



Disability Federation of Ireland

An Advocate for the Voluntary Disability Sector

Supporting Organisations to Enable People with Disabilities

NEWSLETTER - JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2011

Next Government and Disabled People:

Propelling Forward or Reversing Back to Our Past?

Between Friday 21st and Monday 24th of January so much changed in relation to the date of the election and the party political set up. That said the issues are the same for people with disabilities and mental health needs and their families. You know that very well from your day to day work. With all the talk of the Election date, Finance Bill, the economy and job creation it is easy to forget that, while these are all important issues, what is way more important is ensuring that people are involved in the life of their local community. That is what the work of each of our organisations is about. We are striving to make sure that those whom we serve can fully participate. Over the last decade Government made that commitment, and it did it through the National Disability Strategy (NDS). This Strategy seeks to protect necessary disability specific services such as respite services while also supporting people with disabilities to be able to access mainstream public services, such as housing and education. You might seldom refer to the NDS in your daily work, but your work has the same objective.

Disability is a Societal Issue Not a Sectoral Issue

Disability and mental health are not just issues for another interest group. Disabilities and disabling conditions affect people of all ages and cause varying degrees of restriction, compromise and curtailment. Disability so often arrives without warning and people cannot on their own protect themselves against the multiple effects. There is no company offering that insurance policy, and if there was, no one could afford the premiums. Up to recently that risk was left to individuals and their families together with the voluntary organisations that grew up to support people. There was little support from the State. The NDS is the State's offering to help underwrite the risk. There are many risks and fears that people can face throughout their lives, and living with a disability or a disabling condition is at the top

end, as is the impact that it has on the life of the person concerned and their family. That is why disability is not a sectoral interest; it is in the interest of all of us as a society to ensure that the services and supports needed to ensure that everyone can lead a full life in the community are available.

For these reasons we will be pressing all candidates and parties contesting the election to have the implementation of the National Disability Strategy as a priority area for action in their Programme for Government.

Prioritise the Implementation of the National Disability Strategy

DFI has consistently pushed for the full and early implementation of the Strategy because it will lead to real change for the better within and across communities where people live. With the onset of the recession DFI was greatly concerned that the commitment to the Strategy would fade under the relentless emphasis on banking and the economy. That is why we called for a plan from Government to protect and advance the Strategy through the recession. We continue to push for that, and we are now in discussions with Government officials, along with the Disability Stakeholders Group (DSG), to have that plan put in place as a matter of urgency. Hopefully this will happen in the next week or so, but in any event, it will be the main theme for our Election Campaign.

DFI General Election Campaign

Taking the above into consideration the main focus of our overarching approach will involve the following elements.

1. We will seek commitments from all parties and candidates that they will actively implement the NDS as a priority throughout the life of the next Dáil, whereby they will ensure that people have sufficient income to live, and the necessary public and social services required to live life with dignity.
2. We will seek commitments from all parties that, in implementing the NDS, they will work with and support the many voluntary disability organisations that are representative of people with disabilities and working for their inclusion in the community.

This approach is built on the fact that the NDS is not just something for the disabled population or interest group; it is a necessary social infrastructure that this State badly needs to have available to all of its people, as and when they may need it. Furthermore it is built on the foundation of the inalienable rights of all people.

The recession must not become an excuse to stop progress; rather it gives us opportunities to do things differently, mainly with the assistance of the Public Service Agreement and the Public Service Reform Programme. Voluntary disability organisations are key partners in 'working smarter' to progress the NDS.

The DFI Approach and the Election Work of Your Organisation

I hope that you find this information of assistance in whatever work you are planning in the run up to the election, and that our broad approach gives support to the more particular issues that you may raise. We are focusing on necessary public and social services in the mainstreaming context, along with highlighting the importance of income for people to be able to live life with dignity in the community. I am aware that the Neurological Alliance of Ireland and the collective Centres for Independent Living (CIL), through CIL Carmichael, already have their election issues in circulation. This gives great focus to their specific issues during the campaign. DFI will shortly be sending a campaign document to you and to all the political parties. We will also be posting information updates on our web site.

www.disability-federation.ie

It is said that "all politics is local". With this in mind please support all people with disabilities and their families who are connected with your organisation to deliver a clear message to every candidate, to commit to MAKING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY A PRIORITY FOR THE NEXT GOVERNMENT. I would strongly encourage you to raise your organisation's concerns through local media in the coming weeks. People with disabilities need access to public services in their own communities. The actions of the next Government will either propel us forward or bring us back to our past. The election candidates need to hear people with disabilities speak about their needs whether in relation to accessing housing, education and training or employment in their own communities.

Please keep in touch with your DFI Support Officer and we will do whatever we can to support your work. It would be great to hear any updates that you have or about events that you are organising.

John Dolan CEO

Election Campaign 2011

DFI has set up a special section on its website to cover the election campaign. The site will link to key campaign documents, including excerpts from the manifestos of the political parties that focus on disability policy. Go to www.disability-federation.ie

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Tendering for HSE services

As you are aware the disability sector is moving into a new era of providing disability services. For the first time ever many contracts for the provision of services and supplies will be subject to competitive tendering. That not only means that the rolling-over of service level agreements from one year to the next will be a thing of the past, but it will also mean a huge shift from the current partnership model with the HSE to a more commercial, contract-based relationship.

The HSE has commenced the use of “E-Tenders”, a website on which it publishes its tenders, and there is a real threat that voluntary disability organisations may loose out to private competitors in the market place. It is also interesting to note that these tenders are advertised EU-wide.

DFI has monitored these developments closely over the past months and we are now of the firm opinion that it is of **critical importance** that voluntary disability organisations prepare themselves for this huge change.

In order to ensure that your organisation is informed about all new or renewed tendered contracts, we strongly advise you to sign up as a “Supplier” to the E-Tenders website. Once signed up, you will receive automatic updates on new tenders and additional tender information. Also, we would encourage you to regularly visit the E-Tender website to check for other updates. For example, it may be possible that the HSE centrally or in another geographical area may describe the service you deliver differently, i.e. uses different

terminology. This could possibly mean that you miss out on a potential tender process. Therefore, a regular check is recommended.

To sign up as a Supplier, register here and follow the on-screen instructions:

http://www.etenders.gov.ie/login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fmembership%2fmember_main.aspx

It is with this in mind that DFI has joined forces with Ireland's largest and most experienced Bid Support Consultancy in Ireland – Tender Team – to stage a short series of one-day seminars on “How to Tender successfully for HSE contracts”. Tender Team have a longstanding track record in providing advice and successfully preparing tender proposals. They have highly professional staff, resources and expertise to help organisations to win more business or indeed venture into new areas of activity.

To facilitate disability organisations from around the country we will hold two events in separate geographical locations:

- **16th February** **Carmichael Centre, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7**
- **23rd February** **Clayton Hotel, Ballybrit, Galway**

This event is primarily aimed at Chairpersons, CEO's, Manager's and Financial Managers of disability organisations.

Both events are full-day seminars and are offered to organisations from the voluntary disability sector at a greatly discounted fee. The rate for DFI Members is €50 per person whereas the rate for non-members is €85 per person. If an organisation wishes to have more than one attendee then a reduced rate is applicable for the second and all further attendees of that organisation (€35 p.p. for DFI members, €60 p.p. for non-members). Non-attendance/late cancellations (up to 48 hours prior to the event) will be charged for in full.

Please note that places are strictly limited.

For further information on the event, booking form and agenda, please contact Marcus Hufsky at marcushufsky@disability-federation.ie or Jacqueline Grogan at Jacquelinegrogan@disability-federation.ie

We are looking forward to meeting you on the day.

Skill Staff Training Programme 2011 – 2012

Call for Expression of Interest

DFI member organisations are now invited to submit their Expression of Interest (Eoi) for inclusion on the SKILL Staff Training Programme to DFI by Monday, 14th February. Eoi's are to be completed online by following the link: [DFI SKILL Staff Training Programme Expression of Interest 2011 - 2012](#)

Since 2006, DFI has coordinated the uptake of over 1000 staff from 33 DFI member organisations onto the SKILL Staff Training Programme. Staff are trained up in FETAC Levels 3, 4, 5 & 6 accredited programmes for Support Staff and Line Managers / Supervisors within the voluntary disability sector.

Training for staff continues to be a priority area of development for organisations. The National Quality Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland have already been published by the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) and regulations are now being adhered to and are being actively monitored by HIQA. Appropriate training for staff is becoming increasingly recognised as a must for all service providers. Within these standards, Standard 24: Training and Supervision within highlights the following criteria for staff:

'24.2 All newly recruited care staff and those in post less than one year commence training to FETAC Level 5 or equivalent within two years of taking up employment. Long standing care staff have their competency and skills assessed to determine their need for further training and suitable arrangements are put in place to meet their identified training needs.'

Similar standards are laid out in National Quality Standards: Residential Services for People with Disabilities.

Work is currently underway to quantify the threshold of standards relevant to staff working within community based service provision. The SKILL Staff Training Programme is your opportunity to ensure that your staff meet an appropriate standard of quality and professionalism in the work they do on a daily basis.

The SKILL Staff Training Programme provides:

- FETAC Level 3, 4, 5 & 6 accredited programmes training free of charge.
- Delivered nationwide.

- Tailored to meet specific training needs of the voluntary disability sector.
- Your organisation receives **€3, 500** per participant, to cover costs incurred.

Please note that there will be no flexibility in the deadline for completion of EoI by Monday 14th February. Only EoI fully completed with relevant information will be considered.

DFI / NFVB Skill Programme Briefing Sessions

DFI will be holding SKILL Programme Briefing Sessions jointly with the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies (NFVB) in the coming weeks – please contact DFI to book a place:

Dublin – Thursday 24th February from 11am – 1pm. Offices of [DFI](#), Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane Dublin 8.

Galway – Friday, 18th February from 11am-1pm. Offices of [National Federation of Voluntary Bodies](#), Oranmore Business Park Oranmore Galway.

For all queries please contact your [local DFI Support Officer](#) or myself, Cathy McGrath directly on 01 425 0124.

HR & Employment Law Update

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.

Use of Organisation's Systems

Organisation's IT (including email and internet) and Communication systems are in place to assist employees carry out their roles. Employers may seek to monitor usage of the systems to ensure that they are not being misused.

In some organisations, employees are permitted moderate usage of the organisation's email and internet for personal use during their lunch breaks or after work hours.

Employees should always ensure that this facility is not abused - inappropriate emails should never be forwarded and inappropriate websites never accessed.

There is always the risk, when using external sites that are not work related, that a virus could be contracted and could damage company equipment. Another risk is that the views of the Employee are mistaken for that of the organisation. Employees may have

disclosed the organisation's name or email address on their personal social media sites. If an employee's connection to the organisation is apparent they must ensure that it is clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the organisation, as inappropriate comments can have an effect on the organisation's public reputation.

We would recommend that organisations put a policy in place which regulates internet and email usage and clearly outlines what is and is not permitted. Once the policy is in place, employers should ensure that it is implemented and understood by all employees.

For further information on the HR Support Services provided click on the link below:

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

Factors in Workplace Bullying

by Maeve Halpin, Counsellor and Organisational Supervisor.

Bullying at work constitutes one of the most complex and demanding HR issues facing CEO's, managers and staff in the Community and Voluntary Sector. Reported incidences of workplace bullying appear to be on the increase, which may be a reflection of increased awareness of the unacceptability of bullying behaviour. Effective managerial responses to complaints of bullying require a high degree of skill, training, sensitivity and courage. Early intervention in situations of suspected bullying is essential if a bully is not to be allowed to dominate the workplace.

Causes of bullying

At the level of the **individual**, bullying is now recognised as evidence of a dysfunctional personality. Bullies tend to have a strong need to dominate and control others, sometimes in response to having little personal power outside their job. They can have an underlying feeling of insecurity and inadequacy, which results in envy and resentment of others. They have a poor ability for self-reflection, and need to boost their weak sense of themselves by undermining others. Bullies don't bully everyone - they bully those they think they can bully. They can be easily intimidated by people they perceive as more powerful than themselves, because they see relationships as hierarchical, with power as something to be abused.

They often are people who as children have been bullied by authority figures, such as parents, older siblings, teachers or older children.

At the level of the **organisation**, a number of factors which influence whether or not bullying will be allowed to develop have been identified. Weak leadership will facilitate a bully, as will an authoritarian and rigid leader. Negative and stressful working conditions, where staff feel undervalued and under-resourced, can lead to friction and scapegoating. Bullying will only take place if the offender feels he or she has the blessing, support, or at least the implicit permission of superiors to behave in this manner. Lax implementation of company policies and procedures can leave bullies knowing they will be “accountable to no-one”.

Organisational change seems to be widely associated to bullying, especially when the restructuring is implemented in a top-down, autocratic manner. Ironically, more progressive “flatter” organisational structures have led to the loss of the safety provided by traditional hierarchies, which creates a need in some to establish their supremacy by more aggressive means. Interdepartmental teams can create ambiguity in relation to seniority and reporting lines, weakening organisational controls and allowing bullying to go unchecked.

How bullying develops: Bullying tends to begin with relatively subtle aggressive behaviours, which if unaddressed escalate to more open, direct and frequent attacks. This usually will result in serious negative outcomes for the person being bullied, including anxiety, suspiciousness, compulsive worrying and impaired work performance. The person being bullied can become stigmatised as being the problem, and viewed as complaining, paranoid and irrational. The bully themselves can then claim to be the victim of unreasonable and unjustified complaints.

Often bullying takes place in the presence of a large group of relatively uninvolved bystanders. The bully relies on this conspiracy of silence to maintain their monopoly of power. If bullying is tacitly accepted in the workplace, then colleagues know they will not be rewarded for speaking up. They will also be wary of attracting the negative attention of the bully on themselves. Without effective intervention, a culture of bullying can become established, which is far more difficult to address.

Addressing bullying: In 2005, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation commissioned a report by an Expert Advisory Group on workplace bullying. The report strongly recommended non-adversarial early intervention by management in all cases of suspected bullying, as behaviour that becomes habitual and entrenched is far more difficult to change. Early intervention aimed at speedy resolution should be implemented internally, as parties become more adversarial as a complaints process progresses. The person being bullied may also become too traumatised to effectively participate in a resolution process if the situation is allowed to go on too long.

Managers have a clear responsibility to include an up-to-date Anti-Bullying Policy in their Employee Handbook, and to ensure that all staff are aware of this. Training in dealing with workplace bullying should be a requirement for all line managers and CEO's.

Using External Support: In my work in Organisational Supervision, I have found that workplace bullying is often allowed to continue because no-one is willing to take the risk of confronting the situation directly. The dynamics of a situation of bullying can be complex and multi-layered, and may have developed over months or even years. Attending one-to-one External Supervision on a short term basis can provide a opportunity to discuss a bullying situation with an objective outsider, and to consider creative and inventive possibilities for internal resolution. Preventative measures can also be identified and implemented, ensuring that the possibility of further bullying arising in the future is minimised.

Maeve Halpin, M.A., M. Phil., Dip. Couns. Psych. is currently partnering with DFI to provide External Support/Supervision to employees and directors of DFI member organisations as part of the DFI Service Suite. Maeve is a Social and Organisational Psychologist with extensive experience in the voluntary sector, as a volunteer and at Senior Management and Board level. She has been providing both managerial and clinical supervision to professionals working in a range of settings for many years.

For further information please visit the websites below

www.maevehalpincounselling.com or www.appletreehealthandwellness.com

NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY / TOWARDS 2016

What “Value for Money” Means for Disability

Minister John Moloney T.D. and the Office for Disability and Mental Health have released two documents that give people with disabilities, and the voluntary organisations who work with them, a strong steer on where the Government’s health policy and funding are heading. Both reports come from the Value for Money and Policy Review (VfM) of the HSE’s Disability Services Programme (DSP). They will influence the Review’s recommendations, which in turn will affect how Government budget cuts over the next four years impact on voluntary disability organisations.

Minister Moloney announced the VfM Review in September 2009, with terms of reference that questioned what objectives should be driving the DSP and how effectively and efficiently funding was targeting those objectives. The publications released in December 2010 are designed to highlight to all interested parties about the radical nature of the changes being considered in the Review. The Policy Review will be considered by the VfM Steering Group, along with its critical examination of the current system, and incorporated into the final recommendations.

The Minister clearly is encouraging voluntary disability organisations to study the interim information, and he is offering an opportunity to make submissions on the full version of the policy paper in the first half of 2011.

1 Report on Public Consultation: Efficiency and Effectiveness of Disability Services in Ireland

The Report describes in detail the feedback from the questionnaire-based consultation for the VfM Review conducted in November 2009. The report states that 191 submissions were received, 14% from service users, 29% from family members / carers, and most of the rest from service providers. The many quotations from respondents enrich the report.

Respondents strongly endorsed the modern policy objectives of empowering people with disabilities. Findings include:

- 60% were dissatisfied with the amount of choice people have over the services they receive, with significant support for individualised budgets and also consultation (p50)

- 68% were dissatisfied with the amount of control people have over their lives, with Personal Assistants, independent advocacy and better consultation suggested
- 53% were dissatisfied with the support from providers to facilitate people's inclusion in mainstream, with a variety of access measures favoured including awareness raising (p54).

The report on the consultation was used in the review of disability policy (below).

2 Key Proposals from the Review of Disability Policy

This ten page document summarises the policy review by the Expert Group set up to assist the VfM Steering Group. The full policy report will be made available for consultation early in 2011. The summary paper demonstrates a highly positive and ambitious approach upon which the voluntary disability sector can build.

Policy Goals

Based on public policy statements , consultation with people with disabilities and others, and appreciation of the changing social and economic environment, the Expert Group identifies two policy goals that define a new policy approach, goals that the voluntary sector can strongly endorse:

1. Full inclusion and self-determination for people with disabilities
2. The creation of a cost-effective, responsive and accountable system which will support the full inclusion and self-determination of people with disabilities.

Individualised Supports

The paper detects a gap between the objectives and current services, which it describes as strongly influenced by a professionalised model of provision, largely focussed on group settings segregated from the general community, and entangling health and personal social services. Under the new policy the report points out that:

- Individualised supports will require the provision of a flexible range of supports and services that are tailored to the specific needs of the individual, and are primarily determined by the person.

- The supports embed the person in their natural support system of family, voluntary organisations and their wider community, only drawing on formal support groups when necessary

Mainstreaming

The paper identifies mainstreaming as central. It states that all Government departments need to commit to an approach of tailored universalism, where people with disabilities are fully supported to access all the services and supports available to their peers. It envisages less duplication of resources, greater choice and flexibility as well as better protection for the non disabled in such a scenario.

Governance

The paper explains how a governance framework is essential to underpin the two goals. Its description highlights the changes required in how things are currently done. It means for example:

- Comprehensive needs assessment of each individual where that person is in the driver's seat and there is oversight independent of the service providers
- Allocation of resources determined by need and based on an individual support plan related to availability of to the person of natural supports, mainstream services etc
- Individualised budgeting using various formats so that the person can pick and choose amongst providers
- Health and personal social services unbundled and skill mix and deployment reconfigured.

3 DFI Comments

Change that respects and empowers the person with disabilities is very welcome and merits strong support throughout the VfM Review. The policy paper's prescription for achieving the two goals may be uncomfortable reading for some, for example when it refers to shifting from providers being accountable for inputs and compliance to being accountable for outcome based standards. But it is up to each of us to consider how we can help to move to the new approach, starting by exploring holistically what each person with whom we work really seeks and needs.

At the same time we need to ensure that the VfM analysis is thorough. In DFI's view there appears to be a neglect of the work already done by many voluntary disability organisations. Voluntary disability organisations, that routinely co-work with people with disabilities to enable their full participation, have identified areas where DSP has under-invested, for example in supporting capacity to build pathways to mainstream services and opportunities. This is something that mainstream providers cannot do alone, and where voluntary organisations are well equipped to contribute. Another area is supporting people to acquire the self confidence and ability to set objectives for themselves in a realistic manner; again this is a function that support-oriented organisations perform.

The paper recognises that transition to the new approach is likely to be a long term process occurring over a 5-10 year period, and that significant redeployment of financial resources will be required, as well as significant flexibility and redeployment of staff. We need to think carefully about how that transition should be managed.

UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

The Centre for Disability Law and Policy, NUI Galway, held a conference on 10th December 2010 focussing on how Ireland's National Disability Strategy (and initiatives in other states) support the rights enumerated in the UN Convention. Speakers from a wide range of countries and international bodies addressed issues such as meaningful consultation, measuring progress and independent monitoring.

John Dolan, CEO of DFI, spoke about the potent resource residing in the voluntary disability sector, where people with disabilities play a critical role. He noted at the same time the need for that sector to become more effective nationally, through the Disability Stakeholders Group. He also highlighted the importance of public sector reform if mainstreaming and realisation of the UN Convention are to be achieved.

The Conference was held in anticipation of the soon to be published book, 'From Rhetoric to Action: Implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities', by Dr Eilionoir Flynn. Dr Flynn's presentation identified key steps to advance the NDS, based on her book, which is to be published in March 2011.

A presentation by Shuaib Chalklen, UN Special Rapporteur on Disability, suggested that the early strong impetus in South Africa to realise disability rights has weakened partly because the leaders become too involved with the national government. On the other hand Molly Harrington, from the Government of British Columbia, observed that the successes achieved were due to the partnership between the public and voluntary disability sectors. Professor Jerome Bickenbach argued that the disability sector must insist on the collection of appropriate statistics to ensure the evidence necessary to measure progress in NDS implementation. Relying on whatever was available would not allow adequate evaluations.

Consultation: “Better Literacy and Numeracy for Children and Young People”

The Department of Education and Science is seeking feedback on this document, a draft national plan to improve literacy and numeracy in schools, by 28 February 2011. The plan is available at www.education.ie

Youth Unemployment Report

The National Youth Council of Ireland has published “Youth Unemployment in Ireland: The Forgotten Generation”. It reports on the experience of young job seekers and their interaction and engagement with key public support services. The research identifies the different experiences of job seekers, those who have graduated from third level educational institutions, those with Leaving Certificates and those who left school without credentials. While finding examples of good practice by the welfare and employment services, it highlights the fragmented and inconsistent nature of the service provision for most young people. For the report, go to www.youth.ie

“Is the Government Keeping its Promises to Children?”

The Children’s Rights Alliance has published its ‘report card’ for 2010. It covers the range of social services affecting children, including children with special educational needs where a grade of D is assigned. To view the report, go to www.childrensrighsalliance.ie

HOUSING

Assessment of Social Housing Need - March 2011

Local authorities are again carrying out this census under the guidance of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government, but without applying new directives that were to improve their ability to measure the nature and extent of the housing need, especially amongst people with disabilities. The results of the March 2011 count will influence public planning for housing investment and allocation of social (subsidised rental) housing units by both local authorities and housing associations.

Although the last assessment in March 2008 yielded a higher national count of 'Disabled' in need of social housing than was reported in 2005, at 1,155, it was only 2% of the total number of households assessed in need. In Dublin City for example, the count was 15 and in Limerick it was 9. There doubtless were additional persons with disabilities counted in other assessment categories, such as 'Elderly' and 'Medical or compassionate reasons', but these small counts compromise the strength of the disability sector's case for a greater supply of appropriate housing.

Disability Sector's Response

Those concerned might protest to the Department and others about the continued use of a process that the Department has admitted is inadequate. For example, the existing approach makes it difficult for adult disabled people who have a bed but no independence to register on local authority waiting lists. The Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 should have enabled the application of new regulations in 2010.

Voluntary disability organisations also need to provide evidence of people in need of social housing. The Irish Wheelchair Association is developing an initiative, OPERATION SIGN UP, that will encourage and support individuals to apply to City and County Councils to register their Housing Need on Social Housing Lists. OPERATION SIGN UP will be supported by an IWA Housing microsite, giving information on how to apply to a local Council to register one's housing need. More information from IWA will follow on www.iwa.ie in the next weeks.

HEALTH

New Director for Disability in the HSE

Cate Hartigan D. Gov. - BSc(Hons) - RGN - has taken over from Ann Kennelly as Director for Disability in the HSE.

Cate is a native of Wexford and is a registered nurse having trained in the UK. She moved into general management in 1994 and returned to Ireland in 1999 to live, working in the Eastern Health Board and the East Coast Area Health Board, primarily in Child Care and also in services for Older People and acute hospitals and emergency planning. Cate worked on the Change Management Team for the Health Service Reform Programme from its inception in November 2003 and was subsequently appointed Assistant National Director of Primary, Community and Continuing Care for the Health Service Executive (HSE), with responsibility for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation. She also worked as Acting National Director of Corporate Planning and Control Processes for the HSE.

Cate graduated from Queens University, Belfast with a Doctorate in Governance with the health service reform programme as the subject of her thesis.

We look forward to progressing outstanding issues with Cate that we were working on with Ann Kennelly. We thank Ann for her work and wish her all the best for the future following her retirement from the HSE.

HSE appoints National Director for Children and Family Services

Gordon Jeyes has been appointed by the HSE as the new National Director for Children and Family Services. His appointment was approved by the HSE Board in December 2010. This is a two-year post that has been established to lead organisational and cultural change in the Child and Family Services in the HSE.

A critical role for Gordon is the delivery of a clear service model that focuses on providing a safe and high quality child protection service which is consistent with statutory obligations.

This will involve the development of national structures to ensure social workers and other professionals in the area are supported to provide quality services.

Chief Executive Officer of the Health Service Executive, Cathal Magee, welcomed the appointment and said that it ‘would bring a requisite strong focus and leadership to the development of child and family services’.

HSE Publishes National Service Plan 2011

In December 2010 the HSE published its National Service Plan 2011, which sets out the type and volume of service it will provide in 2011, directly, and through a range of funded agencies, within the funding provided by Government, €13.457 billion, and within the stipulated employment levels. The Service Plan is available at

[HSE National Service Plan 2011.pdf \(size 897.6 KB\)](#)

In developing this plan, the HSE’s priorities for 2011 are to:

- Maintain the levels of service provided in 2010
- Deliver the cost reduction and restructuring programmes to enable the maintenance of these service levels on a total reduced budget basis of €962m (€683m net)
- Seek to ensure the delivery of high quality and safe services
- Accelerate the HSE reform programme to reconfigure core services and in line with HSE strategy, deliver an appropriate balance between hospital and community services as well as best care models in childcare, disability, mental health and older person’s services
- Implement the national clinical change programmes and new service developments

SOCIAL INCLUSION

€3m To be Provided for Innovative Projects in Mental Health and Disability Services

John Moloney T.D. Minister of State at the Department of Health & Children has announced that €3m is to be provided this year for innovative projects in mental health and disability services.

€2m innovation funding will be provided to the Genio Trust in 2011. Genio seeks to improve the everyday lives of people with disabilities and mental health difficulties. In 2010, it was allocated €3m in innovation funding to support over 100 people to move from institutions to the community, or to become more independent in the community where they belong. Grants were awarded to 50 projects including 15 mental health projects with total funding of €1.4m. The additional funding being provided this year will enable Genio to further their work in this area; focusing on one institution or hospital to enable that facility to close in its entirety. The funding will also be directed towards increasing the provision of cost effective, family and community based respite care, as an alternative to traditional institutional models.

A further €1m will be provided to fund the expansion of Jigsaw, currently in 5 counties, to a further 10 counties. Jigsaw is an innovative community based support service for young people, which has been developed by Headstrong and is designed to promote systems of care that are accessible, youth-friendly, integrated, and engaging for young people.

Referring to Jigsaw the Minister continued “It is critical that we provide, within our communities, the kinds of support young people need. In Jigsaw we have a committed, caring and co-ordinated service for young people which was developed with young people at the core. Jigsaw is an operational expression of A Vision for Change and this funding, which is for a 3 year period, will enable it to be expanded and put on a firmer footing within our mental health services for young people.”

Speaking at an event in Dublin Castle to mark progress and achievements in mental health services, 5 years on from the publication of A Vision for Change, the Minister said “this

allocation is a reflection of the important partnership which has developed in recent years between Government and philanthropy in driving the reform of our disability and mental health services. The service reforms which will be facilitated by this funding are fully in line with the objectives of Government policy as set out in A Vision for Change and with the objectives of the National Disability Strategy.”

European Union ratifies UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

On 5th January 2011, the European Union ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The European Union is now the first international organisation to become a formal party to the UN Convention.

On this matter, The European Union website, europa.eu states:

"Following formal ratification, it is the first time in history the EU has become a party to an international human rights treaty – the United Nation's (UN) Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. The Convention aims to ensure that people with disabilities can enjoy their rights on an equal basis with all other citizens. It is the first comprehensive human rights treaty to be ratified by the EU as a whole. It has also been signed by all 27 EU Member States and ratified by 16 of these. The EU becomes the 97th party to this treaty. The Convention sets out minimum standards for protecting and safeguarding a full range of civil, political, social, and economic rights for people with disabilities. It reflects the EU's broader commitment to building a barrier-free Europe for the estimated 80 million people with disabilities in the EU by 2020, as set out in the European Commission's disability strategy (IP/10/1505)."

The Convention commits parties to making sure that people with disabilities fully can enjoy their rights on an equal basis with all other citizens.

For the EU, this means ensuring that all legislation, policies and programmes at EU level comply with the Convention's provisions on disability rights, within the limits of EU

responsibilities. Ratifying countries, such as the EU Member States, should take action in the following areas: access to education, employment, transport, infrastructures and buildings open to the public, granting the right to vote, improving political participation and ensuring full legal capacity of all people with disabilities.

The EU signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 30th March 2007. It has since been signed by all 27 EU countries and a further 120 states worldwide.

More information on this and a full list of countries that have signed the convention and their progress on ratification is available here:

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/4&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

European Parliament agrees Citizen's Initiative

On 15th December, MEPs gave the green light to the 'Citizens' Initiative', which will make it possible for more than one million EU citizens to demand new EU legislative Acts. Member States will adapt their legislation by the end of this year to facilitate this.

The agreed procedure is as follows: To start matters, a committee of at least seven citizens need to approach the Commission to register the request for an initiative. It is the Commission that will determine its admissibility, based on the EU Treaty. If the petition is admissible and collects at least one million signatures, its initiators will have the right to be received by the Commission and to take part in a public hearing. However, in accordance with the Treaty, the Commission will be the sole judge of the possibility of giving a legislative follow-up to a citizens' initiative (it will reply within three months). All support of a political, financial, associated, religious, national or international nature may be provided, but needs to be totally transparent. Those who are asked to sign must know what lies behind this.

For more information:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P7-TA-2010-0480+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN#BKMD-16>

Protecting Customers: DeRegulation of the Electricity Market:

Over the coming months, the Energy market will be deregulated, which means that customers will have greater choice in who they receive their electricity from. The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) has launched a consultation on the provisions that electricity suppliers must make for customers once the electricity market opens up for competition. They want to know more from the public about how they would like information on their choice to switch service providers if they choose to switch from their current service provider to another service provider.

The consultation asks questions about a customer education campaign, how to compare prices, communication with customers, including those with access requirements as well as those who might be vulnerable to being disconnected. If you, or someone you work with is older, is a carer or has a disability, and you or they have something to contribute to this consultation, please feel free to respond directly to CER www.cer.ie or you can contact Joan O'Donnell at DFI and input your comment for an overall submission that the Disability Stakeholders Group is drawing up.

Contact: Joan O'Donnell, Disability Federation of Ireland, 8 Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8, Tel: 01 4250122, email: joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie.

The deadline for all submissions to CER is 4th February 2011.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Follow the DFI Eastern Region Support Officers ON TWITTER

As a test in the use of social media, DFI Eastern Region Support Officers (Anthony Carrick, Louise Mc Cann and Martin Naughton), are piloting Twitter and have set up an account which you can follow by going to www.twitter.com/DFIEastRegion.

The plan is that, each day, one or more of us will tweet some fascinating insights into what we're up to, where we're going, who we're meeting and so on – and all in 160 characters.

You can receive these tweets online or directly to your mobile.

So, give it a go and follow us – and let us know what you think! The site, again, is www.twitter.com/DFIEastRegion. You will need a Twitter account (what, you don't have one?!) which is easy to set up and is free.

Tax relief on Charitable Donations retained in Budget:

Irish Charities Tax Research (ICTR) has had a major success in securing retention of the 41% rate of tax relief on charitable donations in Budget 2011. The rate remains unchanged despite the ending or restriction of virtually all other reliefs, including pension contribution relief. ICTR had done extensive lobbying to retain this relief and this one piece of success is a major piece of 'good news' from the Budget for the sector, even as ICTR recognises that many charities will suffer income loss due to grant cuts from various government departments and HSE sources. Thanks are due to the many charities that supported ICTR's Advocacy work, attending briefing sessions and raising the issue individually with government.

The ICTR would also like to record its appreciation of the government's attention to this issue and its willingness to engage with and respond positively to ICTR's position. For more information log on to www.ictr.ie

LEAP Communication & Supporting Skills Programme for Parents

This programme aims to empower parents and to encourage them to be as effective as possible for the challenges they meet. The programme is centred on the considerable expertise of parents, and involves parents in a series of workshops. Those workshops, which will be engaging and interactive, seek to help parents towards:

- Self care in order to prevent burnout
- Stress management as a means of reducing stress
- Mutual support for accessing support for self and others
- Networking and learning from other parents

- Listening skills as a means of enhancing relationships (both within the family and with service providers)
- Assertiveness skills as a way of claiming rights and having needs met
- Information to ensure awareness and confidence

Content of Workshops will include:

Setting the scene: Introductions, overview and purpose of the workshop; sharing family details; dealing with stress and caring for oneself

Reactions and feelings of parents to the diagnosis of disability; sharing of experiences; approaches to mutual support

What is support? Developing a range of skills to support others

Developing assertion skills as a means of advocating for oneself, one's family and others

Revision and integration of the skills of the workshops

The workshops run for 2 hours one day a week over 7 weeks

Facilitator: Frieda Finlay is a parent, a rights Campaigner, Chairperson of Inclusion Ireland, member of LEAP and a member of the education and research committee of the NIID.

Facilitator: Angelina Verge is a psychotherapist in private practice, specializing in working psychotherapeutically with people with Intellectual Disabilities and Autism and their families. She has also worked for many years supporting Advocacy and Human Rights in an intellectual disability service. Angelina provides consultation, training and group facilitation.

When 18th, 25th February, 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th March, 1st April (Fridays 10am to 12noon)

Where NIID, 4th Floor, 3 College Green, Trinity College, Dublin 2 (entrance door left of Starbucks on Dame Street)

Fee €30 which includes course papers and "People Skills" by Robert Bolton

These training opportunities are offered by LEAP and the National Institute for Intellectual Disabilities (NIID) and funded by GENIO. LEAP are parents working with professional allies whose mission is to support people with Intellectual Disabilities and people with Autism and their families through person directed education/training, planning and supports.

Contact: Frieda Finlay - 087 6573730, or email - leap@ireland.com

Newsletters

For information please contact the relevant organisation directly.

Ability - Newsletter of the Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, Tel: 01 4572329, E-mail: info@iasbah.ie

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Newsletter, Tel 01 2804164
email: cbrack@abiireland.ie

http://www.abiireland.ie/docs/ABII_Newsletter_Spring_2010.pdf

Arthritis Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 01 661 8188

E-mail: info@arthritisireland.ie

Aspire - Asperger Syndrome Association of Ireland. 01-8780027/9, E-mail: admin@aspire-irl.org

Asthma Society News - Tel: 01-8788511,
E-mail: office@asthmasociety.ie

Brainstorm - Migraine Association of Ireland, Tel: 01-8064121,

E-mail: info@migraine.ie

Brainwave - Quarterly Newsletter, Tel: 01 4557500, E-mail: info@epilepsy.ie

Care Alliance Ireland - E-mail: ndo@carealliance.ie

Clar na nÓg - National Youth Council of Ireland Tel: 01-4784122
E-mail: info@nyci.ie

Cleft Lip and Palate Association of Ireland -
www.cleft.ie/newsletter/index.htm, Tel: (01) 2848227,
E-mail: georginawade@cleft.ie

Community Exchange Newsletter, E-mail: info@activelink.ie, Tel:
+1 667 7326

Connect - Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association. E-mail:
info@imnda.ie, Freefone 1800 403 403

Community Workers' Co-operative – Community Work News. E-mail:
info@cwci.ie, Tel: +353 (0) 91 779 030

Cornerstone - Homeless Agency -
<http://www.homelessagency.ie/research/cornerstone.asp>, Tel: 01
7036100, E-mail: homeless@dublincity.ie

Cumhacht - People with Disabilities in Ireland
http://www.pwdi.ie/news_events/newsletter/index.htm, E-mail:
info@pwdi.ie, Tel: 01-8721744

Debra Ireland Newsletter, Tel: 01 678 5044, E-mail:
info@debraireland.org

Down Syndrome Ireland - Tel: 01-8730999, E-mail:
info@downsyndrome.ie

Enable Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 1850 204 304 E-mail:
communications@enableireland.ie

Equality News - Tel: 01-4173333, E-mail: info@equality.ie

E-Info Deaf Source— E-mail: info@irishdeafsociety.ie. Tel: +353
1860 1878

Féach - Support to parents of blind and visually impaired children.
Tel: 01 493 1896, E-mail: info@feach.ie

Fighting Blindness - Tel: 01 7093050, E-mail:
avril.daly@fightingblindness.ie

Frontline of Learning Disability -Tel: 01-2862649. E-mail:
frontline@indigo.ie

GROWing - Information on Mental Health, Tel: 1890 474 474, E-mail:
info@grow.ie

Guidelines - Irish Guide Dogs Association. Tel: 021 4878200 E-mail:
info@guidedogs.ie

Headway Ireland - National Association for Acquired Brain Injury -
'Making Headway', Tel: 01-8102066, E-mail: info@headway.ie

Heart News: - Newsletter of Irish Heart Foundation. Tel:
01 668 5001
E-mail: info@irishheart.ie.

Heartstrings - Newsletter of Heart Children Ireland,
published quarterly,
Tel: 1850 217017 E-mail: heartchildren@eircom.net

Heatwave - Irish Raynauds Scleroderma Society,
E-mail: info@irishraynauds.com, Tel: 01 2020184

HOPE - Huntington's Disease Association of Ireland. Tel:
01-872 1303, E-mail: hdai@indigo.ie

Inclusion Ireland - Tel: 01 8559891, E-mail:
info@inclusionireland.ie

Irish Deaf News - Irish Deaf Society. Minicom: 01-
8601910; 01-8601878; E-mail: info@irishdeafsociety.ie

Irish Wheelchair Association - 'Spokeout', Tel: 01-8186
400, E-mail: Joanna.marsden@iwa.ie

Kerry Network of People with Disabilities - Network News
066-7180611, E-mail: kerryPWDI@eircom.net

MS News—Newsletter of MS Ireland. Tel: 01 6781600,
E-mail: info@ms-society.ie

Muscular Dystrophy Ireland - MDI News Update Tel: 01-
8721501, E-mail: info@mdi.ie

DeafHear.ie - Link Magazine - Tel: 01 8723800, E-mail:
info@deafhear.ie, Minicom: (01) 817 5777

NCBI News - Newsletter of the National Council for the
Blind of Ireland, Tel: 01 8307033, E-mail: press@ncbi.ie,
www.ncbi.ie

Neuro News - Neurofibromatosis Association of Ireland,
Tel: 01-8726338, E-mail: nfaireland@eircom.net

People First - Central Remedial Clinic Tel: 01-8057400
E-mail: vmmcutch@crc.ie

Post Polio Support Group - Newsletter, Tel: 071 64791
E-mail: newsletter@ppsg.ie

Poverty Today - Combat Poverty Agency. Tel:01-670
6746

Rehab News -Tel: 01-2057200 E-mail:
dara.duffy@rehab.ie

Simon News - Simon Community, Tel: 01-6711606 E-mail:
info@simoncommunity.com

Shine News - Schizophrenia Ireland, Tel: (0)1 8601620
E-mail: info@sirl.ie

Social Housing - Irish Council for Social Housing Tel: 01-
6618334; E-mail: info@icsh.ie

Sonasa aPc – Tel (01) 2608138. www.sonasapc.ie.

Speaking up for Advocacy – Citizens Information Board
Newsletter on advocacy. Tel: 01 6059035, E-mail:
mairide.woods@ciboard.ie

Volunteer Stroke Scheme News- Tel: 01-4559036.
E-mail: info@strokescheme.ie

Wheel E-Bulletin Tel:01- 454 8727,
E-mail: info@wheel.ie





Disability Federation of Ireland is a national support and representation mechanism for voluntary disability sector organisations, covering all areas of disability and disabling conditions. There are currently over 100 voluntary disability organisations in the DFI Membership.

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