



Disability Federation of Ireland

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

NEWSLETTER – July – August 2013

Government Needs to Commit to People with Disabilities

In the final Prime Time debate before the General Election in 2011, both Eamon Gilmore and Enda Kenny stated that, if they were in government, they would prioritise people with disabilities as their number one social justice issue. Two years later, it is fair to say that the Government has not lived up to this commitment.

People with disabilities have been hit hard over the past number of years. Government has shown a complete lack of understanding of the challenges facing people with disabilities in trying to live an ordinary life, consistently chipping away at vital services and supports.

2012 saw one of the harshest years for people with disabilities. Key budget plans in health failed to materialize, deficits rose, and major cuts to disability services were announced by the Department of Health. Meanwhile, funding for mental health and other disability services was transferred to other parts of the health system which had incurred significant deficits.

2013 has not been any easier. The changes to the Mobility Allowance and the Motorised Transport Grant dealt a further blow to people with disabilities, along with the cuts to special needs assistance, respite care grants and housing adaptation grants, and the fact that there are now not enough day places for school-leavers with intellectual disabilities.

However, as well as being affected by these cuts to disability-specific supports, people with disabilities are also substantially impacted by cutbacks to mainstream social and health services which they need to access. This is an unfair double hit, a major issue which cannot be ignored.

It is unacceptable that people with disabilities have to fight for the services and support they are entitled to. After five years of austerity, the Government now needs to act on the commitment it made to the disability movement, by putting plans in place to begin the restoration of these supports, and working in close partnership with disability and other organisations to make the full inclusion of people with disabilities a reality.

John Dolan, Chief Executive Officer

DFI Submits Its 2014 Budget Recommendations to Government

DFI views the Budget as the Government's expression of its priorities for the coming year. In this regard, we are recommending that the Government:

1. **Protects the basic standard of living of people with disabilities.** This means recognising the extra costs that people with disabilities incur living in one's home, in maintaining one's health, accessing education and employment, and in travel.
2. **Introduces no more cuts to disability services** and prioritises investment in community living.
3. **Prioritises investment in public services**, such as health, education, employment, transport and housing services, to make them appropriate and accessible for people with disabilities.

Work on our Budget campaign continued with the finalisation of budgetary letters which were sent to various Ministers (Education and Skills, Health, Transport, Environment, Community, and Local Government).

A separate approach was used for the Department of Social Protection in the context of their call for a pre-budget submission by the 7th June, 2013. The submission called for the protection of basic payments, protection of secondary payments that contribute to alleviating the cost of disability, introduction of the Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities, and equality of access to mainstream activation measures.

After five years of cumulative, stringent measures, where social inclusion outcomes for people have become less of a priority than financial outcomes, we consider that the time is long overdue to rebalance the Government's recovery programme.

We cannot accept the reduction of the government deficit as a marker of success, when it is at the expense of a damaged social infrastructure and the creation of further inequalities in society.

Please take time to read our Pre-Budget Submission 2014 at this link <http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=10710>, a copy of which has been posted to every member of the Oireachtas.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HR & Employment Law Update

The Disability Federation of Ireland, together with Adare Human Resource Management, operates a support structure which allows member organisations to exclusively avail of discounted Human Resource and Employment Law Support Services.

Employment Law and HR Services At A Glance

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

Adare Human Resource Management provides these services to a large number of organisations within the community and voluntary sector.

Organisations are supported by ensuring legal compliance in their practices, policies and procedures, and thus minimizing the risk of exposure to legal challenges.

For more information on this service, please get in touch with your DFI Support Officer or contact Derek McKay at dmckay@adarehrm.ie or on 01-612 7092.

Employment Equality: The Burden of Proof

The area of Employment Equality plays an important role in safeguarding the employment rights of people with disabilities, and, as such, is regulated at both national and European levels.

The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2011 seek to protect both employees and applicants for employment from discrimination. Discrimination occurs where a person is treated less favourably than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation due to one of nine protected grounds, including disability.

The Employment Equality Acts outline the steps to be taken in any proceedings by or on behalf of a Complainant who believes that he or she has been discriminated against by the Respondent (employer).

In the first instance, the Complainant must prove that it can be inferred from facts that discriminatory treatment was suffered on one of the nine protected grounds listed above. This is known as establishing a 'prima facie' case.

Three elements are necessary in order to successfully determine that a Complainant has established a prima facie case of discrimination:

- The discriminatory ground must apply to the particular case. The Complainant must establish that they have been discriminated against on one of the nine grounds themselves, or because they are associated with someone who is covered under the nine grounds.
- The discrimination was enacted by the Respondent, and the incident occurred while the individual was in employment or seeking employment with the Respondent.
- The treatment received by the Complainant was less favourable than the treatment which would have been received in similar circumstances by someone not covered by the ground.

Once the complaint meets all of the above criteria, the burden of proof falls onto the Respondent to prove that they did not discriminate against the employee or potential employee.

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

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

GOALS OF THE EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY ACTS

- Promote equality and prohibit victimisation
- Prohibit discrimination (with some exemptions) across the nine protected grounds of Gender, Civil Status, Family Status, Sexual Orientation, Religious Belief, Age, Disability, Race and Membership of the Traveller community.
- Prohibit sexual harassment and harassment.
- Ensure there are appropriate measures in place for people with disabilities in relation to employment access, participation and training.
- Allow positive action measures to ensure full equality in practice across the nine protected grounds.

Disability Services Discussed At National Consultative Forum

The Mobility Allowance and access to education for people with disabilities were among the topics discussed at the meeting of the National Consultative Forum on Disability (NCF) on 10th July.

The NCF encompasses representative organisations and agencies from across the disability sector, working with the Health Service Executive (HSE) to develop and promote disability service provision.

Updates

A brief update was given on the Mobility Allowance, with DFI highlighting the fact that no discussions have been held over the Motorised Transport Grant. It was decided that a future NCF meeting will deliberate on Value for Money and the Service Arrangements with Pat Healy, Director of Social Care. The HSE will release a paper by Tom Beegan on the implementation of the Value for Money report in the voluntary sector upon completion of its review.

During a discussion about school leavers, DFI argued that short-term solutions have to be found every year but there is still no evidence of a longer-term solution, suggesting that multi-annual planning is needed. DFI emphasised that, in terms of accessing education, training and employment places, the expectations of people with disabilities and their families have been raised. However, the reality of such accessibility is set against a context of limited resources and short-term planning.

The point was made that the NCF should focus on policy and planning issues, rather than operational issues. In this regard, DFI underlined the fact that we continue to look at only one area of unmet need, signifying that, while unmet need in relation to personal assistance and other supports is not the focus for the NCF, it should remain a consideration.

With regards to employment, Cate Hartigan informed the forum that Minister Lynch has asked Christy Lynch, founder of the Irish Union of Supported Employment, and the National Disability Authority to work on the development of a Comprehensive Employment Strategy. A working group, reporting its developments to the Cabinet and the Taoiseach, will be established. DFI noted a 'stalling' has taken place with regard to the Strategy, whereby

neither the Department of Social Protection nor the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation are willing to take responsibility for the Strategy.

Finally, news was given that, due to changes within the structures of the HSE, Pat Healy has been appointed as the new Director of Social Care and Cate Hartigan will move to the Directorate of Health and Well-Being. As legislation on this re-structuring (under the HSE (Governance) Bill 2012) remains with the President, the commencement date for the new framework has yet to be announced.

HIQA Presentations

Colm Desmond of the Department of Health gave a presentation on the Health Information and Quality Authority's (HIQA) Draft Regulations. Responding to concerns that the regulations prioritise placement over the individual, Mr Desmond outlined that the Department will review the most appropriate ways to apply the regulations in the context of de-congregation. DFI noted that people should not be placed in these centres just because of a lack of adequate supports to enable community living.

DFI also reminded the forum that there are misplaced people living in nursing homes which are subject to regulations for older people's homes, rather than regulations relating to disability which have a 'care and welfare' focus. In response, HIQA said that standards for older people's homes are currently under revision, and that a disability component will be included. In terms of future provision, Cate Hartigan added that, while the model (Standards) is welcomed, it would not be replicated if a person is living in their own home. She asserted that the service a person receives should be quality-assured regardless of its nature or of where the person lives.

A presentation on a new 18-module programme in Quality Improvement for disability services was also delivered by Marie Kehoe O'Sullivan, HIQA's Director of Safety and Quality Improvement. HIQA will launch the programme, called 'Train The Trainers', in January 2014, after developing case studies so that its language can be made more applicable to Social Care.

DFI suggested that the case studies could be informed by work done by 'soft' services in supporting connections with numerous other bodies and entities, such as local authorities. Organisations feel that this work is not properly understood. In relation to long-term conditions, excellent self-management initiatives are in place, which could also instruct the case studies. A sub-group of the NCF will be established on the Standards.

DFI Welcomes Publication of the NDS Implementation Plan

The Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) welcomed the publication of the National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan (NDSIP) on 23 July, but expressed concern and disappointment at its shortcomings.

The NDSIP gives a re-commitment to the high level goals of people with disabilities being treated as equal citizens, independence and choice, participation, and maximising potential. However, DFI feels that there are a number of areas in which the plan falls short of what Ireland has committed to achieving for people with disabilities.

John Dolan, CEO of the organisation, stated that “overall, it lacks ambition and does not include many of the priority actions which DFI have suggested since the start of the drafting process for the Plan. For example, there is no priority given to the important role played by existing community services and supports funded through the HSE, and other Departments, that enable people’s access and participation in life in the community. Equally, there is no mention of supports such as Personal Assistance, a vital support in independent living for many people.”

He outlined concern that the Government lacks the ambition to pursue the goals laid out in the National Disability Strategy (NDS), with the problem of inadequate public service reform underpinning the situation. “There is a conflict between the actions stated in the NDSIP, and the reality of Government decisions that have been taken over the past number of years”. DFI contends that the timelines for achieving the various Departmental actions are too weak, with an over-reliance on the word ‘on-going’. This makes it extremely difficult to monitor progress on the actions stated within the plan. A whole of government approach is needed to fulfil the commitments made. DFI hopes that the structures established to support new ways of working will achieve this.

Mr Dolan concluded that, “although we welcome this Implementation Plan, we strongly believe that people with disabilities deserve better. Ireland has signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and is set to ratify it shortly. Robust implementation of the Strategy and more will be required if Ireland is to fulfil its obligations under the Convention”.

Local Implementation of the National Disability Strategy

DFI continues to deliver information and training workshops to statutory and voluntary organisations on Local Government Reform and its links to the NDS and UNCRPD implementation. Direct links to moving people out of Congregated Settings into the community are also highlighted and partnership approaches are encouraged between the voluntary disability sector the broader C&V sector and statutory agencies.

DFI is currently exploring the experiences of UK organisations who have been working with Local Government structures for a number of years in a bid to inform best practice in the development of new structures here. In addition DFI is exploring the process through which colleagues in the Netherlands developed and funded a training programme with Local Government on the implementation of the UNCRPD at local level.

DFI is investigating academic links to the process of Local Government Reform and is seeking collaboration with relevant Third Level institutions.

It is proposed to hold a conference on Local Government Reform in early 2014.

GENERAL INFORMATION

New Pop-Up Park in Dublin Gets DFI Seal of Approval

Impressed by the positive attitude towards people with disabilities from those behind Granby Park, a new pop-up park in Dublin city, DFI's Martin Naughton shares his enthusiasm for the project.

“Granby Park is an initiative by a voluntary arts collective called Upstart. For one month from 22 August, a vacant space on Dominick Street Lower in Dublin city centre will be transformed into a popup park, a space that will be free to the public and will hold various activities and events.

I had been asked to visit the site and offer any advice I could in terms of its accessibility. Although I told the organisers that there were others with far more technical expertise in this matter, I went along to see what I could do.

On 19 August, I went to a building at the address, only to be greeted by a big flight of stairs as soon as the door opened. After some toing and froing, I discovered that Upstart is actually based in the attic of this building. I'd like to pretend at this stage that no part of me was boiling, but the real truth is that I planned on giving a piece of my mind. When I was greeted by Naomi from Upstart, my opening remark was a very pleasant "this is not a great start". Yes, I set the tone – or, at least, those steps set the tone.

Excellent Attitude

However, the tone quickly changed once Naomi walked me around to the space where the project is held. It had been transformed from a vacant lot into a popup park. At the time, the conversion was still on-going, involving a lot of planting and the establishment of both an arts corner and a theatre centre.

My initial impression of the project was the thoughtfulness from the whole team of volunteers, who all had a genuinely excellent attitude. It was evident they had already given so much consideration to disability: any barriers to accessibility were seen as precisely that, challenges that could be faced by a team of people ready to find a solution. I went halfway around the site when I had to stop and say that there was nothing that I could improve on.

As we carried on, more people gathered around who, without exception, shared the same positive attitude. They want people with disabilities to come and enjoy this pop-up park throughout its one-month opening. They are determined that there will be no segregated arrangements.

Making Accessibility A Priority

For example, they pointed out that, because the main toilets aren't accessible, they had initially considered advising people to use the accessible bathrooms in the nearby Ilac Centre. But no, they decided that's not good enough for them, so they are bringing an accessible portable toilet on-site. It is great to see what lots of enthusiasm and determination can achieve on a very limited budget.

Plans for accessibility are in place so that everyone can enjoy this space. People with visual impairment, for example, will have one or two volunteers sit with them to go through the activities and describe what's going on, as well as encouraging other people to support in this way as well. For small groups of young people who may want to visit the park together, this is especially helpful.

Upstart also wants to support children who are deaf, and encourage them to come along – not on a special day, but on any and every day. However, it would be great if somebody could help with some sign language support as they can't afford to provide this service. They don't need fully-qualified interpreters to be with the children, just people who work with children who are hard of hearing and could volunteer some time.

Encouraging Support

It's obvious by now that all of my boiling points had cooled off, and I can only say again how impressed I am with this particular project. It requires all of the encouragement that we and our member organisations can give, and, of course, the best support is to show up and use the space they have created. They are really determined to learn from this experience, and hope that others can come and learn from it as well. I would love to hear from anybody, particularly young people, who visits the park to get their perspective on it".

Granby Park is located in a formerly vacant lot on Dominick Street Lower, opening for four weeks from 22 August. There are two or three wheelchair parking spots near the junction close to the park. From Monday to Friday, it will open from 8am to 7pm, and opens from 10am to 7pm at the weekend. For more information and news of upcoming events, visit www.granbypark.com or email hello@upstart.ie. To contact Martin, call 086 820 7196, or email martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie.

Advocacy Training Course in Popular Demand

DFI and DESSA are teaming together to offer a course on '**Community Development, Disability Equality and Advocacy Training**', in light of the success of recent joint training initiatives.

The course, accredited through IT Sligo, will be delivered in Galway over six full days between September and November 2013. Although this session course is currently fully subscribed, Cathy McGrath of DFI explains that the programme will be offered again in 2014.

Grounded in principles of disability equality, the course focuses on community development and advocacy, enabling participants to advance their knowledge in these areas. The course also develops practical skills in self-advocacy and group representation. It aims to facilitate

participants in learning how to effectively represent their own opinion and the interests of people with disabilities in a wide variety of settings.

The course was previously held between January and March earlier this year. Robert Vaughan, a member of Muscular Dystrophy Ireland (MDI), was one of twenty participants, describing it as a beneficial and informative experience. “It made me think, are we disabled by society and the barriers it puts in our way?”.

Mr Vaughan found the course helpful in understanding the development of disability policy in Ireland, as well as the principle concepts of advocacy and its role within the community. He stated that “I was given confidence; I felt I knew more about the subject matter”.

For further information or queries on the Advocacy Training Course, contact Cathy McGrath on 086 384 7440, or email events@disability-federation.ie.

Muscular Dystrophy Ireland to Host Information Sharing Day

Muscular Dystrophy Ireland (MDI) has announced an All-Ireland Research and Information Sharing Day to be held on 21st September.

The event will be co-hosted with the Northern Ireland Council of Muscular Dystrophy Campaign in the City North Hotel, Gormanstown, Co Meath.

Experts speakers due to participate include Professor Orla Hardiman, Professor Richard Costello, and Professor Dominic Wells. Afternoon workshops on nutrition and physiotherapy will also take place. Activities for children between the ages of six and sixteen are available if booked before 13 September.

The event marks the first cross-border conference on neuromuscular conditions in Ireland, aiming to share information and research news from both sides.

MDI hope that the conference will signal the beginning of new links and initiatives between the two hosting organisations.

The conference will be held between 10am and 4pm on Saturday, 21 September. For more information or to make a booking, contact Ann-Marie Coen on 01-623 6414 or email annmarie@mdi.ie.

Booking Open for New Boardmatch Ireland Training Events

Boardmatch Ireland has released a calendar outlining its training and events schedule for 2013. Collaborating with DFI and the Association for Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), Boardmatch works to develop the community and voluntary sector in Ireland by strengthening Boards and management committees.

Boardmatch Training Event Schedule

Board Member Induction Training

21 September and 15 November
9.30am-4pm - €120 per person

Board Leadership: Behaviour, Techniques and Compliance

3 October – 9am-5pm
€150 per person

CEO & Chairs Training

8 October - 9.30am-4.15pm
€300 per organisation

Communication Strategy for Boards

22 October – 9am-12.30pm
€80 per person

Fundraising: The Role of the Board

24 October – 9.30am-12.30pm
€80 per person

Owner Management Company Training

21 September, 26 October, and 23 November
9.30am-4pm - €165 per person

Upcoming courses include Board Member Induction Training, CEO & Chairs Training, and Communication Strategy for Boards, amongst others. All training takes place in Dublin on dates between September and November 2013, with costs for the individual courses running between €80 and €165.

Boardmatch's training is designed to improve the governance capacity of the voluntary sector, combining theory with practice to ensure that participants can easily implement what they learn in their organisation.

In addition, its free online matching service matches people from the corporate and public sectors willing to volunteer at Board level to non-profit organisations which would benefit from their skills. 900 matches have been made in this way to date. Training is suitable for not-for-profit boards and committees, senior staff and CEOs, as well as new and established board members.

All bookings can be made online by clicking a link at the bottom of the description of each course in the new calendar, with discounts available for multiple bookings. Boardmatch advise early booking to avoid disappointment.

The calendar can be found at <http://www.boardmatchireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/BMI-Training-Calendar-2013-Final.pdf>. For more information, visit www.boardmatchireland.ie, call 01 671 5005, or contact Eva Gurn at eva@boardmatchireland.ie.

Charities Evaluation Services Offer New Training Opportunities

Consultant trainers from the Charities Evaluation Services (CES) are set to deliver a number of new courses in conjunction with the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) in the coming months. The courses, individually focused on outcomes monitoring, data analysis and implementation of PQASSO, will be held in the DFI Head Office on a series of dates between October and December 2013.

The courses include:

- **How to Choose an Outcomes Monitoring Database - One-day**
Tuesday 22nd October 2013
- **How to Collect, Analyse, Present and Use Data – Two day**
Wednesday and Thursday, 23rd and 24th October 2013
- **Implementing PQASSO – Two Day**
Wednesday and Thursday, 4th & 5th December 2013

The training is designed to teach participants ways to support their monitoring and evaluation, centring on real-life, up-to-date case studies. Prices for the courses range between €140 for the one-day courses and €275 for those taking place over two days. Discounts may be available for group bookings.

Places have filled quickly for previous sessions, so early booking is advised. More detailed information on the courses can be found at <http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=10635>. To register for a place, contact Eleanor Uí Fhiannacta at eleanoruifhiannacta@disability-federation.ie. For more information on the courses, contact Dermot O'Donnell on 086-7808639 or email dermotodonnell@disability-federation.ie.

UCIT Rolls Out Social Finance Scheme Across Republic of Ireland

Ulster Community Investment Trust (UCIT) has extended its Social Finance Loan provision to all community-based bodies across the Republic of Ireland.

The group, which provides social finance, business support and mentoring to the social and community sector, previously focused its work in the border region.

This nationwide expansion came about in recognition of the difficulties many community organisations are facing in accessing mainstream credit to fund and develop their projects.

As a consequence of cutbacks and lower grant support from government, Social Finance is now a vital resource for many such organisations. UCIT's decision will allow many more groups to avail of its loan facilities and other supports.

Available loans generally range between €30,000 to €500,000. Approval depends on several criteria, namely that the proposed investment provides for an immediate social impact.

Any profits generated must also be re-invested into the organisation, and all assets involved must be held in a community interest. In turn, as a registered charity, all profits raised by UCIT are re-invested further into the community and social enterprise sector.

The group takes a flexible approach in its loan provision, granting them to organisations for the purposes of purchasing buildings and equipment, funding working capital and cash shortfalls, or allowing restructuring of debt, among other reasons.

Those which have already benefited include community transport projects, housing associations, training initiatives and childcare schemes.

For more information on UCIT and to see testimonials from its clients, visit the website at www.ucitltd.com.

Alternatively, if interested in learning more about the loan products or discussing your options, contact Donal Traynor on 041 685 6837 or email at donaltraynor@ucitltd.com.

DFI Network of Interest To Focus On Social Protection Issues

The Disability Federation of Ireland is holding its next Network of Interest meeting regarding Department of Social Protection issues on 19 September 2013.

The meeting, which is open to organisations and individuals with an interest in issues relating to the Department of Social Protection, will be held at 2pm in the boardroom at DFI Head Office.

Updates on the Review of Domiciliary Care Allowance and the Public Services Card will be given, while a speaker from the Department of Social Protection will talk about the revision of the Free Travel Scheme.

If you are interested in attending or joining the network's mailing list, please contact Joan O'Donnell at 01-454 7978 or email joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie.

New Funding and Mentoring Opportunities for Social Projects

Social Entrepreneurs Ireland has partnered with the Arthur Guinness Projects and 2014 David Manley Awards to support new and on-going initiatives in the social entrepreneurship sector.

The two programmes offer opportunities for funding, mentoring and promotion to projects operating in the cultural, business, and social spheres.

David Manley Awards

The David Manley Awards were established in 2002 to nurture Ireland's entrepreneurial spirit in the business, arts and social spheres, granting over €1 million to its recipients to date.

Organisations which have been established in the past one to three years and which work in these three areas are eligible for the awards. The deadline for applications remains open until 6th September.

The overall winner will receive €100,000 in mentoring and support, as well as €10,000 in cash. The three category winners will also be presented with a €1,000 cash prize.

Additionally, each of the nine shortlisted entrepreneurs will obtain free payroll and accounts software, and mentoring support from Enterprise Ireland's Mentor Network.

Previous winners include Release, a programme designed to enhance the communication skills of children with intellectual disabilities, and Grace App, a mobile application to help children with autism to communicate effectively.

The awards are held in honour of David Manley, a business strategist with an active interest in sports and the arts, who passed away in August 2002. More information about the Awards can be found at www.davidmanleyawards.ie.

Arthur Guinness Projects

The Arthur Guinness Projects, designed to invest in innovative creative projects across the categories of Music, Art, Food and Sport, were launched earlier this year. While applications and voting have now closed, several of the competing projects aimed to

support people with disabilities. Bursaries of up to €50,000 are available, with judges now deciding who has been successful in receiving them. The results are due in the following weeks; see www.arthurguinnessprojects.com for more news and information.

DFI Holding Meeting To Discuss New Broadcasting Charge

The Disability Federation of Ireland is holding a meeting to discuss proposals for the new Broadcasting Charge, examining how it will affect people with disabilities and how it will form part of a social inclusion agenda.

The meeting will take place in the DFI Head Office on Thursday, 19 September from 11am to 1pm.

The Broadcasting Charge, which will replace the Television Licence Fee from January 2015, applies to every household in the country. It is set not to exceed the current €160 cost of the Television Licence.

A consultation period for the new Broadcasting Charge was recently announced by Communications Minister Pat Rabbitte. The closing date for public feedback is Tuesday, 8 October. A consultation document has been published online, and submissions can be made by email or by post.

DFI intends to make a submission, welcoming input from members or interested parties. If you would like your views included in this, or to make a booking for the meeting, contact Joan O'Donnell on 01-454 7978 or email joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie.

To access and respond to the consultation document, visit <http://www.dcenr.gov.ie/Broadcasting/Broadcasting.htm>. Comments can also be emailed to the Department of Communications at broadcast@dcenr.gov.ie, or posted to PSB Charge Consultation, Broadcasting Policy Division, Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources, 29-31 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2.

International Expert to Deliver Free Workshop for Families

A new training programme on individualised ways of supporting people with disabilities, mental health difficulties and dementia will take place in Dublin next month. The one-day workshop, to be held free of charge in the Red Cow Moran Hotel on 16 September, will be

delivered by an international expert in the area, Hope Leet Dittmeier. It will be hosted by Genio, an organisation promoting constructive change in the disability and mental health sector.

Ms Dittmeier uses an approach known as 'Social Role Valorisation' (SRV) to facilitate supported individuals in improving their quality of life. This workshop, called 'The Usefulness of Valued Roles In Getting A Good Life: What Families Can Do', is designed to help families explore the actions they can take to enhance the life outcomes of their family member.

Ms Dittmeier explains, 'Regardless of their extraordinary effort, many families struggle with the loneliness and lack of opportunity explored by their loved one. In this workshop, I will propose that family members explore ways they might invest in a fundamentally different way, rather than a more intensive way'.

The programme will take place between 10.30am and 4pm on 16 September, with a light lunch provided. Places are limited, so applications should be made at <http://www.genio.ie/family-workshop> as soon as possible. For further information, contact Orlaith Potter of Genio at info@genio.ie.

Open Training College Accepting Applications for New Programme

Applications are open for a range of new courses on offer from the Open Training College as part of its 2013-2014 Programme.

The college, a division of St Michael's House which has provided education for people working in the disability and non-profit sectors since 1992, unveiled its updated programme in July.

Multi-Phase Programme

The newly-introduced courses include Conflict Resolution, Person-Centred Planning, Supported Employment, Teaching Independent Living Skills, Supporting Wellbeing in Practice – Positive Behavioral Supports, Online Learning Module (Trainers/Managers), and HIQA Standards Training: Professional CPD Courses.

The courses have been broken down into several phases, each representing a different level of qualification. The phases can be undertaken either independently or as part of a series. This means that those taking the courses can choose to complete them solely through online learning or intensive face-to-face sessions, or through a combination of both. The phases are also offered at various price points to accommodate different budgets.

As Dr Karen Finnerty, College Director, explains, this approach allows learners to select the level of training most appropriate for their educational requirements and budget constraints.

“If an organisation requires accredited training, we can deliver it. We can offer non-accredited options too. It very much revolves around the specific knowledge demands of the individual or organisation, and what is affordable.”

How It Works

The college presents the Conflict Resolution course as an example of its new programming. Learners can opt to take an online-only, self-directed module in Phase One, receiving a certificate upon successful completion.

Phase Two involves a one-day management seminar and small group activities, with participants again awarded a certificate. The final phase comprises a fully accredited six-week module which includes seminars, telephone and online tutorials, and assignments, leading to a QQI/HETAC Level 7 qualification.

Applications

Applications can be made through the college’s website or by contacting the college to request an application form. The college is also accepting applications for the autumn commencement of the following accredited courses:

- BA (Ordinary) in Applied Social Studies (Disability)
- BA (Honours) in Applied Social Studies (Disability)
- Certificate in Applied Management (Non-profit/Human Services)
- Higher Certificate in Applied Management (Non-profit/Human Services)
- BA in Applied Management (Non-profit/Human Services).

For more information on the new programme and to apply for the courses, visit <http://www.opentrainingcollege.com/site/studying-at-the-otc>. Alternatively, you can contact the college directly at 01-298 8544.

Public Consultation on Employment Strategy Is Under Way

The Disability Federation of Ireland has organized a consultation meeting on the development of a Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities.

The meeting will be held at 2pm on Wednesday, 11 September in the DFI Head Office for all interested individuals and organisations. Issues surrounding the development of the strategy will be discussed, and participants are invited to give their input for the DFI's submission to the National Disability Authority (NDA) on the matter.

The ten-year Comprehensive Employment Strategy for People with Disabilities is currently being developed by the NDA, as per the committed action of the National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan.

The NDA is currently accepting submissions on the Strategy, with the closing date set on Friday, 30 September 2013. An outline strategic framework, setting out the vision, principles and priorities of the Strategy, has been developed, and can be found at

<http://www.nda.ie/website/nda/cntmgmtnew.nsf/0/550F1F688B240AE280257BC20049987C?OpenDocument>.

To discuss the Employment Strategy further, or to register for the meeting, contact Joan O'Donnell at 01-454 7978 or email joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie.

Alternatively, submissions on the Strategy can be made directly to the NDA through their website at

<http://www.nda.ie/CntMgmtNew.nsf/DCC524B4546ADB3080256C700071B049/550F1F688B240AE280257BC20049987C?OpenDocument>. Queries can also be sent to employmentstrategy@nda.ie or by contacting Heather O'Leary on 01-608 0480.

Public Consultation on New Broadcasting Strategy Launched

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) launched a public consultation on its 2014-2016 strategy on 27 August.

Established in 2009, the BAI is the national regulator of content across all broadcasting services in the State. As part of its role, it ensures that the broadcasting sector responds to its audience's needs and remains accessible to people with disabilities.

A draft strategy statement, outlining its objectives for the next three years and its plans to engage with the public and broadcasting sector, has been made available as part of the consultation process. Organisations and members of the public now have until 22 October to respond to the new proposals. Submissions can be made online, by email or by post.

Speaking at the launch, Bob Collins, Chairperson of the BAI, acknowledged that changes in new media and technology have affected how television and radio output is accessed. The new strategy aims to allow efficient regulation in this new media environment, enabling audiences to guide the work of the regulator more effectively.

Mr Collins stated that “the BAI must ensure that the fundamental interests and entitlements of the viewers and listeners are protected at all times. Working with broadcasters, we must also ensure that broadcasting properly reflects the nature and composition of our society and that the voices of those who are currently often under-represented, including women, are heard”.

The draft Strategy Statement of the BAI – along with supporting information – is available at www.baifuture.ie. Submissions on the statement can be made through the website, by email to info@bai.ie, or by post to: BAI, 2-5 Warrington Place, Dublin 2.

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

Clár 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 Freephone 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@irishdeafociety.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: 01-6236414, or 01- 6236415 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: ymmcutch@crc.ie

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

Sonas 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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Personal Notes:



**Representing the interests and expectations of people with disabilities to be fully included
Comprising organisations that represent and support people with disabilities**

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

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

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

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

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

For further information go to www.disability-federation.ie

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