include:

- Introduction to Rehabilitation
- Current Issues in Mental Health
- Advanced Rehabilitation Practice

- Management in Health and Social Care Organisations

**The deadline for applications is 15 March 2015.**

You can apply at: [www.ucd.ie/apply](http://www.ucd.ie/apply)

For further information go to the website here:

<http://www.ucd.ie/psychology/ourschool/centrefordisabilitystudies/mscinrehabilitationdisabilitystudies/>

Informal enquiries should be directed to:

Marie O'Connor,

UCD Centre for Disability Studies, School of Psychology.

Telephone: +353-1-716 8333

Email: [marie.oconnor@ucd.ie](mailto:marie.oconnor@ucd.ie)

## QQI Accredited Lámh Sign Course in Galway

**Lámh is the manual sign system used by children and adults with intellectual disability and communication needs in Ireland. This 4 day course includes sign training in 400 signs, Lámh assessment process, implementation of a signing programme as well as content on advocacy, choice-making, legislation and Total Communication, with certification by QQI and post-training support from a Lámh Tutor.**



This programme is for professionals seeking further comprehensive training in how to better facilitate Lámh signing for individuals using a total communication approach, and who may want to progress to Lámh Tutor Training. Following the course dates, applicants will have 10 weeks to complete an assignment. Participants must identify an individual with whom they can carry out the assignment. Participants must already have attended the Module 1 Lámh Course.

**Venue: Galway City**

**9.15am - 4.30pm**

**17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> April (Friday and Saturday) and 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May (Friday and Saturday)**

**Fee: €400 (Early Bird €380 - ends 16<sup>th</sup> March)**

This key training in Lámh signs, implementation of a signing programme and total communication addresses communication in the context of advocacy and self-determination. Course Tutors are Mari Caulfield and Margaret Farrell, both SLTs with extensive experience in the area of disability and communication.



*Using Lámh in a Total Communication Approach* has been developed by Lámh and the Open Training College. This course leads to two QQI Level 5 Award Level 5 components - further education and training from the QQI Intellectual Disability Practice Award. The components are: Facilitating Communication through Lámh and Total Communication.

For further information contact: Mary Cullen, Project Manager, Lámh Development Office [info@lamh.org](mailto:info@lamh.org), 059 9139 657

## Free Data Protection Training

**Free Data Protection training will soon be available for one million Irish people.** The announcement was made at the National Data Protection Conference on January 28<sup>th</sup> 2015.

The training will be part of the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) programme and will be administered by the Irish Computer Society (ICS). It is thought up to one million ECDL students could avail of the training.

ICS Chief Executive John Friars said the training is basic and will cover the minimum standards for any workforce. He also emphasised that “Every worker should ask themselves ‘would I be happy if my personal information was being handled the way my company is handling our customers?’”

It is hoped the training will be available by the ICS 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2017.

For more information see here; <https://dpo.ie/news/view/1388>

## Family Carers Survey

**Care Alliance is asking all family carers to fill in a survey.** The information will help them understand what life is like in 2015 for family carers, and be used it to make this year’s 9th annual Carers Week the best one yet! National Carers week this year is June 8<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>.



You can find the survey here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/GKVF7CY>

Or by checking the website [www.carersweek.ie](http://www.carersweek.ie)



## Wheelchair and Seating Provision Workshop: Thinking Globally and Acting Locally

**Sarah Frost is a Clinical Specialist (Physiotherapist) in wheelchair and seating provision for Motivation UK.** Motivation is a charitable trust whose aim is to develop wheelchair provision infrastructure throughout the world, being a major contributor to the World Health Organisation (WHO) Guidelines on the Provision of Manual Wheelchairs in less resourced settings.

Sarah will share her experiences, highlighting the opportunities, challenges and successes she has encountered. The workshop will provide the opportunity for discussion and application of ideas within an Irish context.

Venue: Blue lab, HS2-009 Department of Clinical Therapies, Health Science Building, University of Limerick

Date: **Tuesday 24th March 2015**

Time: **9am - 1pm**

Cost: **20 euro**

Booking: To book please email: [laura.culkeen@ul.ie](mailto:laura.culkeen@ul.ie)  
To secure this place please return the attached slip along with a cheque or postal order made payable to the "University of Limerick" for €20 **by 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015** to the following address:

Laura Culkeen,  
Department of Clinical Therapies,  
Faculty of Education and Health Sciences,  
Health Sciences Building,  
University of Limerick,  
Limerick.

## Booking form:

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I would like to book a place for the Wheelchair & Seating Provision Workshop on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mobile No: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Disability Inclusion Training for Sports

**This is an introduction level course designed to adapt Sport, Physical Activity and Physical Education sessions to make them more accessible and inclusive for children and adults with disabilities.**

This course has been designed for a range of audiences including administrative staff, volunteers, coaches, sports development officers, teachers, SNAs, parents or anyone who has an interest in making sport accessible for all!

### Following the course, participants will:

- Know and understand the different disability types, disability etiquette and the pathways to participation for people with disabilities
- Develop confidence and competence to adapt and modify skills, activities and games to make them more accessible and inclusive for people with disabilities

On completion of this course all participants will receive a Disability Inclusion Training Certificate of Completion and a resource pack.

The course costs **€45 per person**. Online Booking required for individual booking, for small group bookings or to avail of Private Course Block Bookings contact Kate at [apa@ittralee.ie](mailto:apa@ittralee.ie) or 066 714 5647

For further information please see <http://www.caraapacentre.ie/training-education/disability-inclusion-training/>



## Features and Opinions

### Changing Places Ireland Campaign

**Common “wheelchair accessible” toilets found in restaurants, shopping centres and public buildings are not accessible for those with disabilities such as severe learning difficulties, who require a carer to help them use the toilet or change their incontinence pads.**

This operation requires a large room with space for a large wheelchair and carers, a hoist, an adult-sized changing bench and a screen to allow privacy, amongst other things.

If access to this kind of toilet is unavailable it can lead to people being changed on dirty toilet floors, going home early or leaving events in order to find a suitable toilet, or in some cases not risk leaving the house for more than a short amount of time. This is an entirely unfair and undignified way of life for people with disabilities, their families and carers.

In 2007 the Changing Places website was launched in the UK in order to bring attention to the need for more of these types of toilets, as well as create a database so carers can search for a nearby toilet before they plan an outing.

Almost ten years later, no such service currently exists in this country. This year Inclusion Ireland, in partnership with DFI and with the support of other organisations, are setting up a website and launching Irish Changing Places campaign.

Cormac Cahill, Communications Officer with Inclusion Ireland, hopes the Irish website will replicate the British one; “The Changing Places campaign in the UK has proved hugely successful since 2007, I think there are now over 750 fully accessible facilities. These facilities have proved a life-changer for thousands of families across the UK.”

Cormac says that the CP Ireland website will work like Google Maps, so people can see exactly where the closest place is and get step by step directions to it. It will be fully accessible from smartphones and tablets, so it can be used while on outings or away from home.



## Changing Places

While it is estimated that there are very few places in Ireland that currently meet the CP criteria, a number of ‘step down’ facilities will be considered for a special section on the website, for premises that do not meet all the criteria (for example a bench but no hoist), and they will then be encouraged to upgrade their services.

Changing Places would benefit thousands of people across Ireland, including older people and people with disabilities such as cerebral palsy, multiple learning difficulties, an acquired brain injury, MS, Spin Bifida or MND.

Cormac summarised the main reason for a Changing Places campaign in one lucid sentence; It is about giving people with disabilities a normal social life free from exclusion, just like everyone else.

Changing Places Ireland campaign is on Twitter, follow them for updates at [www.twitter.com/Cha\\_Places\\_Irl](http://www.twitter.com/Cha_Places_Irl)

Or if you want to get involved email Cormac at [cormaccahill@inclusionireland.ie](mailto:cormaccahill@inclusionireland.ie)

## TEDxDCU 2015: Changing Lives, Challenging Perceptions

DFI communications assistant Philippa attended the 2015 TEDxDCU event on February 7<sup>th</sup> at Dublin City University. TEDx is a locally organised event, part of the global TED network of short lectures.

The TED philosophy is “Ideas Worth Spreading”, and to share these ideas with you I live tweeted the event on our Twitter [@DisabilityFed](https://twitter.com/DisabilityFed), and have also written below some highlights.

This year there were ten speakers who spoke on a range of topics from family matters and entrepreneurship to global extinction, but of most relevance were of course the speakers who spoke about disability, including Sinead Kane, Louise Bruton, Adam Harris, and Kate Irving.



### Sinead Kane

Sinead Kane is a PhD researcher at the National Anti-Bullying Centre at DCU. She gave a powerful speech in which she described [bullying as the shark in the water – we all know it's there but you can't see it](#). One of her key messages was that diversity needs to be valued.

Sinead's parents told her, age 4, “You're different, you'll always be different”. She has just 5% vision. She thought being different was a positive thing, until she got to school and was bullied. She was pushed to the ground without being able to see how to get back up, unable to see or dodge the next fist that was flying towards her. The mental effects of bullying still affect her to this day, but in 2009 Sinead became Ireland's first blind solicitor, despite being told she would never do it due to her disability.

## Adam Harris

AsIAM.ie founder Adam took to the stage and asked us to imagine being aliens, not knowing how to react to people around us and getting irritated by things that seem normal to everyone else. Adam has Aspergers Syndrome, and this is how he described his condition. He said that 1 in 100 people in Ireland are affected by autism. As an example he said you wouldn't go to France without learning some French, and that people with autism "have had to learn your language, now you learn ours".



He emphasised that **the average person has only a vague idea of disability and how to react appropriately**, even more so with an "invisible condition" like autism. He said he was not asking for charity, but asking us, as a society, to listen and to learn.

## Kate Irving

Kate is a senior lecturer in Mental Health Nursing at DCU. Her speech was very important as she highlighted some common myths about dementia and gave the facts, however most of what she said could be applied to a range of disabilities as it is more about getting informed and changing perceptions.

Kate outlined a number of risk factors that, if avoided, can delay the onset of dementia (drinking, smoking, lack of exercise, unhealthy diet etc). She emphasised that **"We can't afford to wait for the fountain of youth" and that we can act today**. This idea was echoed by fellow speaker and DCU lecturer Niall Moyna, who outlined how a number of health related illnesses can be delayed or prevented if we exercise and follow a healthy diet; "What we do now will affect us as we age. Exercise is medicine".

## Louise Bruton

There were two main points which resonated with me as I listened to Louise, a journalist well known for her "Legless in Dublin" blog.

The first was when she argued against "inspiration porn". This is a term often used to describe when people share photographs of people with disabilities with "inspirational" captions, which are then used to encourage able bodied people to think that if they're having a bad day, at least they're not disabled. **"If you think leaving the house for a few pints is inspirational then you've set the bar quite low"**.

The second was when she said that she is a journalist with a passion for pop culture, but it seems as though she is only ever wheeled out in the media to discuss disability related topics, not the latest Lady Gaga music video. She called for a need for more disabled people in the media, where their disability isn't the focus of the piece but is seen as a part of everyday life.

The videos from this event should be online in the coming weeks, check our Twitter [@DisabilityFed](#) where we will be sure to post them! Until then, the TED website has thousands of videos online. You can view inspirational talks on disability from around the world here; <https://www.ted.com/talks?topics%5B%5D=disability&sort=newest>

If you want any further information email [philippabrennan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:philippabrennan@disability-federation.ie)

## DFI MEMBER ORGANISATIONS | NEWSLETTER DIRECTORY

For information, please contact the member organisations directly.

### **ACTS (Accessible Community Transport Southside)**

Newsletter available at [www.actstld.ie](http://www.actstld.ie)

### **Acquired Brain Injury Ireland**

Newsletter available at [www.abiireland.ie/publications.html](http://www.abiireland.ie/publications.html)

### **Arthritis Ireland**

Subscribe to e-zine at [www.arthritisireland.ie](http://www.arthritisireland.ie)

### **Aware**

Subscribe to e-newsletter at [www.aware.ie](http://www.aware.ie)

### **Bodywhys**

Subscribe to newsletter at [www.bodywhys.ie](http://www.bodywhys.ie),

### **Bray Lakers**

Visit [www.braylakers.ie/Newsletter/190](http://www.braylakers.ie/Newsletter/190) for newsletters

### **Care Alliance Ireland**

Visit [http://www.carealliance.ie/publications\\_newsletters](http://www.carealliance.ie/publications_newsletters)

### **Carers Association**

Subscribe at [www.carersireland.com/newsletters.php](http://www.carersireland.com/newsletters.php),

### **Carmichael Centre**

Sign up for news at <http://www.carmichaelcentre.ie/news>

### **Disabled Drivers Association**

Subscribe to newsletter at <http://www.ddai.ie>

### **Down Syndrome Ireland**

Twice-yearly magazine available to members of the organisation

### **Dyslexia Association of Ireland**

Visit <http://www.dyslexia.ie/about/download-section/>

### **Enable Ireland**

E-newsletter at <http://www.enableireland.ie/newsletter>

### **Epilepsy Ireland**

Visit <http://www.epilepsy.ie/index.cfm/spKey/news.html>

### **Féach**

Subscribe to newsletter at <http://feach.ie/index.php/newsletter>

### **Fighting Blindness**

Visit <http://www.fightingblindness.ie/news/email-newsletter/>

### **GROW**

Subscribe at [http://grow.ie/blog/publication\\_titles/newsletters/](http://grow.ie/blog/publication_titles/newsletters/)

### **Irish Guide Dogs Association**

Visit <http://www.guidedogs.ie/iopen24/newsletters.php>

### **HAIL (Housing Association for Integrated Living)**

Download newsletters at <http://www.hail.ie/publications.htm>

### **Headway**

Monthly e-newsletter at <http://www.headway.ie/stayintouch>

### **Heart Children Ireland**

Subscribe at <http://www.heartchildren.ie/sign-our-newsletter>

### **Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland**

Visit <http://www.huntingtons.ie/content/hope-newsletter-0>

### **Irish Haemophilia Society**

Subscribe at <http://www.haemophilia.ie/newsletter.php>

### **Irish Kidney Association**

Visit <http://www.ika.ie/services/support-magazine-archive>

### **Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association**

Subscribe to newsletter at [www.imnda.ie](http://www.imnda.ie)

### **Irish Wheelchair Association**

Visit [www.iwa.ie/information/publications/spokeout-magazine](http://www.iwa.ie/information/publications/spokeout-magazine)

### **Livability**

Subscribe to e-mail updates at <http://www.livability.org.uk/>

### **Migraine Association of Ireland**

Subscribe to monthly e-zine at <http://www.migraine.ie>

### **Move 4 Parkinsons**

Visit <http://www.move4parkinsons.com/join-move4parkinsons/>

### **Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland**

Subscribe to e-newsletters at [www.ms-society.ie](http://www.ms-society.ie)

### **Muscular Dystrophy Ireland**

Subscribe at <http://www.mdi.ie/newsletter-by-email.html>

### **National Council for the Blind of Ireland**

Magazine at <http://www.ncbi.ie/news/ncbi-news-magazine>

### **Neurofibromatosis Association of Ireland**

Subscribe to newsletter at [www.nfaireland.ie](http://www.nfaireland.ie)

### **Offaly Centre for Independent Living**

Email [sarah@ocil.ie](mailto:sarah@ocil.ie) to subscribe to monthly newsletter

### **Neurological Alliance of Ireland**

Sign up to newsletter at <http://www.nai.ie/>

### **Parkinsons Association of Ireland**

Visit [http://www.parkinsons.ie/mediacentre\\_publications](http://www.parkinsons.ie/mediacentre_publications)

### **Post Polio Support Group**

Newsletters at [http://www.ppsg.ie/publications\\_survivor.html](http://www.ppsg.ie/publications_survivor.html)

### **Rehab Group**

Visit <http://www.rehab.ie/about/rehabnews.aspx>

### **Roscommon Disability Support Group**

Email [mganly@rosdisabilities.ie](mailto:mganly@rosdisabilities.ie) to request copies of newsletters

### **Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus Ireland**

'Ability' magazine at <http://www.sbhi.ie/ability-magazine.html>

### **Special Olympics Ireland**

Subscribe at <http://www.specialolympics.ie/home.aspx>

### **Spinal Injuries Ireland**

'Spinal News' at [http://www.spinalinjuries.ie/?page\\_id=164](http://www.spinalinjuries.ie/?page_id=164)

### **Walkinstown Association**

Visit [http://www.walk.ie/info\\_newsletter](http://www.walk.ie/info_newsletter)

### **Yoobyoo (formerly Children In Hospital Ireland)**

Subscribe to newsletter at <http://yoobyoo.ie/>



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**Representing the interests and expectations of people with disabilities to be fully included.**

**Comprising organisations that represent and support people with disabilities.**



**The Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) represents the interests and the expectations of people with disabilities to be fully included in Irish society. It comprises organisations that represent and support people with disabilities and disabling conditions.**

The vision of DFI is that Irish society is fully inclusive of people with disabilities and disabling conditions so that they can exercise their full civil, economic, social and human rights and that they are enabled to reach their full potential in life. DFI's mission is to act as an advocate for the full and equal inclusion of people with disabilities and disabling conditions in all aspects of their lives.

There are over 120 organisations within membership or as associates of DFI. DFI also works with a growing number of organisations and groups around the country that have a significant disability interest, mainly from the statutory and voluntary sectors. DFI provides:

- Information
- Training and Support
- Networking
- Advocacy and Representation
- Research and Policy Development / Implementation
- Organisation and Management Development

DFI works on the basis that disability is a societal issue and so works with Government, and across the social and economic strands and interests of society.

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