



## **Disability Federation of Ireland**

An Advocate for the Voluntary Disability Sector  
Supporting Organisations to Enable People with Disabilities

### **NEWSLETTER – October 2012**

#### **Decision Making Practices in Health Leave Disabled People Exposed**

Five weeks after the announced €10m cut to PA Services, beyond diverting the cut to apply across the disability programme, the Government does not appear to have considered how such a perverse and drastic decision was allowed to occur. We in the disability sector need to insist on such an evaluation. Humane and effective social policy formulation depends on it.

We are told that the decision was made jointly at the highest level in the HSE and the Department of Health (DoH). This decision was made within six weeks of the publication of the Value for Money and Policy Review of the HSE's Disability Services Programme, a Review that necessitated on-going high level engagement by the HSE and the DoH in relation to finance, information, policy and service delivery. The Review strongly endorsed person centred services that support independence and autonomy, of which PA services are the outstanding example within the Programme.

Senior representatives from the Disability Unit in the HSE and the Office for Disability and Mental Health in the DoH have confirmed that they had no involvement in the decision-making process for the €10m cut announced at the end of August. Minister of State Kathleen Lynch has also confirmed that she too was not informed. Closing the PA service for the rest of 2012, which the cut would have required, could not have saved the Exchequer €10m; it could not have saved the HSE €10m because people would need supports in home, or require institutional or hospital admission. It would also have made people redundant and so increased costs to the Department of Social Protection.

Leaving aside the huge impact on people with disabilities, and the sense of raw vulnerability that they experienced with the announced cut, it is truly frightening that such a decision could have been contemplated without consideration of its wider impact. There is no sense from all of this that public service reform is seriously underway within the health sector. There seems to have been a panic driven response to the Troika's stance on the health budget overrun, and the need to get it back in balance by the end of the year. The Oireachtas urgently needs to examine the information management, policy orientation and decision making processes that led to this decision as well as the commitment by Government to implement the National Disability Strategy.

In a related development Minister of State Kathleen Lynch confirmed, at our Pre Budget Forum, that the National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan will not be in place before January next, a month after the Budget. She also stated that she cannot guarantee there will not be further cuts to disability funding in the Budget.

**John Dolan**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### Digital Switchover

#### Old Analogue Signals to be Switched Off on 24th October 2012

##### What is Digital Switchover?

On 24<sup>th</sup> October 2012 television service in Ireland will switch from [analogue](#) to digital. This is the biggest change since the introduction of colour TV.

Digital Switchover (DSO) is the process of changing from analogue to digital broadcasting. RTÉ will switch off the old analogue signals, and their new [digital TV](#) service, [SAORVIEW](#) will be the only service showing Irish TV channels (RTÉ1, RTÉ 2, TG4 and TV3) without paying a subscription.

If you are currently using an aerial to view programmes, will need to take action before 24<sup>th</sup> of October to ensure you continue to receive the national TV stations. Pay TV services are unaffected by the closure of the old TV network.

To learn about your different digital options visit the [My Switchover Options](#) .

##### National Helpline

In addition [My Switchover Options](#) a national telephone gives guidance and advice in relation to digital switchover

To speak to an English language operator please call 1890 940 980, to speak to an Irish language operator please call 1890 940 970.

Lo-Call charges are the same as a local call, prices may vary depending on your operator.

Calls from mobiles may vary considerably.

The helpline is open 24 hours.

## **Know your Logo**

If you go to buy a new television or a set- top box you may have noticed the number of labels on the packaging. These labels represent the networks or countries where the televisions are intended to work.

RTÉ has developed a labelling scheme to be used on digital receivers which are SAORVIEW approved. This will help TV viewers to identify televisions and other receivers which will work to receive Saorview. The Saorview approved Logo is:



RTÉ has informed the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources that only equipment carrying the SAORVIEW approved logo is guaranteed by RTÉ to work on SAORVIEW.

As with traditional televisions, a SAORVIEW approved TV set can also be used in conjunction with a Pay TV service.

## **Pay TV service**

If you are currently using a Pay TV service, operated by SKY, UPC, Magnet or a local cable or broadband TV service provider, you don't need to make any changes to your TV service.

## **Making the Switch**

You can switch now. The Irish analogue terrestrial TV service will be switched off in the Republic of Ireland on Wednesday October 24th. However the Irish digital terrestrial TV service, Saorview, has already been switched on. Therefore you can switch NOW to Saorview and avoid the rush and panic.

## DFI PRE-BUDGET WORK

### Launch of DFI Pre Budget Submission

October 4th 2012

We would like to thank all of you who attended the launch of the DFI Pre Budget Submission on October 4th 2012.

In our budget campaign, DFI seeks the re-balancing of the Government's national recovery programme to respect both the social and economic priorities that underpin a successful future. We identify four priorities for Budget 2013:

- 1.** The basic standard of living of the most vulnerable, including people with disabilities, must be protected. This means off-setting the impact of any increased charges imposed, or essential services withdrawn, as well as recognising the extra costs that people with disabilities incur. The social justice issue named by the Government leaders makes this a priority.
- 2.** For people with disabilities community-based services and supports are critical to enabling independence, to seeking work and a fuller life. The Government's policy objectives cannot be progressed without a greater focus on resourcing such services and supports. Health disability specific and personal social services funded by the HSE particularly merit protection.
- 3.** An ambitious Implementation Plan for the National Disability Strategy is required, in keeping with the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, where people have dignity, individual autonomy and full and effective participation in Irish society.
- 4.** Government needs to protect the viability of our community infrastructure, the community and voluntary bodies as well as the locally operating statutory agencies whose interventions underpin ordinary life. Because many different public bodies fund aspects of this social infrastructure, it is essential that the overall, cumulative impact of budget decisions is explicitly considered.

## Budget 2013

DFI is actively campaigning for a Budget, for 2013 and beyond, that protects the mainstream and disability-specific services and incomes supports essential to people with disabilities. We are using a range of avenues.

- DFI's pre-Budget brochure, in addition to setting out our key demands includes, includes two fact sheets, one reviewing the experience of people with disabilities and the other reporting the adverse impact of the recession on them.
- DFI's Budget Forum at the Mansion House on 4th October creates an opportunity for the political parties and Oireachtas members to engage with people about disability policy and the way forward.
- DFI and eight other national representative bodies launched a joint statement on 3rd September highlighting how close to the edge were many people with disabilities, due to the cumulative cuts imposed since 2008.
- As well as a submission to the Review of Domiciliary Care Allowance, DFI advised the Department of Social Protection against budgetary decisions that would adversely affect the income and opportunities of people with disabilities. DFI will present its position at the Department's Pre Budget Forum in October.
- DFI is supporting other initiatives that demonstrate the unsustainability of further cuts for people with disabilities, notably the recent Leaders protest at Leinster House.
- DFI, at both national and local levels, is meeting whenever possible with elected Oireachtas and Council members to underline the unacceptable situations into which people with disabilities have been forced since the onset of the recession.
- As we near 5th December, DFI will spell out to the media and the wider population the likely impact of new developments on Ireland's goal of enabling people with disabilities to be full citizens.

The documents mentioned above are available on the DFI website: [www.disability-federation.ie](http://www.disability-federation.ie)

# ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## HR & Employment Law Update

Adare Human Resource Management provides HR and Employment Law Support Services to a large number of Organisations within the Community and Voluntary Sector. Adare Human Resource Management aims to enable organisations to focus on their core operations, by providing management with the knowledge and support to assist them to deal effectively with people management and organisational change. We support organisations through minimising the risk of exposure to legal challenges by ensuring legal compliance for organisations in their practices as well as policies and procedures.

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.

### Record Keeping

There are a number of pieces of legislation which set down record keeping requirements for Organisations. The Data Protection Acts set out guidelines for data controllers and processors to ensure personal data is processed in accordance with the Acts.

The Acts set out that Data must be;

- Obtained and processed fairly
- Accurate, complete and kept up to date
- Obtained only for one or more specified, explicit and legitimate purpose
- Shall not be processed in a manner incompatible with these purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Shall not be kept longer than is necessary
- Should be controlled with appropriate security measures

There are other pieces of legislation which set out timeframes for which records should be kept. See below some such requirements:

<b>Act</b>	<b>Record Keeping Requirement</b>
Organisation of Working Time Act 1997	3 years (this includes records of annual leave, public holidays, working hours and rest periods)
Carer's Leave Act 2001	Must be retained for 8 years.
Parental Leave Act 1998 and 2006	Parental Leave and Force Majeure leave records must be kept for 8 years.

Employers would be advised to keep records for time periods as detailed below in order to be in a position to defend against a case, should a case be taken. Examples of these are as follows:

<b>Act</b>	<b>Record Keeping Requirement</b>
Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act 1973-2005	1 year as claims must be brought within 12 months of the date of the offence
Payment of Wages Act 1991	1 year as complaints may be presented within 6 months from the date of an unlawful deduction of payment, this may be extended by up to a further 6 months in exceptional circumstances
Maternity Protection Act 1994-2004	Complaint can be made within 6 months from date employer was notified of employee's intention to take leave which can be extended to 12 months in exceptional circumstances so records should be held for a minimum of 1 year.
Adoptive Leave Act 1995-2005	Complaint can be made within 6 months from date employer was notified of employee's intention to take leave, which can be extended to 12 months in exceptional circumstances so records should be held for a minimum of 1 year.

If you have any questions relating to record keeping requirements within your Organisation, 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>

## Free Employment Law Update Seminar

Adare Human Resource Management, in conjunction with DFI, will present a FREE Employment Law Update Seminar in DFI's Boardroom on Thursday 18th October 2012, 11.00 – 13.00. This seminar will highlight recent changes in employment legislation as well as points of interest from recent case law and will focus on the relevance of these changes to Community and Voluntary organisations.

Derek McKay of Adare HRM, who will present the seminar, will already be familiar 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>, which many of you are familiar with.

Further details and invitations to the seminar will be issued in September and, as always, tea / coffee and pastries will be provided before the session and a light lunch will be provided afterwards. As numbers will be limited, please contact Anthony Carrick at [anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie](mailto:anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie), if you are interested in reserving a place.

## Practical Tips for Coping with Change

By Maeve Halpin

*Maeve Halpin is a practising counsellor and Social and Organisational Psychologist, with many years' experience in the Community and Voluntary sector, latterly as Chair of the Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups. In conjunction with Maeve, DFI have launched an External Supervision and Support Service for staff and Boards of DFI member groups.*

We live in a time of rapid and unpredictable change. This can be enormously stressful, taking its toll on individuals, families, groups and organisations. Understanding the process of change, how it affects us and how to manage our reactions to it can greatly alleviate the associated stresses.

Sometimes we initiate change and sometimes it occurs as part of our natural developmental process. But it is most stressful when it is imposed by external conditions over which we have little or no control. These might include job loss, bereavement, illness or relationship breakdown. We are forced out of our comfort zone and may be thrown into confusion, anxiety and doubt. This can manifest itself in physical symptoms such as neck tension, fatigue, headaches, or more frequent accidents. Emotional symptoms can include



feeling isolated, angry, hopeless or “in limbo”. Our thoughts can become racing, obsessional and driven by anxiety. Distracting behaviours like drinking, smoking, overeating, gambling and gaming can increase, serving as forms of self-medication.

### ***Understanding Change***

A common tendency that exacerbates the stress of change is that we assume that it will never happen. Western culture is based on the assumption that the individual can create a secure life by setting up the right conditions – a good job, a suitable partner, a comfortable home – and that this will more or less guarantee a predictable and successful life. This assumption ignores the fundamental reality that everything in this world is subject to constant change – everything from our bodies, to relationships, to material things which will inevitably decay, to the stars which burn out over millions of years. To some extent, we create our suffering by naively expecting the world to stay just as we have carefully arranged it, tailor-made to meet our needs. Eastern cultures tend to take a more reflective approach, recognising that the world itself, of which we are an inextricable part, is in a constant state of flux. Our lives, loves and attachments will always be shifting and changing. Adopting a position of equanimity in the face of this irrefutable state of impermanence allows us to re-frame our experience of change, not as loss, but as the unavoidable and entirely predictable playing out of the world-as-it-is. Change can be seen as presenting valuable and unique opportunities for us to grow and develop, to forge new skills and understandings and to see ourselves as part of a larger picture.

### ***Developing Techniques for Calm***

A useful technique for achieving this level of equanimity is to begin to develop the “observer self”, that is the part of us that can observe with detachment the fluctuating patterns of our emotions and reactions. Rather than being immersed and possibly overwhelmed by our fear, anger and grief, we can watch the rising and falling of these emotions and see that they, like everything else, are transitory and ever-changing. We can develop a central core of calmness by realising that “this too shall pass”. This can be described as mindfulness, a practice that has gained currency in both medicine and psychology for its healing properties. Mindfulness allows us to gain some perspective on the ego, which always wants to be in control, and which panics when things go “wrong”. A more sanguine and wiser part of ourselves can intuit that there is no such thing as “things going wrong”; it is just the

inevitable flux of life, which, with the right tools, we can learn to accept rather than resist. We can begin to surf the waves of life rather than be swamped by them.

Another tried and tested method of cultivating this inner foundation of tranquillity is by connecting with the stability of the body, getting away from the frenetic activity generated by the head. The breath is an immediate and accessible means to tune into stillness and inner calm. Taking just 5-minute breaks a few times a day to sit in silence and be aware of our breathing has been shown to decrease anxiety and stress levels. A guided 5-minute breathing exercise can be found at <http://marc.ucla.edu/body.cfm?id=22&oTopID=22>. With regular practice, we can deepen our familiarity and sense of connection with the stillness within so that it becomes a refuge from the emotional ups and downs of life.

### ***Self-care During Times of Change***

Times of change have been characterised as “liminal spaces” where our potential is latent, waiting to be brought into reality. Realizing and accepting that the process of change is an opportunity to move on, to evolve and grow as a person and to emerge with a deeper understanding of ourselves and others will make the sense of turmoil easier to bear. Finding a compassionate person to confide in will ease the sense of isolation and help one to “think outside the box” of our mental discomfort. Maintaining good habits of sleep, exercise and eating are essential to keeping the body and mind healthy and strong, which will support us powerfully in times of adversity. While change may never be easy, the stresses involved can be greatly diminished by re-framing, detaching, looking for support and exercising good self-care.

*More information is available at* <http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=215>.

## HEALTH

### Report on HSE National Consultative Forum

The Health Service Executive (HSE) National Consultative Forum (NCF) met on 19th September. Amongst issues discussed were Personal Assistant (PA) Services, the recommendations of the Value for Money & Policy Review of Disability Services and budget cuts were discussed.

DFI again raised the issue of PA services, pointing out that failure to recognise the value of this service was highlighted by the recent protest at Leinster House. The HSE officials explained that the decision to impose the €10m cut on PA services, announced and then subsequently withdrawn (although still applying to disability services), had been taken at a high level. DFI questioned the credibility of the consultation process if decisions were made elsewhere.

The HSE was still collecting information to gain a better understanding of the current PA service. DFI will continue to emphasise the critical importance of the service, and support it through the NCF and other relevant fora.

The Value for Money (VfM) Review will feature heavily in the NCF's work programme. A group of officials is currently drafting an 'Implementation Framework' regarding the recommendations of the Review. This is likely to describe specific actions, name responsible leads, and set time frames. DFI emphasised that the Framework must recognise and address the disability services that received limited attention in the Review, namely, community-based services.

Regarding the Budget, HSE officials admitted that the €10m cut to Disability Services for 2012 was unexpected. DFI highlighted the planning dilemma faced by organisations in the context of such unpredictable shifts, observing that multi-year funding ought to be the practice. DFI also noted the unsatisfactory state of demographic information on which plans should be based. For example demographics statistics are needed on school leavers, but also on anticipated needs for PAs, therapeutic services and the like.

DFI observed that the crisis approach being taken has resulted in a situation where people with disabilities are not getting essential services, and organisations faced great difficulty

planning in the face of frequent and unexpected changes by the HSE. It was agreed that the NCF would explore budget options in October.

Further information from Lillian Buchanan [lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie)

## Invitation

### **Self-Management: A key niche for voluntary sector organisations**

Neurological Alliance of Ireland and Disability Federation of Ireland invite you to a half-day seminar: **“Self-Management: A key niche for voluntary sector organisations”**

Venue: Boardroom, Disability Federation of Ireland, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8.

Date and Time: Thursday 25 October 2012 10.30 am to 1.00pm

Light lunch will be provided

There is no attendance fee but please book early as we anticipate there will be significant interest in this event

The aim of the conference is to highlight the concept of self-management among organisations supporting people with neurological and other chronic conditions.

NAI and DFI were closely involved in the recent development of a national framework of self-management for our health services. An outline of this report and its current status, as well as an outline of the key principles of self management, will be given by Dr Pat Doorley, HSE Director of Population Health. This will be followed with a number of presentations from voluntary organisations providing practical examples of self-management and its benefits to their own members.

We hope to provide organisations with more information and encourage them to recognise and harness their experience and expertise in this area in order to promote self-management among their members.

To reserve your place contact John Doyle at [johndoyle@disability-federation.ie](mailto:johndoyle@disability-federation.ie) or phone (01) 4547978 by Friday 19 October 2012

## **Project SMILE Ireland:**

### **Action Research to Improve Oral Health Services for People with Disabilities in Ireland**

The aim of Project SMILE Ireland is to initiate, design, implement, evaluate and establish evidence based Oral Health Service Models (OHSM) of oral healthcare for people with disabilities in Ireland. The SMILE team includes a wide variety of people who have come together in a common effort to improve oral health services for people with disabilities in Ireland. These people include dental service providers, disability service providers, special care dental service users, advocacy organisations and policy makers.

#### **Are you an expert?**

Have your say about dental services for people with disabilities and complex health conditions in Ireland, e.g. patients who may have one or more of the following: neurological, mental health, intellectual, developmental, physical disability, and complex medical conditions such as cancer, organ transplant, heart defects etc.

The first step in improving services is deciding what your dental service provider should do. We need your help to make this decision. Project SMILE is currently calling people to register for a panel of experts, called a Delphi pane, made up of experts that can be either service users, providers or advocated who are seen to have expert views on dental services based on their own perspectives. In this instance an expert can be a person with expertise in using services, dealing with services or providing them, and we also encourage service managers and policy makers to become involved in this process. This panel will decide priorities for oral health services for people with disabilities and medical conditions in Ireland.

Project SMILE Ireland is all about change. It is run voluntarily by the ever growing representative team of dedicated service providers and users who aim to improve services in this area. The team will develop goals for these services and design service models based on these goals. The hope is that these service models can be tried to see if they are effective. Ultimately this should give good evidence for how dental care to people with disabilities in Ireland should be provided. The SMILE team has a large number of influential people already and welcomes others who share the same vision.

For further information on the aims and goals of Project SMILE, or if you think that you can, help please contact the SMILE team. There are many roles that you can play in this

process. The responsibility and input expected for each role varies greatly. These can range from submitting to become an expert in our Delphi Panel, to joining the Steering Group which has greater responsibility for the project. Different roles will appear throughout the process. To find out more about joining now email [info@projectsmileireland.com](mailto:info@projectsmileireland.com), Tel: 016127337

## NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY

### Joint DESSA and DFI Project

#### Accredited and Non Accredited Advocacy Training

DFI has come together with the Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency (DESSA) to offer individuals the opportunity of non-accredited and FETAC Level 6 accredited advocacy training.

- Do you want to know more about how to advocate on your own behalf or behalf of someone you know who has a disability or chronic disabling condition?
- Do you want to learn more about the tools, resources and attitudes that may support you in representing your needs and or the needs of those around you in your own lives or when engaging with your local organisation, community, local authority, HSE or other representative fora?
- Do you want to meet other people facing the same challenges to advocacy as yourself?
- Do you know of someone in your organisation that may benefit from this training?

This project is linked to DFI's recent project "Supporting Organisations for Mainstreaming: A Listening and Changing Project". Further information on DFI and our work is available from our website [www.disability-federation.ie](http://www.disability-federation.ie)

Please contact DFI as soon as possible to secure places on these extremely practical, action based training courses.

**Training courses:**

- Empowering Parents – a six day course for parents of children with disabilities. This course has started and will run in different towns throughout the South East until the end of October. For queries contact Kay Teehan on 087 3534432 or email [advocacy@dessa.ie](mailto:advocacy@dessa.ie).
- Practical Self Advocacy – a seven day non-accredited programme. Training will commence Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> October and will run until mid December 2012. Deadline for applications is Friday 12th October.
- Community Development & Advocacy - a six day accredited FETAC Level 6 Programme developed by DESSA and accredited through IT Sligo. Training will commence late January 2013 and run till May 2013. Deadline for applications is Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

Training will be provided **free of charge** in the **DFI Office, Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8.**

For an application form and further information please log onto [www.disability-federation.ie](http://www.disability-federation.ie) / contact your local DFI Support Officer / Cathy McGrath direct on 086 3847440.

## **Implementing the National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities**

DFI is looking for ways to give momentum to the National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities Strategy's Implementation Framework, published in July by the Environment and Health Departments, despite the difficult economic conditions. We seek progress both for people in residential accommodation getting the choice of living in the community and for those with housing need who live in the community to have access to appropriate housing and supports. A particular concern is the limited and patchy nature of the information about housing need amongst people trying to gain or maintain their own home.

- DFI is making a submission to the HSE's National Consultative Forum highlighting how that consultative structure can contribute to balanced and equitable implementation of the Housing Strategy.
- The Department of the Environment invited DFI to nominate a representative of people with physical and sensory disabilities including neurological conditions, to join the group chaired by the Housing Agency to guide implementation of the Strategy. The nomination process is underway, and will be completed in time for the representative to participate in the group's next meeting, scheduled for 25 October.

- We highlight the importance of anticipating Irish ratification of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and responding to its provisions about the right to 'independent living'.
- DFI Support Officers are active in supporting initiatives at the local level. In Dublin City Council, for example, an ad hoc steering group has been established which is exploring practical measures that can be taken to get more people into disabled housing.

The Housing Strategy envisions an environment where people with disabilities have housing choices as others do, and we in the disability sector need to press hard to ensure that this drives policy. The vision is to “facilitate access, for people with disabilities, to the appropriate range of housing and related support services, delivered in an integrated and sustainable manner, which promotes equality of opportunity, individual choice and independent living”

**Critical to our capacity to maintain the priority of advancing towards the vision will be engagement by voluntary organisations and from people with disabilities**, initially in supporting seminars and other vehicles for profiling and advancing this policy commitment.

Anyone interested in being connected with DFI's work in this area, please contact [martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie](mailto:martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie), [lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie) or [pjcleere@disability-federation.ie](mailto:pjcleere@disability-federation.ie)

## Referendum on Children in the Constitution

Minister Frances Fitzgerald has announced the wording of the 'children' amendment to the Constitution, with the referendum to be held on 10 November. The amendment, while not bringing major changes for most children with disabilities, is expected to promote a more constructive approach to protecting children and supporting families. It has been endorsed by, amongst others, the Children's Rights Alliance, a grouping of over one hundred organisations working to secure the rights of children in Ireland.

The new Article 42a focuses on the child, and amongst other things, requires the State to use proportionate means in the provision of care services to children. This encourages care workers to engage with families that are struggling at an earlier stage before a situation



reaches a crisis point. Decisions in child care cases brought by the State as well as decisions relating to adoption, guardianship, custody and access will be taken in the best interests of the child. There are other useful changes incorporated in the Article, none of which undermine the place of the family in the Constitution.

The modernisation of the State's approach to care is welcome from the perspective of families with a disabled child or children. However, it is disappointing that the Amendment does not create wider obligations on the State regarding social services, for example extending to education and health. But the fact that a group who have long been marginalised is finally receiving due respect is very positive.

For further information about the Children's Referendum, click [www.dcy.gov.ie](http://www.dcy.gov.ie)

## **Briefing on the Children's Rights Referendum for the Disability Sector**

**Venue: Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI),**

**Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8**

**Date: 31<sup>st</sup> October 2012**

**Time: 11am – 1pm**

A light lunch will be provided afterwards

The Children's Rights Alliance is hosting a briefing with the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) on the upcoming Children's Referendum.

The briefing is aimed at service users, parents, advocates and those working in disability organisations.

We would value the opportunity to meet with you to discuss issues that relate to you in relation the referendum, which takes place on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2012.

To reserve your place contact John Doyle at [johndoyle@disability-federation.ie](mailto: johndoyle@disability-federation.ie) or phone (01) 4547978 by Monday 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2012.

Who is the **Children's Right Alliance (CRA)**? CRA is a coalition of over 100 organisations working to secure the rights of children in Ireland and we believe very strongly in the need for constitutional change. We believe that this referendum can make a real and positive difference to children and their families in Ireland and has the potential to be a great step towards making Ireland one of the best places in the world to be a child.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Sanctuary a New Play by Christian O'Reilly

#### What if the cinema was the only sanctuary for your relationship?

Sanctuary's world premiere will take place at the Galway Theatre Festival this October. Commissioned by Blue Teapot this poignant, funny and bittersweet play opens the window into the lives and relationships of people with intellectual disabilities (ID) and the obstacles they must overcome to be together.

An ordinary trip to the cinema and a welcome break from their training centre provides an opportunity for Larry and Sophie to steal away and be together at last. But now that they're alone, what are they going to say and do?

Director Petal Pilley says 'My hope in commissioning this play was to present a living tragedy that demands discussion, awareness and a more enlightened response from our society towards the sexuality and relationships of adults with ID'.

Playwright Christian O'Reilly is well known for *The Good Father* (Druid Theatre) and *Is This About Sex?* Winner of Best Theatre Script 2008 Irish Writers Guild Awards

In *Sanctuary*, Christian has created characters that struggle within constraints of dependant living, looking to find privacy and space to express sexual and romantic fulfillment. Each character individually tries to deal with this reality and the situation in their own life.

This production is not suitable for children as it explores the subject of intimate relationships and sexuality.

Proudly supported by: Brothers of Charity Galway, Ability West, The Ireland Funds, Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Galway City Council, and Galway County Council

**Booking Information:** In Galway Theatre Festival: Box Office for GTF contact: Town Hall Theatre, 091-569-777 or online [www.tht.ie/bookings](http://www.tht.ie/bookings)

Click on this link for dates, details and booking information:

<http://www.bluteapot.ie/general/sanctuary-box-office-open/>

## **Need someone to talk to?...**

**If you ever feel down and need someone to talk to, Samaritans are there for you.**

The Samaritans helpline has been in operation in Ireland for 50 years – providing emotional support to anyone that needs someone to listen to them. There are times when we all need a listening ear – someone who'll listen to us without judgement and in confidence – when we don't want someone to tell us what to do, but just to be there while we express how we're feeling – particularly when times are tough.

We know that life is worth talking about and encourage people to call us, long before they might reach that point where they feel suicide is their only option.

Samaritans are there to listen 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You can call Samaritans on **1850609090**, text on **087 2609090**, email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) or call in to your local branch. There are 20 Samaritan branches on the island of Ireland – 8 in Northern Ireland and 12 in the Republic. Most are open for callers during day time hours.

Check out [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org) for more information.

Remember too that Samaritans are always looking for volunteers. Keep an eye out in your local press for details of Information Evenings or contact your local branch to find out when their next recruitment drive will be on. We need people who can listen, or people who can help with fund-raising, outreach and publicity. If you have something to offer, why not give us a call?

Samaritans would like to congratulate all those who competed in the Paralympics this year and we would be delighted if any competitor would like to come on board and help us raise awareness of our organisation

### ***Life's Worth Talking About...***

## **One Day Symposium entitled 'The Wounded Body: Human Vulnerability and Disability in a Finite World'**

This year, the Michael Devlin Lecture will be held as part of the Symposium and will be delivered by Professor Julia Kristeva (Université Paris Diderot)

Venue: Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth

Date: 29<sup>th</sup> September 2012

Further information for this event is available from Saint Patrick's College Maynooth on 01-7084700 or by calling The Irish Centre for Faith and Culture on 01-7083349 or by e-mail @ [icfc@spcm.ie](mailto:icfc@spcm.ie)

## AONTAS STAR Awards 2013

The STAR Awards are an awards initiative coordinated by AONTAS as part of the annual Adult Learners' Festival. The awards acknowledge the fantastic work undertaken by adult learning projects throughout Ireland and celebrate the positive contribution that these projects make to our society, our economy and our local communities. Five awards in total will be granted to adult learning projects based within the island of Ireland - four regional awards (Leinster, Munster, Connaught, Ulster) and one nationwide award.

Nominations are welcome from projects themselves, from people directly involved in the project or from people who think the project is just a great initiative and deserves to be nominated. In the last case it is important to inform the project that you are nominating them. Nominated projects can involve initiatives, resources or group work. Projects may come from adult learning organisations, community and voluntary groups, the private sector, government agencies, statutory bodies and non-government organisations.

The deadline for nominating projects is **Monday, 19th November 2012 at 5pm.**

Nominators are encouraged to nominate their projects as early as possible and it is easy to nominate online! Just click [here](#).

For more information on how to nominate visit [www.adultlearnersfestival.com](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com) or get in touch with Kathryn, Festival Operations Officer at [klaing@aontas.com](mailto:klaing@aontas.com)

The Adult Learners' Festival 2013 is kindly supported by the [Department of Education and Skills](#).

Kathryn Laing Festival Operations Officer AONTAS National Adult Learning Organisation  
2nd Floor 83-87 Main Street Ranelagh Dublin 6

Ph: 01 4068220 Fax: 01-4068227

[www.aontas.com](http://www.aontas.com)

[www.adultlearnersfestival.com](http://www.adultlearnersfestival.com)

## The Autism Jigsaw Seminar 2012

The Autism Jigsaw Seminar 2012 will take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of October in the Maryborough Hotel and Spa in Cork. Tickets cost €25 for adults and €15 for students. Group discounts apply. A variety of professionals will be speaking at the event, including Dr. Mickey Keenan, Dr. Ken Karr and Laura Crowley of the Shine Centre for Autism.

To find out more or to purchase tickets, please visit

<http://www.autismjigsaw.com/autismjigsaw.html>.

***Do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss this further.***

Aileen Cruise, Aspire Development Officer Phone: 01 8780027

Email: [development@aspireireland.ie](mailto:development@aspireireland.ie)

Web: [www.aspireireland.ie](http://www.aspireireland.ie)

# 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](mailto:info@iasbah.ie)

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Newsletter, Tel 01 2804164 email: [cbrack@abiireland.ie](mailto:cbrack@abiireland.ie)

[http://www.abiireland.ie/docs/ABII\\_Newsletter\\_Spring\\_2010.pdf](http://www.abiireland.ie/docs/ABII_Newsletter_Spring_2010.pdf)

Arthritis Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 01 661 8188

E-mail: [info@arthritisireland.ie](mailto:info@arthritisireland.ie)

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

Asthma Society News - Tel: 01-8788511,

E-mail: [office@asthmasociety.ie](mailto:office@asthmasociety.ie)

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

E-mail: [info@migraine.ie](mailto:info@migraine.ie)

Brainwave - Quarterly Newsletter, Tel: 01 4557500, E-mail: [info@epilepsy.ie](mailto:info@epilepsy.ie)

Care Alliance Ireland - E-mail: [ndo@carealliance.ie](mailto:ndo@carealliance.ie)

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

Cleft Lip and Palate Association of Ireland - [www.cleft.ie/newsletter/index.htm](http://www.cleft.ie/newsletter/index.htm), Tel: (01) 2848227,

E-mail: [georginawade@cleft.ie](mailto:georginawade@cleft.ie)

Community Exchange Newsletter, E-mail: [info@activelink.ie](mailto:info@activelink.ie)

Tel: +1 667 7326

Connect - Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association. E-mail: [info@imnda.ie](mailto:info@imnda.ie) Freefone 1800 403 403

Community Workers' Co-operative – Community Work News. E-mail: [info@cwci.ie](mailto: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](mailto:homeless@dublincity.ie)

Cumhacht - People with Disabilities in Ireland [http://www.pwdi.ie/news\\_events/newsletter/index.htm](http://www.pwdi.ie/news_events/newsletter/index.htm), E-mail: [info@pwdi.ie](mailto:info@pwdi.ie) Tel: 01-8721744

Debra Ireland Newsletter, Tel: 01 678 5044, E-mail: [info@debraireland.org](mailto:info@debraireland.org)

Down Syndrome Ireland - Tel: 01-8730999, E-mail: [info@downsyndrome.ie](mailto:info@downsyndrome.ie)

Enable Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 1850 204 304 E-mail: [communications@enableireland.ie](mailto:communications@enableireland.ie)

Equality News - Tel: 01-4173333, E-mail: [info@equality.ie](mailto:info@equality.ie)

E-Info Deaf Source— E-mail: [info@irishdeafsociety.ie](mailto: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](mailto:info@feach.ie)

Fighting Blindness - Tel: 01 7093050, E-mail: [avril.daly@fightingblindness.ie](mailto:avril.daly@fightingblindness.ie)

Frontline of Learning Disability -Tel: 01-2862649. E-mail: [frontline@indigo.ie](mailto:frontline@indigo.ie)

GROWing - Information on Mental Health, Tel: 1890 474 474, E-mail: [info@grow.ie](mailto:info@grow.ie)

Guidelines - Irish Guide Dogs Association. Tel: 021 4878200 E-mail: [info@guidedogs.ie](mailto:info@guidedogs.ie)

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

Heart News: - Newsletter of Irish Heart Foundation. Tel: 01 668 5001 E-mail: [info@irishheart.ie](mailto:info@irishheart.ie)

Heartstrings - Newsletter of Heart Children Ireland, published quarterly, Tel: 1850 217017

E-mail: [heartchildren@eircom.net](mailto:heartchildren@eircom.net)

Heatwave - Irish Raynauds Scleroderma Society, E-mail: [info@irishraynauds.com](mailto:info@irishraynauds.com) Tel: 01 2020184

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

Inclusion Ireland - Tel: 01 8559891,

E-mail: [info@inclusionireland.ie](mailto:info@inclusionireland.ie)

Irish Deaf News - Irish Deaf Society. Minicom: 01-8601910; 01-8601878; E-mail: [info@irishdeafsociety.ie](mailto:info@irishdeafsociety.ie)

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

Kerry Network of People with Disabilities - Network News 066-7180611, E-mail: [kerrypwdi@eircom.net](mailto:kerrypwdi@eircom.net)

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

Muscular Dystrophy Ireland - MDI News Update Tel: 01-6236414, or 01- 6236415 E-mail: [info@mdi.ie](mailto:info@mdi.ie)

DeafHear.ie - Link Magazine - Tel: 01 8723800, E-mail: [info@deafhear.ie](mailto: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](mailto:press@ncbi.ie) [www.ncbi.ie](http://www.ncbi.ie)

Neuro News - Neurofibromatosis Association of Ireland, Tel: 01-8726338, E-mail: [nfairland@eircom.net](mailto:nfairland@eircom.net)

People First - Central Remedial Clinic Tel: 01-8057400 E-mail: [vmcutch@crc.ie](mailto:vmcutch@crc.ie)

Post Polio Support Group - Newsletter, Tel: 071 64791 E-mail: [newsletter@ppsg.ie](mailto:newsletter@ppsg.ie)

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

Rehab News -Tel: 01-2057200 E-mail: [dara.duffy@rehab.ie](mailto:dara.duffy@rehab.ie)

Simon News - Simon Community, Tel: 01-6711606 E-mail: [info@simoncommunity.com](mailto:info@simoncommunity.com)

Shine News - Schizophrenia Ireland, Tel: (0)1 8601620

E-mail: [info@sirl.ie](mailto:info@sirl.ie)

Social Housing - Irish Council for Social Housing Tel: 01-6618334;

E-mail: [info@icsh.ie](mailto:info@icsh.ie)

Sonas aPc – Tel (01) 2608138. [www.sonasapc.ie](http://www.sonasapc.ie).

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

Volunteer Stroke Scheme News- Tel: 01-4559036. E-mail: [info@strokescheme.i](mailto:info@strokescheme.ie)

Wheel E-Bulletin Tel:01- 454 8727,

E-mail: [info@wheel.ie](mailto:info@wheel.ie)





## CONTACTS

### National Office

Fumbally Court Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8  
Tel: 01 454 7978 Fax: 01 494 7981  
E: [info@disability-federation.ie](mailto:info@disability-federation.ie)

### Dublin Mid-Leinster

Anthony Carrick  
Dun Laoghaire, Dublin South East, Wicklow  
(Dublin Office),  
Mobile: 086 8206736  
E: [anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie](mailto:anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie)

Louise McCann  
Dublin South City, Dublin South West, Dublin  
West, Kildare, West Wicklow (Dublin Office)  
Mobile: 086 9189750  
E: [louisemccann@disability-federation.ie](mailto:louisemccann@disability-federation.ie)

Jacqueline Grogan (On leave please call Dublin  
Office)  
Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath  
Tel: 01 454 7978 Fax: 01 494 7981  
E: [jacquelinegrogan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:jacquelinegrogan@disability-federation.ie)

Lillian Buchanan  
Support Officer – Policy and Research (Dublin  
Office)  
Tel: 01 424 0127  
E: [lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie)

Joan O'Connor  
Policy and Research Assistant,  
Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8  
Tel: 01-4250121  
E: [joanoconnor@disability-federation.ie](mailto:joanoconnor@disability-federation.ie)

Dermot O'Donnell  
Support Officer – Support for Organisations  
(Dublin Office)  
Tel: 01-4250125  
E: [dermotodonnell@disability-federation.ie](mailto:dermotodonnell@disability-federation.ie)

### Dublin North-East

Joan O'Donnell  
Meath, Louth, Cavan, Monaghan (On leave  
please call Dublin Office) 01 4547978  
E: [joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie](mailto:joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie)

Martin Naughton  
Dublin North Central, Dublin North, Dublin West  
Mobile: 086 8207196  
E: [martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie](mailto:martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie)

### West

Michael Corbett,  
Galway, Mayo, Roscommon  
C/O DFI, 8 Acres Grove, Newport, Co. Mayo,  
Tel: 098 41919,  
Mobile: 086 3804750,  
Fax: 098 41065,  
E: [michaelcorbett@disability-federation.ie](mailto:michaelcorbett@disability-federation.ie)

### North-West

Jennifer Van Aswegen  
Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal  
Disability Federation of Ireland  
Model Niland, The Mall, Sligo  
Co Sligo  
Mob: 086 3811261  
E: [jennifervanaswegen@disability-federation.ie](mailto:jennifervanaswegen@disability-federation.ie)

Toni Gleeson,  
Limerick, North Tipperary, East Limerick, Clare  
DFI, The Forge, Croke St. Thurles, Co Tipperary  
Mobile: 086 6004526  
E: [tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie](mailto:tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie)

### South

P.J. Cleere  
Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford,  
Wexford  
DFI, Tinryland, Carlow  
Tel: 059 9179431  
Mobile: 086 3811064  
E: [picleere@disability-federation.ie](mailto:picleere@disability-federation.ie)

Alison Ryan  
Cork, Kerry  
101 North Main Street, Cork  
Tel: 021 4271752 Mobile 086 3816323  
E: [a.ryan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:a.ryan@disability-federation.ie)



**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 130 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.

For further information go to [www.disability-federation.ie](http://www.disability-federation.ie)

Disability Federation of Ireland, Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8

Tel: 01-4547978, Fax: 01-4547981

Email: [info@disability-federation.ie](mailto:info@disability-federation.ie) Web: [www.disability-federation.ie](http://www.disability-federation.ie)

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