

# **Disability Federation of Ireland**



An Advocate for the Voluntary Disability Sector.

Supporting Organisations to Enable People with Disabilities

## **NEWSLETTER APRIL 2010**

### **Should we be hopeful that the fusion of social inclusion, disability and equality under the new Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs will serve to push forward the implementation of the National Disability Strategy?**

Leaving aside the focus of public commentary on the Cabinet changes we might wonder what they mean for the implementation of the National Disability Strategy (NDS). In the new Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs, under newly appointed Minister Pat Carey, we have the coming together of issues relating to equality, disability, integration and human rights from the Department of

Justice Equality and Law Reform (DJELR). This creates a potentially positive mix where areas such as responsibility for social inclusion, the NDA, the Disability Equality Unit, Equality Authority, Equality Tribunal, and responsibility for community, including the Charities Act, all fall to one Minister, where they constitute a major part of that Minister's responsibility. Given that the rights issue for disabled people is one of having easy and reliable access to social and community participation, should we then be hopeful that the fusion of the social inclusion and equality agendas will serve to push forward the implementation of the NDS?

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**Department of Enterprise Trade & Employment Disability Consultative Forum**

It is now five years since Government gave its commitment to the Disability Legislation Consultative Group (DLCG - the precursor to the current Disability Stakeholders Group (DSG) to have the Cabinet Handbook amended so that there would be disability proofing of all substantive matters of policy and legislation going to Cabinet. Despite this matter being consistently raised by the DSG, through their participation in the NDS Stakeholders Monitoring (NDSSMG) Group with Government , the matter is still outstanding.

Last month we were critical of the failure of Government to produce its promised NDS Recession Implementation Plan. Both parties in Government are keen to talk up their jointly agreed “Renewed Programme for Government” as the focus of their work following the recent Cabinet changes. Protecting the NDS is a key commitment in that document.

Minister Carey now has critical resources directly within his remit in order to progress implementation of the NDS during this recession. Is disability just being passed on without any ambition to deal with the issues? We will know soon enough.

**John Dolan**  
**CEO**

# **ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

## **DFI Service Suite**

### **Exciting New Opportunities for DFI Member Organisations**

DFI Service Suite is a unique package of solutions that has been purposely designed to support, and to create growth opportunities for, DFI member organisations.

Through the relationships that we have built with external organisations, as well as our internal expertise, DFI Service Suite has developed a comprehensive range of specially discounted, member-exclusive services. These include:

- Organisation Healthcheck
- SKILL Training Programme
- PQASSO Quality Assurance System
- Human Resource Package (in association with Adare Human Resource Management)
- Garda Vetting Service

### **Vhi Employee Assistance Programme**

As an extension of this range of opportunities DFI Service Suite, in conjunction with Vhi Corporate Solutions, is delighted to announce the launch of an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Through the EAP, Vhi Corporate Solutions are offering access for you and your employees to a 24 hour telephone and face to face counselling and information service, with DFI member discounts of up to 70%.

Why is Employee Assistance important for your organisation?

In the current climate, the employees of voluntary disability organisations face increased pressures in both their work and personal lives. Considering these significant pressures, organisations have a huge amount to gain from the introduction of a comprehensive system of support. In addition to protecting the well-being of staff members, ongoing support for employees can help to counteract organisational problems such as absenteeism and poor performance, and to ultimately improve the standard of service that is being offered.

What is Vhi Corporate Solutions offering to your organisation? To assist organisations in building these effective support systems for staff, Vhi Corporate Solutions is offering DFI member organisations exclusive access to their Employee Assistance Programme, at heavily discounted rates. The aim of Vhi's EAP is to support staff in coping with the effects of personal or work related issues, by providing employees and family members with easy access to confidential, short term counselling. The Programme provides access to a range of information and support services that include:

- 24/7 telephone support for personal and family issues
- Telephone information service on personal, family and work-related issues
- Telephone and face to face counselling – where clinically appropriate
- Legal and financial information service
- Employee website
- Manager support
- Access to a dedicated EAP Consultant
- Promotional material

Vhi's EAP services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and are delivered by a nationwide network of counsellors, making it easy for participants to access a counsellor in their local area. The Programme is strictly confidential and adheres to the rules of the Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP), giving employees a safe, supportive environment in which to deal with their personal and professional issues.

In addition, DFI member organisations already availing of this service from Vhi will be able to avail of the new, discounted rate negotiated by DFI Service Suite.

For more information on how the Employee Assistance Programme can support your organisation, please contact Susan Clarke of Vhi at [info@vhcis.ie](mailto:info@vhcis.ie) or your local DFI Support Officer.

### **IFG Pension Advice Service**

DFI Service Suite is pleased to announce the development of a Free Pension Advice Service, provided by IFG Private Clients. Through this service, IFG Private Clients are offering DFI member organisations a comprehensive pension advice and review

service, at no cost to you or your employees. In addition to this DFI members will have exclusive access to a specially discounted PRSA deal.

Why is a Pension Advice Service important for your organisation?

Irrespective of whether or not your organisation has a retirement system in place, a full review of your processes would be invaluable, ensuring that the most effective retirement arrangements are in place for the future, as well as confirming that all your legal obligations are being met.

The timing of this service could not be more opportune, as the Government recently announced that it is to introduce a new mandatory or 'auto-enrolment' pension scheme, as part of a major restructuring of pension provision in the State. In future, workers aged over 22, earning above a certain income threshold, will automatically be enrolled in a new supplementary pension scheme to provide additional retirement income. This will happen unless they are already in their employer's scheme, which provides higher contribution levels or is a defined benefit scheme.

Employees will contribute 4%, with the Government and the employer providing matching contributions of 2% each - making a total contribution of 8%.

Workers may opt out of the supplementary scheme - but it will be mandatory for employers.

The Government also announced that the qualification age for the State Pension will rise from 65 to 66 in 2014, 67 in 2021, and 68 in 2028. However, workers will be permitted to postpone collecting that pension, to make up contribution shortfalls.

There will also be stronger regulation and more transparency on pension fund management charges.

What will IFG Private Clients offer your organisation? IFG Private Clients, a well-established team of independent financial advisors, has responded to the needs of voluntary disability organisations by offering DFI members a comprehensive pension advice and review service, completely free of charge (IFG Private Clients may conduct these reviews in conjunction with their sister company, IFG Corporate Pensions). One-to-one, full financial reviews can be conducted with you and your employees and IFG advisors will provide straightforward and transparent financial

advice regarding existing arrangements, alternatives to be considered and future plans. In addition, IFG Private Clients has offered to negotiate enhanced terms on your behalf with pension providers.

In addition to providing the free advice service, IFG Private Clients has negotiated a specially discounted deal on behalf of our Members for PRSAs through Zurich Life (formerly Eagle Star Life), the country's leading PRSA provider. This service is being provided exclusively to DFI member organisations.

A reminder of your pension obligations as an employer: As you are aware, making provision for retirement is very important and, as an employer, you have certain legal obligations.

All your employees should, at least, have access to a Standard PRSA. Otherwise, you may be guilty of a criminal offence. This means that if you do not have an occupational pension scheme with a membership qualification period of less than six months, or if your pension scheme members do not have an Additional Voluntary Contribution (AVC) facility, then you must:

- provide access to a Standard PRSA and inform your employees of this facility
- be in a position to deduct contributions from their salaries
- be able to remit the contributions to the PRSA provider within the specified time.

### Contact Details

If you would like to make an appointment to ensure that your organisation's current pension arrangements are the most cost-effective, please contact the dedicated **DFI Member Helpline on (01) 275 2997, email [dfipensions@ifg.ie](mailto:dfipensions@ifg.ie)** or call Michael Harty, IFG Private Clients on 086 908 1093.

Alternatively, please feel free to contact your DFI Support Officer if you wish to discuss this further.

# **HEALTH**

## **Value for Money and Policy Review**

Work on the Value for Money and Policy (VfM) Review of the Disability Services Programme in the HSE is continuing. At issue is some €1.6 Billion of funding directed to disability under the Oireachtas Vote 40.

### **Expert Reference Group**

The Expert Reference Group is tasked with exploring the policy objectives of the Programme. At an information session on 24<sup>th</sup> March, it was explained that the Group asked itself ‘are we doing the right things with the funds’ instead of ‘doing what we’ve always been doing?’ The Group has decided that its focus should be on supports to enable people with disabilities to choose the services they require, rather than having services targeted at them. It proposes a vision of expenditure that supports people with disabilities to live full lives and to give them greater say in securing those supports.

The Group recognises that trust has to be built if the fundamental shifts implied by its vision are to be achieved without additional resources. For example, cutting services such as PA supports and respite care when money is tight would be counterproductive since these are the sorts of supports that empower people with disabilities. The Group expects that the challenge of reorientation will be greater for ID services, where separate services still predominate, than for physical and sensory services. Change will affect disability organisations and health professionals as well as people with disabilities.

### **Steering Group**

In addition to considering the findings of the Expert Group about the Programme’s objectives, the Steering Group’s terms of reference include evaluation of its efficiency and effectiveness. The Steering Group has been overseeing the gathering of available HSE data on inputs, outputs and needs covered by the Programme, in particular exploring the usefulness of the information from Service Level and Grant Aid Agreements collected by the HSE. The aim is to compare costs for services, difficult as this is likely to be. The National Disability Authority has also been looking

into good practice in delivering person-centred supports for the Steering Group. The original schedule was for the Steering Group to complete the Value for Money and Policy Review in September 2010, but this may be somewhat delayed.

## **HSE National Service Plan 2010**

The National Service Plan, published on the HSE website, indicates a decline in the 2010 Budget for both Mental Health and Disability Services, with 2010 allocations of €734 million and €1,476 million respectively.

Meetings of the Regional Co-ordinating Committees (that are still functioning) throw some light on the impact of the Plan on organisations and services. Budget cuts have been calculated depending on whether an organisation is defined as Section 38 or 39 under the Health Act. Section 39 organisations, although not subject to salary pay cuts by legislation, face a reduction in funding from the HSE considered equivalent to the public sector pay cut, generally a cut of 5%. In addition funding is reduced by another 2%, which the HSE terms value for money efficiency savings.

Information provided at the meetings also suggests that the moratorium on hiring will affect many Section 38 organisations. Further more, in some regions at least, there is no money available to address increased need generated by demographic change. The staff of the HSE scrutinise Service Level and Grant Aid Agreements to indentify resources that could be redistributed. There is some discussion about priorities for funding. How such decisions are made in regions without active RCCs is a question to be considered.

## **Department of Health and Children**

### **Disability Advisory Group**

The Department of Health and Children (DoHC) convened a meeting of the Health Advisory Group in March in advance of the National Disability Strategy Stakeholders Monitoring Group. The Health Advisory Committee was established as the formal mechanism for the monitoring of the Health Sectoral Plan, and DFI, along with a

number of other invited voluntary organisations participates in the Group. A number of key updates were provided on the work being undertaken by the DoHC, the HSE and the Department of Education. The following is a synopsis of the key learning:

- DoHC: It is accepted that the time frame allocated for the VFM Review may have been ambitious. The lack of relevant detailed information is proving a difficulty, despite what is contained in the HSE SLAs. It may be necessary to request further information from organisations directly. In addition to this work the Department is also working on the issue of the free pre-school year for children with disabilities, completing the review of the Disability Act and finalising the Review of the Health Sectoral Plan. We were also informed that the Department will meet with the HSE, the Department of Education and Skills (DoES) and the National Council for Special Education in the coming weeks to progress issues of common concern
- HSE: The Group were introduced to Ann Kennelly, the interim Lead LHO with responsibility for Disability. Ms Kennelly assured those present that her focus of work for 2010 was to ensure the delivery of the disability commitments contained in the HSE Service Plan, including the introduction of the ninety new therapy posts and use of the demographic funding across LHO areas. The issue of the difficulty faced in terms of the Assessment of Need for children under the age of five years and the need to streamline the process, was again noted by both the Department and the HSE, although this was questioned by both DFI and other members of the Group.
- DoES: Although there continues to be a pause to the full implementation of EPSEN, the Department continues to invest in the capacity of teachers and schools to support students with special educational needs. This work has included recruitment of an additional 107 National Educational Psychologists, an increase of nine Special Educational Needs Organisers, and the provision of professional training to almost 24,000 teachers.

DFI raised a number of issues at this meeting, including questioning the information deficit in relation to the VFM, the challenge of ensuring the assessment provided to

children is in keeping with the intention of the Act, and the need for the Sectoral Plan activity across the Departments and the HSE to incorporate priorities and commitments across mainstream Health Services.

## **NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY / TOWARDS 2016**

### **Government Reshuffle**

The changes in Departments and ministers, announced by the Taoiseach on 23<sup>rd</sup> March, have implications for the implementation of the National Disability Strategy and people with disabilities. The Department of Social and Family Affairs has been transformed into the Department of Social Protection (DSP), under Minister Eamon Ó Cuiv, T.D. While this Department loses the social inclusion part of its remit, it takes on the job-seeking and community employment parts of FÁS. This should strengthen its ability to support people with disabilities to become more active participants in their community.

A reconfigured Department for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs (DCEGA), led by Minister Pat Carey T.D., will take over the equality and disability unit that was formerly at the Department of Justice Equality and Law Reform. Thus the unit that organises national monitoring of the NDS is now located in a department where the focus is strongly on the inclusion of disadvantaged groups, especially as the social inclusion and combat poverty units also are transferred to DCEGA.

The Department of Education and Science, now Education and Skills (DoES), headed by Minister Mary Coughlin T.D., loses its third level research function but gains responsibility for skills training at FÁS. This change offers the potential for a more seamless continuum of personal development opportunities for people with disabilities. The Taoiseach is quoted as saying, “The changes and rearrangements ... are intended to provide better services to the public ... In the first instance, there must be better co-ordination among existing organisations and the departments.”

## **Monitoring Implementation of the National Disability Strategy**

On 30<sup>th</sup> March the Disability Stakeholders Group (DSG), consisting of the six major disability organisations including DFI, meets the National Disability Strategy Stakeholder Monitoring Group (NDSSMG). The NDSSMG is composed of senior officials of the six sectoral plan departments plus others, including the Department of Education and Skills, and is jointly chaired by Mary Doyle from the Department of the Taoiseach and the Chair of the DSG, Angela Kearns. The NDSSMG and the DSG meets twice a year to review progress under the NDS. The NDSSMG reports to the Cabinet Committee on Social Inclusion.

The agreed focus of the meetings is on the key strategic issues, the identification of any obstacles to Strategy implementation, significant funding matters and cross-sectoral matters. At the March meeting the DSG will be raising several issues of over-arching concern as well as questions about specific departmental Sectoral Plans. The issues include information about how the Government is planning to ensure continued progress in implementing the NDS through the current recession and about the guidance for all public bodies on the prior disability-proofing of any policy initiatives going before the Cabinet. The DSG considers measures to protect the NDS a priority, particularly important in view of the cutbacks already being experienced by the disability sector.

## **Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation**

### **Disability Consultative Forum**

The Disability Consultative Forum, consisting of representatives of voluntary and statutory organisations and several Government Departments, met on 18<sup>th</sup> March to review the Department's progress report in implementing its Sectoral Plan.

#### ***Placements***

The Department stated that 6,707 people with disabilities had been placed in jobs (excluding community employment posts) over 2006-2009 inclusive. The Supported Employment Programme was the main route to employment with the National Learning Network the second most important. Jobs obtained via mainstream

services provided by FÁS declined consistently over the period. Activity under the Wage Subsidy Scheme fluctuated between 140 and 200 placements per year. The total number registered on the Scheme at the end of 2009 was 728 persons. The report noted that the withdrawal of the Back to Work Allowance for new applicants has reduced the incentive for people to participate in the Wage Subsidy Scheme.

### ***Rollbacks***

The impact of recession-related budget constraints was evident in several parts of the progress report. The planned Access Learning Support Service for FÁS training programmes is not proceeding, which is likely to inhibit the use of FÁS mainstream training by people with disabilities. Budgets for a number of programmes, such as 'Disability Champions', have contracted. A conference on equality proofing for the Local Employment Service Network has been postponed.

### ***Activation***

Forum members sought information about the learning obtained through the activation project underway in the Midlands. This project is led by the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA) with FAS and other stakeholders involved. An issue is how to measure success when activation may yield improvements for the person without that person becoming employed. Another issue is the importance of part-time work for many people with disabilities, and DSFA is exploring the possibility of a partial capacity benefit. Inter-agency working on assessing a person's capacities and preferences in the context of activation is hampered by privacy rules. Also difficulty is experienced in persuading people with disabilities (on benefits) to engage in the project.

### ***Comprehensive Employment Strategy***

Progress in developing this strategy slowed after many Forum members criticised changes proposed by FÁS in the supported employment scheme at the last meeting in May 2009. The changes would have excluded many people with disabilities who want to work. DETE reported that it and the Department of Health and Children are jointly chairing an officials group set up to make progress in outlining the strategy. The group is considering draft proposals on the employment of people with significant support needs developed under the auspices of the Office for Disability and Mental Health. Forum members noted the limited sharing of employment-

related information collected as part of the HSE's review of day services. Health and FÁS officials agreed to address this. DETE would reconvene the Forum when the strategy had been developed to incorporate this dimension.

## **SOCIAL INCLUSION**

### **Housing Needs Assessment**

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DOEHLG) has released a consultation paper about proposed Ministerial regulation of the housing needs assessment process by local authorities. The regulations were provided for in the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 to introduce greater standardisation of practices across the country.

The regulations will affect people with disabilities who seek social housing, whether they currently live in institutional accommodation, private rented accommodation, the family home, or are homeless. Voluntary organisations assisting people to obtain appropriate accommodation will be concerned that the process is as disability-friendly as possible. Feedback of comments on the proposal must be submitted by 9<sup>th</sup> April.

According to the proposed regulations the eligibility criteria for registration on the housing waiting list relate to household income, whether or not the applicant is resident in Ireland, the availability of alternative accommodation, and the time the applicant has been on rent supplement. Special needs categories are proposed for those who are considered eligible, including people with a disability (physical, intellectual or mental health).

Another issue on which the Department seeks feedback concerns the collection and management of information about future housing need.

For further information about the consultation document, please contact  
[lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie).

## **RTÉ Six-Week Public Consultation Process**

RTÉ has begun a six-week public consultation process to help inform the preparation of a new Public Service Statement. The Broadcasting Act 2009 requires that RTÉ prepares a Public Service Statement. The Statement will explain to the public what is expected of RTÉ in return for the significant public support it receives in the form of the television license fee. The Statement will replace the existing Public Service Charter, which was published in 2004. For the next six weeks RTÉ is asking the public to put forward their ideas and suggestions for how it might improve its service's and better meet the needs of its audience. For more information see [www.rte.ie/yourviews](http://www.rte.ie/yourviews). DFI will be making a submission on this issue and if you would like your comments to be incorporated, please contact Joan O'Donnell, Support Officer, DFI.

## **Cinema Access in Ireland**

The Irish Deaf Society would like to commend the Twelve cinemas in Ireland who now provide subtitled access for its Deaf patrons.

Eye Cinema – Galway	Cineworld - Dublin	Movies@Dundrum - Dublin
Movies@Swords – Dublin	Movie World – Mayo	Ormonde Cinema - Dublin
Reel Pictures – Cork	Showtime – Meath	SGC - Waterford
UCI – Dublin	UCI – Kildare	Vue Cinema – Dublin

Times and dates for upcoming subtitled shows can be checked at

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

# **EVENTS**

## **The Carers Association National Conference 2010**

### **Under the Radar- A Focus on Young Carers**

*The Conference Will:*

Launch the national study of young carers commissioned by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs and undertaken by the Child and Family Research Centre, National University of Ireland, Galway;

Present the findings of the study on Carers, explore the impact that caring has had on their lives and examine mechanisms through which young Carers in Ireland can be identified and supported.

The event will take place on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> May, 2010, in the Croke Park Conference Centre Dublin for further information please contact Lee Ann Greville; Tel: 057 9322 920 E-Mail [lgreville@carersireland.com](mailto:lgreville@carersireland.com)

## **The Wheel**

### **Conference for the Community and Voluntary Sector**

The Wheel's annual conference - Building a Better Ireland – will provide a focal point for the community and voluntary sector in Ireland.

Come and engage with a host of local and international speakers who will share their expertise on the many challenges currently facing community, voluntary and charitable organisations. Come and explore:

- The leadership challenges facing our sector
- The current funding crisis
- The future of active citizenship in Ireland
- The role of the sector & civil society
- A new framework for partnership working

- Charity regulation - the road ahead

Early bird rate available until 31<sup>st</sup> March: Members of The Wheel 70 euro, Non-Members 120 euro.

The event will take place on 27<sup>th</sup> May at the Croke Park Conference Centre from 09:00-16:00

[Book now](#)

## **Shortlist for O2 Ability Awards 2010 Revealed**

Disability organisation, Kanchi and Telefónica O2 Ireland have announced that 38 organisations have been selected as Ability Companies and shortlisted for an O2 Ability Award. This year over one 100 organisations participated in the Awards Programme, which recognises organisations that value the abilities of employees with disabilities and that recognise the economic potential of making their products and services available to all customers.

Among the 38 organisations shortlisted are 18 organisations that are first-time participants in the O2 Ability Awards Programme. Each participating organisation has undergone an on-site assessment undertaken by disability management consultants and Kanchi's assessment partner, Pricewaterhouse Coopers.

The organisations shortlisted for this year's O2 Ability Awards together employ 49,750 people in organisations spanning eight different sectors across 14 counties, with 22 of the organisations based in Dublin City or County.

All 38 Ability Companies will be considered for one or more of the nine O2 Ability Awards. The O2 Ability Awards ceremony will be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2010 in Dublin, where the winners will be announced. For a full list of the Ability Companies shortlisted for an O2 Ability Awards, go to [www.theabilityawards.com](http://www.theabilityawards.com)

## **Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus Ireland**

### **Host Annual World Conference**

Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus Ireland, together with the International Federation for Spina Bifida Hydrocephalus, announces the Annual World Congress which takes

place in Citywest Conference & Resort Hotel Dublin, Ireland on the 11th & 12th June 2010. A distinguished line-up of key note speakers such as: [Dr Benjamin Warf](#) (USA), [Dr Timothy Brei](#) (USA), [Dr Trudi Edginton](#) (UK) and [Mr. Pierre Mertens](#) (BEL). Also included in the programme will be personal accounts from Eli Skattebu (NOR) and John Fulham (IRE). Please visit [www.sbhi.ie](http://www.sbhi.ie) for more details and the full programme.

## **Dublin Networks of People with disabilities in Ireland Open Meeting**

A meeting will take place on Saturday, April 24<sup>th</sup> in the Kilmainham Room of the Ashling Hotel from 11:15 AM till 1:30 PM and will be followed by refreshments. Attendance is free and all are welcome.

PWDI is the umbrella organisation which brings people together locally and nationally to work on all the issues that affect people with disabilities. These include housing, education, employment, Health, transport, legislation and many more

For further details, please contact either Mr. Dermot Hayes Network Support Officer Mobile (087) 9038002 E-mail [hayes.ennis@eircom.net](mailto:hayes.ennis@eircom.net) or [dermot@pwdi.ie](mailto:dermot@pwdi.ie)  
Mr. Gerry Ellis [Gerry.ellis@feelthebenefit.com](mailto:Gerry.ellis@feelthebenefit.com)

## **GENERAL NEWS**

### **European Union of Supported Employment**

On 11<sup>th</sup> March John Moloney T.D., Minister of State for Disability, Equality and Mental Health launched a CD outlining the EU's position on key aspects of supported employment. On the disc are papers on issues such as:

- Supported Employment for Employers
- Working with Employers
- On and Off Job Support
- Job Finding
- Vocational Profile

- Career Development and Progression

Organisations supporting people seeking employment might find the material useful. They should contact Sarah Togher at the Irish Association of Supported Employment at [sarah@iase.ie](mailto:sarah@iase.ie)

### **Research on Family Carers:**

Care Alliance Ireland is compiling a database of current and ongoing research relating to Family Carers. This database will be distributed widely and placed on their website. If your organisation is carrying out research on carers, Care Alliance is interested in hearing from you. For further information, please contact Liam O'Sullivan, Executive Director, Care Alliance Ireland either by phone: 01-874 7776, [ndo@carealliance.ie](mailto:ndo@carealliance.ie) [www.carealliance.ie](http://www.carealliance.ie)

### **Disability Service Providers Showcase**

At a recent Showcase Event over twenty organisations displayed and presented their service portfolio, which they provide to people with disabilities across the North West Region.

The event, which was hosted by the DFI, gave service providers from the voluntary, public and private sectors an opportunity to set up information stands and give individual presentations, informing colleagues from the sector and people with disabilities about the range of services they provide in Sligo, Leitrim and Donegal.

Service providers presenting on the day covered the whole spectrum of disabilities, including physical & sensory, learning disabilities and mental health conditions.

For more information please contact Marcus Hufsky DFI Support Officer

## **Are You Interested in Access Issues in South Dublin County Council?**

Under the Disability Act 2005, each local authority is required to take action to improve access for disabled people to the services, public buildings and public spaces in its administrative area. As part of their delivery of actions under the National Disability Strategy South Dublin County Council (SDCC) created the:

### Accessible South Dublin County – Downloadable Access Guides Resource

Included in this resource is a “Guide to the National Disability Strategy in South Dublin County”, which includes video footage of access improvements. Three downloadable access guides focusing on County Hall, Civic Offices Clondalkin, and the South Dublin County Library Network.

**Jobot's Access All Areas**, the accessibility game which has been released online via <http://accessible.southdublin.ie>, highlights features that ensure equal access to facilities for a wide variety of users with varying abilities. These include accessible parking bays, automated gates, and loop systems at public desks, to adaptable kitchens and Braille and tactile signage.

If you require further information or would like to provide a link to your website on the Disability Liaison / Access site please contact Selina Bonnie, Disability Liaison/ Access Officer at South Dublin County Council, by phone 01 4249000 Ext. 9041 or e-mail [sbonnie@SDUBLINCOCO.ie](mailto:sbonnie@SDUBLINCOCO.ie).

## **New Storytelling Course**

The Canal Communities Partnership will run a six week storytelling course. This course is open to disabled people of the Canal Communities Partnership Area. You don't need any experience in storytelling, however an interest in telling your story is important. The classes will be held in St. Michael's Community Parish Centre, Emmet Road, Dublin 8 every Tuesday from April 13<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> May 2010 from 11am to 1pm. There is no charge for this course.

Places are limited so booking is essential before Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April. For more information contact Maureen at 4732196 or [maureen@canalpartnership.com](mailto:maureen@canalpartnership.com)



## **Newsletters**

**For information please contact the relevant organisation directly.**

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

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), Freephone 1800 403 403

Community Workers' Co-operative – Community Work News. E-mail: [info@cwc.ie](mailto:info@cwc.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: 01-8721501, 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: [nfaireland@eircom.net](mailto:nfaireland@eircom.net)

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

S.I. News - Schizophrenia Ireland, Tel: (01) 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.sonaspac.ie](http://www.sonaspac.ie).

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

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

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