



Disability Federation of Ireland

Newsletter

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

July 2009

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“Government needs to urgently reaffirm it’s commitment to delivering the National Disability Strategy as the McCarthy report is delivered”.

Disability has been a Government priority for over a decade. It featured in equality legislation in the late 90’s and in the Governments’ commitment to the policy of mainstreaming of supports and services to its disabled citizens in 2000. These developments were given the greatest clarity under the publication of the National Disability Strategy (NDS) and its reflection in the long term goals and priorities set out in Towards 2016 and the current programme for Government.

Despite Government’s decision to prioritise disability it can be argued that when disability funding is being cut in the same manner as other services it is no longer being seen as a priority. Where something is a priority it is necessary that all concerned stay with the issue and work to find solutions which honour that priority

A significant amount of investment has taken place in terms of service delivery but also in the policy, monitoring systems and programme development areas. If this infrastructure is not protected and developed it will be lost. The State will have wasted resources, weakened our national ability to successfully deliver this commitment, and, worst of all dealt, a savage blow to the reasonable expectations of disabled people, carers, family members and the general public, that this State can ever provide for it’s disabled members.

People with disabilities bought the commitment of Government to, once and for all, give them the dignity and status of people who can participate equally in this society. This is a reputational issue for Government at home and abroad. It is critical that Government clearly demonstrates through its decisions and clearly articulates to its disabled citizens that even during a recession it will do all it can to deliver on its own vision “of an Ireland where people with disabilities have, to the greatest extent possible, the opportunity to live a full life with their families and as part of their local community, free from discrimination”. As the report of An Bord Snip Nua (Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programme) chaired by Mr Colm Mc Carthy is set to propose over €5bn in savings for the State DFI calls on Government to urgently restate it’s strong commitment to protecting the commitments that it has made to disabled people and to set out clearly how decision makers across departments and State agencies will exercise that priority throughout this recession so that we protect the National Disability Strategy and give people confidence that it is being delivered.

John Dolan

CEO

DFI Board Consideration of the Service Level Arrangements and Grant Aid Agreements

As you are aware DFI has been working quite intensively with the HSE in relation to the development of the Service Level Arrangements and Grant Aid Agreements for the past year. In February '09 it was agreed between the HSE and the disability umbrella bodies that a series of actions were to take place in advance of organisations been asked to sign the Arrangements. These actions included the development of Protocols, the receipt of a letter from the Director of Primary Continuing and Community Care (PCCC) in relation to partnership, and the commencement of completing the Schedules with organisations. As part of this process the Boards of each of the disability umbrella bodies were asked by the HSE to consider the Arrangements. The DFI Board has had the Arrangements on the Agenda of each of its meeting since May '08, and at meeting on Thursday 11th June, the Board addressed the HSE's specific request in relation to supporting their implementation. At this meeting the Board of DFI considered a number of matters. Firstly, that the Board was satisfied that the work in relation to engagement on the Arrangements has been comprehensive and the process as agreed between the HSE and the disability umbrella organisations is now complete. Secondly that the Board was to decide whether it wants DFI to enter into an arrangement with the HSE, and thirdly what advice it wishes to give to the membership in relation to the Arrangements.

In preparation for the Board meeting of the 11th June '09 DFI prepared "DFI Report on Service Level and Grant Aid Agreements 9th June 09". At the June meeting the Board accepted and endorsed the Report as presented to it subject to the addition of a footnote. Consequently the Board accepted firstly that it was satisfied that the work to date in relation to DFI's engagement on the Arrangements has been comprehensive and the process as agreed between the HSE and the disability umbrella organisations is completed. Secondly that this Report should form the basis of its advice and support to its member organisations as they engage with the HSE on these Arrangements and thirdly that DFI itself should proceed to enter an Arrangement between itself and the HSE. These decisions were made in the order that they have been set out above.

The Report outlines the process to date in relation to the development of the Arrangements and references the substantive engagement DFI has had with member organisations and the HSE in

relation to the development of the Arrangements. The letter to the Director of Primary Community and Continuing Care (PCCC) informs the HSE of the DFI support in relation to the implementation of the Arrangements but also builds upon the Report and the discussion at DFI Board level outlining our ongoing concerns in relation to the approach taken by the HSE in the development and implementation of the generic Arrangements. The Board noted that DFI has an expectation that progress and comfort needs to be further provided through the initial implementation phase of the Arrangements to deal with the substantive unresolved issues and concerns which it and its member organisations have.

The Arrangements represent a significant change in the relationship between the HSE and disability organisations. Implementing the Arrangements will be a challenge to both the HSE and to disability organisations and is a challenge that DFI is committed to working on.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Garda Vetting Network established

DFI in conjunction with six member organisations has now completed the establishment of a Garda Vetting Network for organisations from the voluntary disability sector. This service will be essential for those organisations that were not in a position to obtain Garda Vetting in the past.

It has long been realised by disability organisations that it is vital to have proper Garda Vetting procedures in place. Obtaining vetting in the past, however, was a struggle and indeed in many cases impossible, in particular, for many smaller and medium-sized organisations in our sector. Therefore, DFI has facilitated the establishment of an access gateway with the assistance of six DFI member organisations over the past 18 months.

These organisations, which are referred to as “Lead Organisations”, have undergone training as “Authorised Signatories” at the Garda Central Vetting Unit and are now in the position to process vetting applications on behalf of disability organisations. It should be noted that the Garda Vetting Unit only accepts vetting applications processed by “Authorised Signatories”, thus replacing any previous “clearance” systems.

In order to avail of vetting through this access gateway, interested organisations can contact DFI centrally and will then be allocated to a Lead Organisation. The Lead Organisation will then provide the applicants with all relevant information, documentation and most importantly become

the link between the applicant organisation and the Garda Vetting Unit in Thurles. A charge for the processing of the applications is paid by the organisation requesting the vetting to the lead organisations.

DFI would urge all organisations in the sector to put in place Garda Vetting procedures and policies and ensure that their staff and volunteers are fully vetted. The key benefits are quite easy to outline – peace of mind, reduced legal exposure, and enhanced safety for your members, clients, volunteers and staff. Organisations that receive funding from the HSE should also bear in mind that Garda Vetting will become an essential pre-condition for funding in the new Service Level Arrangements.

If you want to join the Garda Vetting Network, please contact our Support Staff member Eleanor Reece at eleanorreece@disability-federation.ie or tel: 01-7080101. If you require more general information you may also contact your local DFI Support Officer.

Service Suite - “Organisation Healthcheck”

Human Resource Support Services for Dfi Members

As part of our Service Suite of products for member organisations, DFI has developed and launched a new “Organisation Healthcheck” service for member organisations.

This service has been developed in response to the growing level of regulation of voluntary disability organisations.

The “Organisation Healthcheck” is carried out across four areas of performance:

1. Governance
2. Finance and Budgeting
3. Staff and Volunteers
4. Policies and Procedures

The “Organisation Healthcheck” is designed to assess the governance and capacity level of organisations, identify their strengths and weaknesses in the process and, where necessary, propose solutions to issues that need to be addressed. As part of the package of solutions, Disability Federation of Ireland in conjunction with Adare Human Resource Management, has put in place a support structure for member organisations to avail of specially negotiated discounted Human Resource and Employment Law Support Services, exclusively for DFI members.

DFI's aim, through its partnership with Adare Human Resource Management, is to support member organisations to achieve compliance and to be able to avail of cost-effective HR supports from an experienced HR organisation, that has knowledge of and experience with DFI members.

The work includes an audit of HR employment contracts, policies and practices to ensure compliance and best practice. Adare Human Resource Management will develop / review all contracts of employment including full-time, part-time and fixed-term, as well as ensuring that the relevant statutory and organisational policies and procedures are in place for issues including discipline and grievance, harassment and bullying, maternity, parental, carers and sick leave.

Unlimited HR support is one key feature of the support service which will assist member organisations in answering all queries relating to employee issues, from probation and discipline to contracts of employment and employee entitlements.

The HR support service provides a range of benefits to members including achieving compliance, having HR expertise available when required, reduced exposure to employment related cases and the peace of mind in knowing that the advice provided will assist the organisation in this increasingly complex area.

Over the last number of years Adare Human Resource Management has worked with a number of our member organisations, including ourselves at DFI. They have also worked extensively with other charities and not-for-profit organisations.

Please contact Derek McKay of Adare Human Resource Management at dmckay@adarehrm.ie or on (01) 612 7092 or speak to your DFI Support Officer.

Further details are available on the DFI website at http://www.disability-federation.ie/information_organisationaldevelopment_servicesuite_hrpackage.htm

Chairs' Networks and Developing Boards / Management Committees Workshops in Galway and Fingal in July

DFI is sponsoring a series of Chairs' Networks and Developing Boards / Management Committees Workshops.

The events are being organised by Boardmatch Ireland in collaboration with DFI, Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups and Volunteer Centres Ireland, there is no charge for the events.

The Chairs' Network is aimed at existing Chairs or Directors who are considering taking on this role and is a forum for Chairs to get together to discuss issues of common concern and to provide support.

The Workshop is aimed at existing Board / Management Committee members and those who are considering either of these roles.

The Workshop is also open to senior managers from within and without the Community and Voluntary Sector who might want to gain a better understanding of the workings of the Board / Management Committees with a view to putting themselves forward as candidates. We are also particularly keen to attract people with disabilities who might be thinking about getting involved in this most valuable role.

Fingal Area

The Chairs Network will take place on 6th July 2009 at 7p.m. in the Fingal Volunteer centre.

To register for this event contact Fingal Volunteer Centre directly by phoning Paul on 01- 8209550 or you can email Paul on paul@volunteerfingal.ie.

Galway

An event will take place in Galway on 8th July 2009 in the Ballybane Enterprise Centre. The Developing Boards / Management Committees workshop will take place from 14:30 -16:30 and the Chairs' Network will take place from 19:00 - 21:00.

Intending participants can register their FREE place now for the Galway event by contacting Mélanie by email melanie@boardmatchireland.ie or by Tel: 01-671 5005 and / or can indicate their interest in attending at another location.

For further information contact anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie.

HEALTH

Independent Assessment of Need 0-5 years – Disability Act 2005

The National Implementation Group for the Independent Assessment of Need 0-5 years met again on the 3rd June. Several updates on progress regarding progression, standards and review were discussed.

- The Cross Sectoral Group between Health and Education is currently finalising a document on assessing for educational needs under the Disability Act. It will be circulated to Group members shortly for information and ratification. The revised guidelines for Assessment of need were presented to the Group for comment and will now be ratified also.
- The issue of funding for one year's pre-school education for all children is being administered by the office of the Minister for Children. However, the standards and outcomes which are currently proposed as part of the criteria for this funding do not appear to be strong on educational outcomes. The learning needs of children with disabilities require that there be a focus on the supports required by these children to maximise their learning opportunities and to address learning deficits when compared to their peers. DFI is calling on all members to forward a brief outline of evidence of the importance of prioritising educational above developmental for children under five as soon as possible. DFI will also be carrying out this exercise internally.
- The IT system is currently being modified to take account of revised guidelines for Assessment of Need. The system will also record progress on reviews of Assessment Reports and issuing of Service Statements
- A brief overview of the ongoing work of the Early Intervention Services was given. A document outlining the respective roles of Primary Care Teams and specialist services has not yet been completed but this should be accomplished shortly. There has been consultation on a standardised approach to early intervention services. Further focus groups are now being planned with a mix of staff who attended at the initial consultation day and with other staff. It is important that this work is communicated widely, within organisations and Local Health Offices, to ensure that all staff involved in Early Intervention Services are aware of the development of standards and criteria and have an opportunity to comment. If any DFI members have an opportunity to attend these focus groups please do so, especially if you do not have direct participation in early Intervention teams but have a remit to provide services to Children under 5 years. It is expected that a draft document,

containing standards and criteria for intervention services which will promote a standardised approach, should be available by the end of September.

- **Review of Assessments Reports** - In many Local Health Offices, this has not yet commenced. As referred to earlier, a tracking system is required from the IT system to indicate when reports are due. It is the role of the Assessment Officer to initiate the process of generating a review of the Assessment Report. The procedures for review were designed to align with existing good practice and to minimise administration. There are variations across the country in the type and number of reports required by Special Educational Needs Organisers (SENOs) Currently HSE staff schedule assessments in order to have reports available, prior to commencement of school year. It was agreed to review this within two Local Health Offices, one in Kildare and one in the Mid West, to identify and quantify instances of additional work for health service staff, occasioned solely by Department of Education and Science (DES) criteria
- **Review of Terms of Reference of National Steering Group:** The Group itself is also reviewing its terms of reference and the ongoing requirement for such a Group under two main headings, whether there is an ongoing requirement for the Group and the second heading is if there is an agreement that there is an ongoing requirement then what the remit and terms of reference should be in the future.

If you have suggestions, comment or queries please contact: Toni Gleeson, DFI Support Officer (details of DFI Support Officers are available at the end of the newsletter).

Procedures on Protected Disclosures of Information in the Workplace

The HSE has produced a document entitled “Procedures on Protected Disclosure of Information In The Workplace” in order to meet the requirements in Part 14 of the Health Act to establish such procedures.

The purpose of the document is to facilitate employees to make protected disclosures in good faith to an authorised person where they have reasonable grounds for believing that the health or welfare of patients / clients or the public may be at risk, or where there is waste of public funds or legal obligations are not being met, so that the matter can be investigated. The legislation also provides statutory protection for health service employees from penalisation as a result of making a protected disclosure in good faith in accordance with this procedure.

The procedure applies to all employees (employees covers agency workers and persons on placement for the purpose of vocational training) of the following:

- The HSE and agencies funded by the HSE to provide health and social services on its behalf
- Any other person who has received or is receiving assistance in accordance with section 39 of the Health Act 2004 (as amended by the Health Act 2007) or section 10 of the Child Care Act 1991
- A body established under the Health (Corporate Bodies) Act 1961

The legislation also provides for the appointment by the HSE of an “Authorised Person” to whom protected disclosures may be made. Mr Larry Walsh, former Director of the Health Services National Partnership Forum, has been employed in this function on behalf of the HSE and all HSE funded service providers and grant aided agencies.

National Physical and Sensory Disability Database (NPSDD) Annual Report

The Health Research Board (HRB) has recently published the National Physical and Sensory Disability Database Committee (NPSDDC) Annual Report 2008. The information is based on monitoring current service provision and future service requirements over a five year period as well as a demographic profile of those on the NPSDD.

The document can be found at <http://www.hrb.ie/publications/hrb-publication/publications//457/>.

HSE Patient Registers

The Health Service Executive is seeking assistance from relevant stakeholders in identifying patient registers currently operating in Ireland. Patient registers play a vital role in helping to improve patient care. For the purpose of the study, patient registers are defined as systems that collect standardised, valuable information about individual patients in a systematic way, to measure a specified outcome, such as improving the quality of patient care or for research.

As voluntary disability organisations hold a great deal of information about their service users and their needs, DFI would encourage any organisation that feels it has the sort of information being sought by the HSE to assist with this project. While it is acknowledged that people are exceptionally busy, especially in the current economic climate, the HSE would be grateful if organisations could find some time to complete a form, available from

fionnuala.donohue2@hse.ie.

Resource Allocation and Financing in the Health Sector

The problems with the existing arrangements for funding health services have been well publicised. The issues regarding disability funding demonstrates the system's inability to sustain resourcing for the government's stated priority of addressing the deficit in disability services and the HSE's diversion of funds allocated to the disability sector. The Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney T.D., has set up an Expert Group "to examine how the existing system of resource allocation within the Irish public health service can be improved to support better the aims of the health reform programme", and to report by April 2010. The Expert Group advertised in the press, seeking submissions by the 20th June.

DFI 's submission to the Expert Group highlights the existing system's inability to incorporate the changes required by health services reform and adopt an integrated approach to funding. DFI focuses particularly on the existing system's failure to address the deficit in disability services in a sustainable manner, or to apply the partnership approach required for delivery of the person-centred infrastructure of care that is the government's objective. DFI recommends that the reformed system for resource allocations be transparent, with real time tracking of resource use, and that it enable multi annual programmes and cross-agency working. The submission also stresses the need to minimise the administrative burden imposed on those working within the health system as well as the need to improve the data base on which allocations decisions are made

NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY (NDS) / Towards 2016

Community and Voluntary Pillar

Although the social partnership process is on hold, the Community and Voluntary Pillar continues to inform the Government about the concerns of vulnerable people across all stages of life, particularly regarding the adverse impact of funding cutbacks and erosion of public services occurring during the recession. The Pillar members provide a wide range of services and supports details of which provide a basis for its advice to Government on the National Recovery Plan. In brief the Pillar calls on the Government to put in place a national strategy to rekindle economic growth, provide decent jobs and incomes, and to ensure effective social and public services that advance Ireland towards the vision and long term goals agreed in “Towards 2016”.

Disability Stakeholders Group (DSG) Seminar

The DSG, which consists of six national voluntary disability bodies, including DFI, monitors the implementation of the National Disability Strategy. It meets senior officials from a range of government departments twice a year to review the progress achieved. To do its job effectively, the DSG needs to gather information on the experiences and perspectives of people with a disability and the voluntary organisations working with them. For this purpose it established sub-committees consisting of interested people, mainly from the member bodies, for each of the six Sectoral Plan Departments (Health and Children, Social and Family Affairs, Environment, Employment, Communications and Transport) and for the Department of Education and Science. The members of each sub-group participate in the relevant department’s disability advisory committee and on other fora where they can engage on relevant issues.

The DSG seminar, held on 3rd June, brought the sub committees together to share information, and to plan how best to use the coincidence of sectoral plan reviews by five departments (i.e. all except Transport who completed its review in 2008) to strengthen implementation of the Strategy. The participants focussed on keeping the long term goals for people with disabilities committed to in “Towards 2016”, as the drivers for departmental policies. They looked at ways in which the

structures and procedures in the Strategy can be improved, particularly during a time of economic recession, especially regarding cross-agency working at both national and local levels. The contact details for the leaders of the subcommittees can be obtained from Lillian Buchan, DFI Support Officer. (Details of DFI Support Officers are available at the end of the newsletter).

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Carer Support Programme

The Carer Support Programme is a partnership between Age Action Ireland and the HSE. The main aims of the programme are to support carers and help develop and co-ordinate services, in each of the health board areas. Geographically the programme covers South Dublin, Wicklow and Kildare. It also involves developing partnerships between statutory and voluntary organisations, establishing working relationships with organisations currently providing carer support services locally and nationally, conducting an assessment of needs of carers, identifying and communicating good practise in the field of support for carers, designing and developing a programme of training courses for carers based on their identified needs. Training courses are designed to give practical information to carers caring in the home. A new Carers Support group as part of new partnership between Age Action, and the TLC Care Home group held its first meeting on Thursday 4th June in City West. Any Family Carer interested in joining the City West group, or the 2 other proposed groups at TLC Santry and Straffan or Maynooth or looking for more information about the programme should contact Barry O'Keefe Age Action Carer Support on 01 44756989.

Email: carersupport@ageaction.ie

Website: www.ageaction.ie

More Employment for Persons with Disabilities:

EASPD Agrees on Thessaloniki Declaration

On 11th and 12th June, the European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) held a Conference on the theme of "Bringing People to Work" took place in Thessaloniki, Greece. DFI is a member of the EASPD. More than 150 interested sector leaders, EASPD members and persons with disabilities attended the Conference and discussed strategies

on how to include persons with disabilities in the labour market and how social services providers can contribute to this process.

On this occasion, the EASPD agreed on an initiative underlining its commitment to adapt to the challenges of the financial crisis and the 21st century: the EASPD Thessaloniki Declaration.

The EASPD Thessaloniki Declaration states that there are over 50 million European citizens with disabilities representing more than 12% of the population of the European Union. While about 68% of non-disabled people are in employment, only 20% of the disabled citizens are employed. 2.5 million disabled people are still employed in sheltered workshops. Unemployment leads directly to poverty, social exclusion and mental health problems.

The EASPD and its member organisations therefore call for full implementation of Article 27 (on work and employment) of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. These high unemployment rates are not acceptable.

Success factors are:

- Stakeholder cooperation - persons with disabilities, social service providers, authorities and the business world at one table
- Targeted actions - make sure that work pays
- Availability of support for employers and employees
- Promoting research and evidence based innovation should be promoted

“We have to unlock this huge potential of persons with disabilities who want and who are able to work!” said Franz Wolfmayr, President of EASPD. “Excluding people from the open labour market means a huge loss of economic value, skills and competencies and generates pressure on social protection schemes. We cannot accept it and therefore call on the European Institutions and the Member States to promote the correct implementation of Article 27 of the UN Convention and to provide legal frameworks guaranteeing real contracts and real salaries to all workers. Persons with disabilities have the right to work like anyone else.”

The Thessaloniki Declaration will be launched in September 2009 in the European Parliament.

Further information: Mr. Luk Zelderloo, Secretary General EASPD

Press contact: Ms. Charlotte Boetticher, Tel. +32 2 282 46 10, charlotte.boetticher@easpd.eu

All EASPD press releases can be downloaded from

<http://www.easpd.eu/News/PressReleases/tabid/3533/Default.aspx>

Irish Charities Tax Refrom Group (ICTRG)

Incentivisation and Tax Reform - Progress despite Recession

The Irish Charities Tax Reform Group (ICTRG) has continued to engage closely with government on issues related to taxation and incentivisation for independent fundraising during 2009. The forthcoming review of the Programme for Government provides an ideal opportunity for ICTRG and individual charities to emphasise the key demands of the campaign again. The ICTRG has been liaising with the Commission on Taxation.

The Commission on Taxation is now expected to present its final report to the Minister for Finance at the end of July, although it is not clear if the Minister will make it public at that stage.

ICTRG has maintained close contact with the Commission on Taxation, following the ICTRG initial formal submission in May of 2009, which emphasised incentivisation of independent fundraising.

ICTRG is one of a small number of organisations that succeeded in obtaining an oral hearing with the Commission. This was took place last March and was attended by John McCormack, Sheila Nordon, Kieran Farrell, Richard Dixon and John Gallagher. The meeting lasted almost twice the scheduled time which allowed for a detailed teasing out of ICTRG proposals. It is clear that the Commission is looking closely at all reliefs, including:

- An investigation of the 41% relief on donations, the possibility of a standardised rate was raised
- A questioning of the mechanisms for VAT compensation.
- An ambivalence from some members towards philanthropy and large scale donations.

Contact is being maintained with the Commission on Taxation. However it is now in the process of finalising its position. ICTRG will immediately respond to any changes in tax policy that may be proposed.

FUNDING

Special EU Programmes Body Funding

The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB), the Managing Authority for the PEACE III Programme is closing the call for applications under Priority 2.2, for key institutional capacities to be developed for a shared society, on **Friday 3rd July at 5.00pm.**

In keeping with the overall aim of the PEACE III Programme, applications must clearly demonstrate how the proposed operation will reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and promote reconciliation.

PRIORITY 2.2: Key Institutional Capacities are Developed for a Shared Society.

Under this theme applications are sought in two main areas:

Area 1: Pilot innovative service delivery models with the potential for mainstreaming.

Area 2: European and international networking; Exchange of best practice.

All applications should be led by a public sector body or equivalent.

Further detailed information on this call is available at: www.seupb.eu

Application forms are only available by visiting www.eugrants.org

The Ray Murphy Fund – Community Foundation for Ireland

The Ray Murphy Fund – managed by the Community Foundation for Ireland - will make grants to build leadership within the community sector from 2008 - 2017. The grants will be for a maximum of €4,000 each and five will be awarded annually. The fund is to help develop management and leadership skills in the voluntary and community sector through training and education. Application deadline: **31st July 2009**

Further information:

The Community Foundation for Ireland ,32 Lower O’Connell Street ,Dublin 1.

Tel: (01) 874 7354

Email: info@foundation.ie

Website: www.communityfoundation.ie/grants

OLC Ireland Trust Fund: A New Grants Scheme for Marginalised Women

The Community Foundation for Ireland has launched a new nationwide fund, the **OLC Ireland Trust Fund**, and has called for applications from registered charities and not for profit organisations around Ireland who work with marginalised women.

The OLC Ireland Trust Fund is managed by The Community Foundation for Ireland on behalf of The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity. The Fund will endeavour to support projects that most closely respond to issues concerning addictions, prostitution, trafficking, violence and abuse of women.

The goal of the fund is to provide resources which will help educate, develop and enhance the lives and dignity of marginalised women.

This new Fund has been opened with a total of €85,500 available for grants in 2009. It will award grants four times per year. Grants will be in the region of €500 to €5,000 except in exceptional circumstances when a maximum of €10,000 will be awarded. Grants will be made for once-off projects that are not the core of ongoing activities of the organisation concerned.

The 2009 Closing dates for applications are:

June 30th

September 30th

December 31st

The Grants will be awarded in July, October and January.

Application forms for the OLC Ireland Trust Fund are now available at

www.communityfoundation.ie/grants or by contacting The Community Foundation for Ireland directly:tel 01 874 7354 / email info@foundation.ie

Guinness– Signature Campaign

As part of its 250th anniversary celebrations, Guinness has announced details of a new marketing campaign from which Irish community and voluntary groups could receive as much as €2.5m in donations.

The idea of the "Signature" campaign is to get one million Irish people to sign their names on a specially designed poster. The campaign will be rolled out in pubs up and down the country in May and June. Community groups stand to gain from the campaign because for every signature received, Guinness has said that it will donate €2.50 to the Arthur Guinness Fund. Guinness then plans to implement the fund in partnership with Social Entrepreneurs Ireland, with the main focus being on projects that will deliver lasting social benefit.

St Stephen's Green Trust Grants Scheme 2009

Grants will be made to organisations working in 3 specific areas, homelessness, prisoners / ex-prisoners and Travellers.

There is one grants meeting in 2009. Deadline for receipt of applications is **Friday, 11th September, 2009.**

There is more information available on the St Stephen's Green Trust Grants Scheme <http://www.activelink.ie/ce/active.php?id=2317> or phone 045 480666.

National Fundraising Awards Open for Nominations

Nominations are now being accepted for the 2009 National Fundraising Awards. Anyone can nominate fundraisers, whether professional or volunteer, in the following categories: Fundraiser of the Year, Fundraising Campaign of the Year and Community Fundraiser of the Year.

The winners will be announced at a special ceremony, hosted by RTE presenter Mary Kennedy, at the Four Seasons Hotel in Dublin on 20th October. The Wheel and Fundraising Ireland established the Awards in 2008, with generous support from Vodafone Ireland, to recognise and celebrate exceptional achievements in charitable fundraising. To nominate or find out more visit: www.fundraisingawards.ie, or follow the Awards on [Twitter](#).

GENERAL NEWS

Activelink

Activelink is the online network for Irish non-profit organisations. Activelink works with non-profit organisations to develop online communications in the public interest, to promote action and participation and to foster the sharing of ideas, experience and information for a better world. The website provides information on areas that are crucial to the community and voluntary sector. Through Activelink organisations can communicate with each other in a number of areas including job opportunities, volunteering opportunities and training and funding news. It acts as a hub for organisations, charities and non governmental organisations that want to find and exchange advice, information and expertise.

Giancarlo Ramaioli developed activelink.ie and Community Exchange. Both staff and Board of DFI wish to extend sincere sympathy to family and friends of Giancarlo Ramaioli who passed away on Tuesday, 26th May. Within the community and voluntary sector Giancarlo's sincere commitment and enthusiasm touched all those who worked with him.

National Institute for Intellectual Disability (NIID)

The National Institute for Intellectual Disability (NIID) at Trinity College Dublin is an inclusive Institute centering on lifelong learning for individuals with intellectual disability, disability research and social change. The three key areas of the Institute's work include lifelong learning, research and advocacy.

The National Institute for Intellectual Disability (NIID) will be holding a 3 day Summer School from Monday 27th to Wednesday 29th July 2009.

The Summer School will provide an opportunity for participants to take part in one of several workshops and to share and increase their knowledge in a selected area. The Summer School will provide a forum to explore what it means to live in an inclusive society and will be of interest to people with intellectual disabilities, their family members, service agency managers and staff, therapists, policy makers, researchers and other professionals.

For further details contact akenned@tcd.ie Phone 01 896 3885

Brainwave – The Irish Epilepsy Association

One Day Training Course for Health Professionals

Brainwave The Irish Epilepsy Association provides support nationwide to people with epilepsy, their families and friends.

Brainwave is providing a one day training course for health professionals. The course has been developed in conjunction with the Joint Epilepsy Council of the UK and Ireland (JEC) guidelines.

The aim of the course is that delegates develop a greater understanding of epilepsy and are instructed in the administration of Buccal Midazolam medication.

The course content includes looking at epilepsy awareness and Buccal Midazolam medication.

For further information contact Ashley Butler Tel 01 455 7500 , Email: info@epilepsy.ie, Web: www.epilepsy.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

Arthritis Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 01 661 8188
E-mail: info@arthritisireland.ie

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

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

Brainstorm - Migraine Association of Ireland, Tel: 01-8064121, E-mail: info@migraine.ie

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

E-Info Deaf Source—E-mail: info@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@irishdeafociety.ie

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

S.I. 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

Speaking up for Advocacy – Citizens Information Board Newsletter on advocacy. Tel: 01 6059035, E-mail: mairide.woods@comhairle.ie or davin.roche@comhairle.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 120 voluntary disability organisations in the DFI Membership.

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

Dublin Mid-Leinster
Anthony Carrick
Dun Laoghaire, Dublin South East, Wicklow
(Dublin Office),
Tel: 01 708 0105
Mobile: 086 8206736
E: 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

Jacqueline Thomson
Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath (Dublin
Office)
Mobile: 086 3882600
E: jacquelinethomson@disability-federation.ie

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

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

Dublin North-East
Joan O'Donnell
Meath, Louth, Cavan, Monaghan (Dublin Office)
Mobile: 086 3834587
E: joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie

Martin Naughton
Dublin North Central, Dublin North West, Dublin
North
E: martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie

West

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

Marcus Hufsky,
Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal
St. Vincent's Business Park, Finisklin Road, Sligo
Tel: 071-9150098
Mobile: 086 3811261
E: marcushufsky@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

South

P.J. Cleere
Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford,
Wexford
DFI, Tinryland, Carlow
Tel: 059 9179431
Mobile: 086 3811064
E: pjcleere@disability-federation.ie

Alison Ryan
Cork, Kerry
101 North Main Street, Cork
Tel: 021 4271752 Mobile 0874198796
E: a.ryan@disability-federation.ie