



Disability Federation of Ireland

Newsletter

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

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DFI National Conference

"We Can't Opt Out Of The Future"

21st & 22nd November 2007

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October / November 2007

'Delivering the Commitment' Estimates and Budget 2008

Voluntary disability organisations have a pivotal role to play in supporting the delivery of mainstream services to people with disabilities. They can only succeed in that role if supported by the State and in particular by the HSE.

At the highest level in Government we are regarded as working in partnership with the State to deliver the National Disability Strategy, yet the continued daily experience for many organisations is of a growing gap and deteriorating relationships with the HSE. Allied to this, our organisations have core underfunding issues. For some of our organisations, these were set to be addressed going back a decade, with the establishment in 2000 of the Working Group on Funding Physical and Sensory Disability Organisations by the Department of Health and Children, and there have been additional commitments from Government across our sector before and since then.

It now appears that due to the HSE cutbacks we have lost what was a modest amount of €5m allocated this year to address funding deficits for health related services provided by voluntary disability organisations. Not alone do we have one hand tied behind our back due to underfunding, but the little that was available this year has been withdrawn. The HSE has not succeeded in

managing its budget, and consequently people with disabilities are paying the price.

There is an expectation that we are all working together to achieve the delivery of the National Disability Strategy. Working together surely means delivering core funding where and when it is needed so that services and supports currently being delivered can be maintained.

We are being softened up for a tight budget yet there are some other facts to be considered. Firstly the economy, which is very strong, is still set to grow over the years ahead and secondly this Government, less than four months ago, said that it will set out for each year the objectives and outcomes to be reached in the National Disability Strategy. These commitments are noted in the Programme for Government, where it is stated that half the Strategy will be delivered over the next three years. The Programme for Government was written after the election - it is the programme of action for this Government.

On Budget day, 5th December, DFI will be seeking €25m towards Core Deficits and Capacity Building for its organisations. We will also be seeking the introduction of a Cost of Disability Payment.

Finally, Governments, on a routine and annual basis must make decisions. They must take into account the circumstances that they find themselves in and, equally, the circumstances that they put themselves in. We expect that they will continue to state that the economy is slowing down. That is a fact. Yet they are also, and equally, approaching the target time limit by which they committed to having 50% of the National Disability Strategy delivered. That too is a fact.

It is now vital that every effort is made by every disability organisation to impress upon TDs and Senators that Government must start to deliver on its commitments.

John Dolan
Chief Executive

Disability Federation of Ireland

National Conference

Date: 21st & 22nd November 2007

Venue: The Portlaoise Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise

“We Can’t Opt Out Of The Future.”

Voluntary disability organisations have been to the forefront of promoting the inclusion and wellbeing of people with disabilities. They have a critical role to play in assisting people with disabilities to gain access, as equal citizens to all aspects of Irish life; this includes the provision of specialist services and in enabling people with disabilities to access services available to members of the public.

The conference focuses on the continued importance and changing role of disability organisations in the new environment being shaped by the Government’s commitments in the National Disability Strategy (NDS) and ‘Towards 2016’ to the mainstreaming of supports and services to people with disabilities. A key tool to achieving this goal will be the ability of all organisations both voluntary and statutory to work better together.

‘Towards 2016’ states that “every person with a disability would ...in conformity with their needs and abilities, have access to appropriate care, health, education, employment and training and social services...be supported to enable them, as far as possible, to lead full and independent lives, to participate in work and in society and to maximise their potential.”

There are already many examples of joint working in the delivery of supports and services for people with disabilities. This conference aims to build upon this experience and to explore:

- the centrality of joint working to the delivery of the NDS;
- give an overview of different ways and means of joint working;
- discuss joint working in Irish context;
- identify what supports and what hinders joint working, and
- allow organisations a time to learn from one another’s experiences and concerns in relation to joint working.

The NDS and ‘Towards 2016’ offers a roadmap for the future supports and services to people with disabilities. This conference will assist organisations to prepare for this future.

Who Should Attend?

Representatives from voluntary disability organisations or statutory agencies interested in delivery of supports and services to people with disabilities.

**Further information and booking details are available on our website <insert link>
For queries please E-mail: conference@disability-federation.ie.**

News

DFI Submission to Department of Health and Children Sectoral Plan Review

Under the Disability Act 2005 (Part 3, Sections 31 – 37) there is a statutory requirement for six Government Departments to publish Sectoral Plans. The aim of these Plans is to ensure that disability is given due priority in service planning and delivery in each Department that publishes a Sectoral Plan.

DFI has prepared a Submission to the Department of Health and Children Sectoral Plan review process, now in progress. The overall aim of this Submission is to ensure that the reviewed Sectoral Plan will comprehensively address the needs of people with disabilities, in line with current Government policy of population health and mainstreaming.

The DFI Submission outlines a number of elements for the implementation process. These include consultation with key stakeholders, a population health focus, the development of planning mechanisms, cross-agency co-ordination, implementation targets and capacity building supports for the voluntary disability sector. These combined elements, if adopted, will greatly increase the possibility of achieving successful outcomes for all concerned.

In the new policy environment that encompasses mainstreaming, the NDS and its expression across the lifecycle approach adopted in Towards 2016, DFI envisages commitments in the Department of Health and Children Sectoral Plan that are not just disability specific, but which also cover the broader needs of people with disabilities, as part of the general population. With these issues in mind, DFI has made a number of recommendations and

expectations to the Department of Health and Children under the review process. Amongst other recommendations, these include:

- Provision of protocols and planning procedures for the implementation and monitoring of the Sectoral Plan, for both disability specific and mainstream services. These procedures to be co-ordinated across all Government departments and agencies in a uniform manner.
- Provision for robust consultation with the voluntary disability sector, as key stakeholders in the process
- Provision of a project plan for the phased implementation of the INA process, including the wider implementation process, to include details of mechanisms and procedures for cross-agency co-ordination. Comprehensive procedures should also be outlined and put in place for the maintenance of records on levels of unmet need under the INA.
- Provision for a review of current information systems, and the replacement of the present interim information system by an effective permanent information system. The working knowledge, experience and information held by voluntary disability organisations should be harnessed as part of the data collection process
- Provision of funding and support processes for capacity building in voluntary disability organisations

This review must result in a strong and focused Plan that reflects the views of the sector and people with disabilities. The Sectoral Plan must not only deliver on Government commitments in relation to the Individual Needs Assessment (INA) and the NDS, but should also encompass

mainstream health policy development, such as Primary, Continuing and Community Care (PCCC), and Population Health.

DFI acknowledges that the key determinants of health, poverty, housing and education, do not fall within the area of direct responsibility of the Department of Health and Children. However, a key challenge for the Department in reviewing its current Sectoral Plan is to put in place a systematic planning process, to include co-ordination measures across all Government departments and agencies.

DFI believes that full delivery of services and supports through specialist and mainstream routes is essential if the overall implementation of the National Disability Strategy is to be successful.

For further information, or if you would like a copy of the DFI's Submission, contact jacintadixon@disability-federation.ie

DFI Submission Local Government Reform

DFI responded to the call by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government for submissions in anticipation of a Green Paper on Local Government Reform. DFI focussed on the issue of providing quality customer service. DFI's Submission highlighted:

- the importance of arrangements for on-going consultation with the voluntary disability sector about service provision, and also
- for local co-ordination of the wide range of services that enable a holistic response to individual needs.

An email version of the submission can be requested from Lillian Buchanan via email lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie

***Towards 2016* Disability Strand of the Life Cycle Approach**

On the agenda of the Steering Group of the Social Partners for 8th October was a Progress Report on the People with Disabilities Stage of the Life Cycle. DFI's CEO, John Dolan, who is a member of the Community and Voluntary Pillar of Social Partnership, commented on progress. He expressed the view that as things currently stand, the vision and long term goals for people with disabilities set out in the partnership agreement will not be substantially delivered by 2016.

He noted that commendable actions are taking place across Government, but he concluded that the performance of the statutory health services will effectively determine success or failure of the whole project. He added that the recent service cutbacks in the HSE, when viewed against significant ongoing core under-funding in voluntary disability organisations, is undermining confidence about the Government's commitment.

A set of priority actions were identified in his remarks. These included:

- Getting the Office of the Minister for Disability fully operational
- Establishing an NDS project management function to ensure progress towards the long term goals
- Ensuring that the Estimates and Budget 2008 sets out the resources to be deployed to reach towards the goals, and for half the NDS commitments to be delivered by 2010

- The Budget to be transparent, distinguishing between funding revenues deployed to provide disability specific services and separately those to provide mainstream services.

Protection of Vulnerable Adults

The HSE is convening a group to work on developing a policy for the protection of vulnerable adults for implementation across the health delivery system. The cohort of clients being considered include those with a disability which includes persons with mental health presentations and older persons who are deemed vulnerable. Jacqueline Thomson, Support Officer will represent DFI on this group and it is envisaged that a draft will be completed by mid-November.

For further information please contact Jacqueline Thomson, Support Officer, at jacquelinethomson@disability-federation.ie.

DFI Seminar 'Information is Power'

DFI held a short seminar on Information Management in Voluntary Disability Organisations on 4th October, in its Dublin office.

The aim of the seminar was to highlight to organisations that, to effectively operate with the National Disability Strategy (NDS) and mainstreaming, it will be essential to have relevant and transparent information on, but not limited to:

- Membership,
- Membership needs,
- Current level of Service
- Service Deficit
- Projected needs of your particular group over the life course

This seminar explored some of these issues. Presentations were made by the National Disability Authority (NDA) and the Health Research Board (HRB).

The meeting noted that over the last ten years significant developments have taken place in relation to the delivery of services to people with disabilities. The Government's commitment to mainstreaming means that voluntary disability organisations have a key role to play in facilitating people with disabilities to link with local services such as education, housing and health. In addition, the introduction of the Independent Needs Assessment (INA) and the future development of the Personal Advocacy Service (PAS) puts stronger emphasis on the role of organisations to better understand and capture the crucial information on the needs of their members and to prepare them for assessments. The better the understanding that organisations have on the needs of their members, the better their ability to present this information to the relevant statutory agency, and the more effective these services will be in identifying the needs and developing the services.

Through the management and use of information held by disability organisations, an important role will be played in supporting these new systems to better capture and respond to the needs of people with disabilities. It will support disability organisations in its efforts to plan, develop, and enhance services.

Following on from the Seminar, it has been agreed that the HRB will hold a Seminar early in the new year, together with the HRB, in relation to the National Physical and Sensory Disability Database. Further information will be provided when available.

Contact jacintadixon@disability-federation.ie

Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) Standards for Designated Centres for People with Disabilities

HIQA has recently established a National Quality Standards Group to develop and agree a set of national standards for designated centres for people with disabilities. Designated centres are defined in the Health Act 2007 as an institution:

- (a) at which residential services are provided by the Executive, a service provider or a person that is not a service provider but who receives assistance under Section 39 of the Health Act 2004 or under section of the Child Care Act 1991:
 - (i) in accordance with the Child Care Act 1991
 - (ii) to persons with disabilities, in relation to their disabilities, or
 - (iii) to other dependent persons, in relation to their dependencies

- (b) that is a nursing home as defined in Section 2 of the Health (Nursing Homes) Act 1990, but does not include any of the following:
 - (i) a centre registered by the Mental Health Commission
 - (ii) An institution managed by or on behalf of a Minister of the Government
 - (iii) That part of an institution in which the majority of persons being cared for and maintained are being treated for acute illness or provided with palliative care
 - (iv) An institution primarily used for the provision of

educational, cultural, recreational, leisure, social or physical activities

- (v) A special care unit
- (vi) A children's detention school as defined Section 3 of the Children Act 2001.

The process will involve regular meetings up to April 2008 when, it is anticipated, a set of draft standards will be completed. Following a consultation exercise, the group will then reconvene later in 2008 to consider its outcome. It is hoped that the standards will be completed and published during autumn 2008. Jacqueline Thomson, Support Officer, will represent DFI on this group. For further information please contact Jacqueline Thomson, jacquelinethomson@disability-federation.ie

SKILL PROJECT

Over the past two years 17 DFI Member Organisations have taken up the unique training opportunity of SKILL Project Training Programme for support and supervisory staff. SKILL is an acronym for Securing Knowledge Intra Lifelong Learning. The programme blends the experience people have gained from their work with modular based training.

SKILL Project is aimed at addressing the need for improved access to education, training and development opportunities to staff working in support grades within the Irish health and personal social services. Two Fetac Accredited awards are currently provided within SKILL Project – Fetac Level 5 'Health Service Skills' and Fetac Level 6 'Advanced Certificate in Supervisory Management Skills'.

The role of DFI within SKILL Project is to facilitate and support participating DFI Member organisations. DFI has recently been granted a position on the National SKILL Project Steering Group and Niall

Byrne, Chair of the DFI SKILL Project Steering Group has agreed to represent DFI Member Organisations participating on the SKILL Project.

SKILL Project Training is provided free of charge to organisations and a financial contribution will be made from the SKILL funding towards the cost associated with participants attending programmes. The HSE has recently announced an increase of this funding to a sum of €3,000 per person per programme.

DFI is now calling on any DFI Member Organisations with an interest in the SKILL Project to submit an Expression of Interest in the SKILL Project Training Programme 2008 / 2009. This form is available to download from the DFI website or by contacting Cathy McGrath on 01 4250124 / cathymcgrath@disability-federation.ie

Charities Bill 2007

DFI welcomes the publication of the Charities Bill 2007 which was introduced for the Second Stage Debate in the Dáil by Minister Pat Carey T.D. on 10th October.

DFI has been engaged, together with The Wheel, in advocating for amendments to be made to the Bill, in order to improve and protect the vitality of the disability sector. The Bill refers to bodies that would be excluded from the register of charities as a 'political party, or a body, the principle object of which is to promote a political party, candidate or cause.' DFI is lobbying to have the word 'cause' removed from the wording, and to have the advancement of human rights, which was included in the Heads of the Bill, reinserted. Other concerns regarding the current wording of the Bill relate to the proposal that the

Regulator shall operate as the enforcer of regulation, as well as acting in an advisory capacity to organisations. These two roles are clearly incompatible, and may even result in a conflict of interest for the Regulator.

DFI is recommending that this be redrafted so that the Regulator will lay out mandatory requirements, and so that separate provision is made for the establishment of a Resource Support Centre for voluntary organisations. Both the Department and opposition parties have been very receptive to proposals to improve this legislation, and further representations will be made once the Bill moves to committee stage. For further information, please refer to DFI's website, www.disability-federation.ie, and the Wheel website, www.wheel.ie. The text of the Bill, as well as a synopsis, can be downloaded at www.pobail.ie.

DFI hosted a panel discussion on the Charities Bill 2007 on Thursday 15th November at Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8, for all organisations who wish to find out more about the Bill and its implications for voluntary organisations. Further information on the event from email ioanodonnell@disability-federation.ie

New DFI Members

The Peter Bradley Foundation has moved from associate membership to full membership. The Mission of the Peter Bradley Foundation is to enable people with Acquired Brain Injury to live an independent life in the community, by providing and maintaining a supportive living environment.

AHEAD has joined as an associate member. The CEO of AHEAD is Ann Heelan. AHEAD is the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability. It's central mission is to promote access for,

and the full participation of, students with disabilities in higher education.

The Kilkenny Centre for Independent Living (CIL) has joined as an associate member. The aims of Kilkenny CIL are to empower people with disabilities to live independently in their own homes and to participate in community life.

Praxis Care Group has joined DFI as a full member. The Group's aim and objectives are to promote the well being of people with learning disabilities, brain injury or who experience mental ill health, through the provision of residential, day care and domiciliary services.

Eastern Region Platform Meeting

The latest meeting of the Eastern Region Platform took place recently, with the usual high attendance. The main presentation came from Frank Snow (FÁS) who gave a detailed and comprehensive presentation and answered lots of questions on FÁS employments supports and services for people with disability. This was preceded by a short presentation by Ava Battles, the new CEO of Carmichael Centre (www.carmichaelcentre.ie), who outlined the work of the organisation and the services it provides to members and non-members.

There was also a presentation from Suzanne Shaw, Director of Business Development and Kathryn Burns, Member Services Executive, both of The Institute of Certified Public Accountants (CPA) in Ireland (www.cpaireland.ie). Suzanne and Kathryn spoke about how DFI is providing CPA with advice and support to develop a best practice guide on financial management policies and a portfolio of functional templates and guidance documents. These are aimed at providing a framework for charities to keep proper

accounts in the light of the development proposed within the Charities Legislation Bill.

If you'd like any further information about this Platform, or if you'd like a copy of any of the presentations, please contact Anthony Carrick on 01-708 0105 or anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie.

DFI Assists Member Organisation to Upgrade Accounting Systems



Anthony Carrick, Support Officer, DFI, presenting a cheque for €1,100 to Maeve Halpin, Development Officer, CARELOCAL, and Laura Desmond, Administrative Assistant, CARELOCAL.

Over the past few years, DFI has been happy to work alongside CARELOCAL in helping them to develop their financial systems and controls, as part of DFI's ongoing work to build the capacity of member organisations.

Approached by Maeve Halpin for advice in securing Core Funding, DFI initially provided assistance in developing the CARELOCAL Strategic Plan 2006-2008. Following receipt of funding from the Dormant Account Funds, CARELOCAL asked DFI to assist in developing a flexible accounting system, which could respond to the needs of a growing organisation while, at the same time, providing the required information to the funder, in a timely and transparent manner.

A strategy was developed to move CARELOCAL's financial systems from a totally manual, paper-based system which provided financial information at year-end only, to a computerised system, which provides detailed monthly information to the CARELOCAL Board, management and funders.

In the first instance, a set of Excel spreadsheets was developed by DFI for CARELOCAL, on the understanding that this would provide a short-term, interim solution before moving to a recognised accounting package.

Two other initiatives were also undertaken by CARELOCAL – the hiring of a part-time Accounts Administrator and the commissioning of an independent professional review of CARELOCAL's systems and financial controls.

The latter initiative resulted in a set of recommendations which were endorsed by the CARELOCAL Board and which has led to the establishment of the CARELOCAL Financial Policies, Systems and Procedures Steering Group, which has been set up to implement the recommendations. The Steering Group comprises members from the CARELOCAL Board, CARELOCAL Management and DFI Support Officer.

Included in the recommendations was the implementation of the MYOB Accounting Package (www.myob.com). DFI is pleased to have been able to provide a small grant towards the purchase of the package and training for CARELOCAL staff. This work was undertaken by Paul Davis of Davis Business Consulting (www.davisbusinessconsultants.com) following a tendering process.

DFI is interested in hearing suggestions from other member organisations in relation to the types of support that they need in order to build their capacity, and that would enable them to respond to the changes being brought about by the National

Disability Strategy, Towards 2016 and the forthcoming Charities Legislation. Where possible, we will use this information to provide direct support but, also, to advocate for greater organisational development supports from Government. Please contact your Support Officer if you have any requirements or suggestions.

Complaints Procedure

The Department of Social and Family Affairs is making specific provision for a system of complaint and redress as required under sections 38 and 39 of the Disability Act 2005. The Department will ensure that over and above its existing Social Welfare Appeals and Customer Comments and Complaints systems, an adequate complaints and redress structure for people with disabilities be put in place to deal with issues concerning access for the full complement of services administered by Department and the agencies under its aegis.

HSE Complaints Procedures

There have been several information sessions for voluntary disability organisations recently, with the HSE giving a presentation about obligations regarding complaints procedures and reporting. One such information session was hosted by DFI at Fumbally Court in Dublin, and another is being arranged in Sligo by DFI on 24th November.

DFI has also been asked to advise its members to alert HSE's Consumer Affairs office of any serious complaints received within the past twelve months. The HSE considers that a satisfactory resolution is more likely to result if it is involved at an early stage. Contact details are:

Consumer Affairs, Office of the CEO,
Health Service Executive, Oak House,
Limetree Avenue, Millenium Park, Naas, Co
Kildare.

Guidelines on the Governance of Integrated Local Development Companies and Urban Based Partnerships

These Guidelines are designed to assist the companies, sectors and pillars that are involved in supporting and promoting social and community development initiatives on behalf of the Department of Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs.

The guidelines can be downloaded from the Pobail website:

<http://www.pobail.ie/en/CommunityLocalDevelopmentProgrammes/CohesionProcess/GovernanceGuidelinesforIntegratedCompanies/file.8629.en.pdf>

Partners Wanted For Exciting Telephone Support Pilot Project

Community Network is seeking organisations to work with them on piloting a new approach to social inclusion and low level care. Since 1989, Community Network, a U.K. registered charity, has used telephone conference call technology to develop the concept of social telephony as a means of combating social isolation. With a client database of 760(plus) voluntary and community groups last year it facilitated circa 9,000 conference hours.

Community Network offers voluntary and community organisations a cost-effective opportunity to reach out to and support individuals by telephone networking from their own homes. For individuals unable to

physically attend a meeting, a conference call will allow them to contribute to, and remain a part of, the wider community. Friendship circles, carers' support meetings are all held over the phone - new friends made and stories told.

Community Network is seeking a range of organisations for this exciting pilot. This is a free opportunity to test out a new way of working and see if and how it will work for your organisation. Each participating organisation will have one telephone conference a week for a six month period for 6 - 8 participants plus a host.

The host, a volunteer from your organisation, will be trained, by Community Network in how to manage the conference call and maximise the experience for all concerned. Everyone will be called out from Community Network and therefore not incur any costs at all.

Contact julian@community-network.org and tell them why you think your organisation should be part of this opportunity. As a big response is expected to this offer please reply as quickly as possible to avoid disappointment.

No special equipment needed to take part - just a phone and no costs to participating organisations. For more information visit www.community-network.org. BT is sponsoring this project.

Housing Adaptation Grant Schemes

The Housing Aid for Older People Scheme was announced by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in its policy statement earlier in 2007. It will become operational on 1st November 2007, will provide targeted support to improve conditions in the existing housing of older people.

Alternatively, the Mobility Aids Grant Scheme, Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability and Housing Aid for Older People are intended to ensure that available funding is targeted at lower income households and those whose accommodation needs are greatest. The schemes are expected to provide a more streamlined process than previously.

Further information is given on the Department's website:
<http://www.environ.ie/en/DevelopmentandHousing/Housing/SpecialNeeds/DisabledPersons/>

100% Capital Funding for Special Needs and Sheltered Housing

Mr Batt O'Keeffe TD, Minister for Housing, Urban Renewal and Developing Areas has announced details of a revised funding scheme for the provision, by voluntary and co-operative housing bodies, of special needs accommodation and sheltered housing for elderly persons, the homeless, persons with disabilities and other special needs groups.

To date, voluntary and co-operative housing groups have been required to contribute up to 5% of total capital cost. The Minister pointed out that in the case of a 10-unit special needs housing project, this could amount to well over €100,000. The Government will contribute 100% of the approved capital costs of new projects commencing construction from the start of November.

The Minister observed that voluntary and co-operative housing bodies currently provide and manage over 2,000 units of accommodation for special needs residents. A further 5,000 units, some with on-site supports such as day-care and daily hot meals, are provided for the elderly. He anticipated that some 2,000 new units of

accommodation can be provided by the voluntary and co-operative sector each year.

Joint Housing Research Report by the Citizens Information Board and Disability Federation of Ireland

DFI and the Citizens Information Board (CIB) jointly participated in a two-year research project on housing for people with disabilities. This research focused on the experience of people with disabilities and the voluntary organisations working with them in accessing appropriate housing. It also considered the implications for housing and accommodation policies. Members of DFI's Housing Sub Group were instrumental in getting the project underway. The findings should inform the development of the national housing strategy for people with disabilities.

The Report will be launched in the near future. Further information about the launch will be placed on DFI's website.

Irish Council for Social Housing Biennial Conference

The Council's Biennial Conference included a presentation on a survey of its housing association members that sought to find out how many of their housing units provide accommodation for people with disabilities. The responses indicate that 2,064 units are occupied by people with disabilities, located across 267 schemes owned by 82 different housing associations. The great majority of these units are in the Dublin area. Some 56% of the units house persons with an intellectual disability.

The research report can be viewed on the Council's website at

http://www.icsh.ie/eng/services/publications/icsh_publications/enhancing_choices_for_people_with_disabilities_in_the_community

National Group to Develop National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities

The first meeting of the National Group took place at the end of October. The draft terms of reference have been proposed by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DOEHLG):

- To input into Government policy on addressing the accommodation needs of people with a disability
- To advise on the structures and supports required to effectively deliver on the accommodation needs of people with a disability, including through the development of inter agency responses
- To act as an advisory and monitoring body on the implementation of the new strategy.

The Group will be headed by DOEHLG with representation from the Department of Health and Children, the HSE, social partners and other relevant stakeholders. The latter includes the six umbrella disability organisations. DFI's representative is Martin McNaughton.

UN Convention and Council of Europe Disability Action Plan NDA Disability Seminar

The Minister of State with responsibility for Disability and Mental Health, Dr. Jimmy Devins T.D., 3rd October, 2007 opened the

National Disability Authority's seminar on the UN Convention and the Council of Europe's Disability Action Plan.

Ireland was one of the first countries to sign the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities when it opened for signature on 30th March 2007. Since then, the Government has established an implementation group to advise on any changes to the Government's National Disability Strategy that may be required to enable Ireland to ratify the Convention.

The Council of Europe Disability Action Plan was launched in September 2006. The purpose of the Disability Action Plan is to support the development of strategies to bring about full participation.

Funding

Funding Handbook

The new edition of the Create (formerly known as Café) Fundbook is now available. This is a special edition as it also includes information on fundraising in accordance with the proposals under the new charities legislation. The cost is €20 plus €3 P&P. to any organisation. It can be ordered by sending an E-mail to fh6@create-ireland.ie or call 01 4736600.

Training

Certificate in Applied Management

The Open Training College is now accepting applications for Certificate in Applied Management. The course has proved very popular among managers, deputy managers or supervisors of two or

more staff, working at first-line level in services for people with a disability.

More information about the course is available on the Open Training College website under the courses section, or, contact the admissions department (Tel: (01)2988544) for a printed information pack. Course fees are €1,700.

NCI Certificate in Managing Organisations - Voluntary and Community Sector

This programme is for people currently working in or who are interested in working in the voluntary sector, in a paid or voluntary capacity.

Venue: National College of Ireland, Mayor St, IFSC, Dublin 1
Date: Tuesday 15th January 2008

For more information please contact National College of Ireland, Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin. Tel:01 4498500 / 1850 221721, Fax: +353 1 4972200, E-mail: info@ncirl.ie

ICEP Europe Autumn 2007 Programme

ICEP (Institute of Child Education & Psychology) Europe is supported by the Special Education Support service and the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Science. This year there are two new collaborations.

- Certificate / Diploma in Special / Inclusive Education, offered in partnership with St Patrick's College, Drumcondra. This online programme leads to the award of a Certificate / Diploma from Dublin City University.

- Advanced Diploma in Inclusive Education is Offered in partnership with Queen's University Belfast, School of Education, this three module online programme leads to an Advanced Diploma in Professional Development (Adv Dip PD) Inclusive Education.

For further information or queries please contact:

ICEP Europe, Thompson Enterprise Centre, Clane Business Park, Clane, Co. Kildare, Ireland. Tel: (045) 982628 or (045) 893073 Lo Call: 1890 882015 Fax: (045) 982637 E-mail: info@icepe.eu

Better Options - High Education

This is a unique one-day national event, organised by AHEAD, focusing on students with a disability or specific learning difficulty considering Higher Education options in Ireland.

Date: Wednesday 5th December 2007
Time: 11.00 am – 3.00 pm
Venue: National College of Ireland, Mayor Street, IFSC, Dublin 1

Event enquiries: AHEAD, Telephone: (01) 716 4396, Email: ahead@ahead.ie

2007 Directory of Community Development Courses

The Combat Poverty Agency has published a directory of courses in community development and related areas offered by third level institutions in Ireland. The directory is useful to anyone considering embarking on study for the first time in the area of community development or wishing to further study in this area. Available only online from www.combatpovertypublications.ie

General Information

‘Are We Delivering Outcomes?’ A National Conference

This Conference will highlight the work of the Delivering Outcomes to People Project. This will be an opportunity for all the agencies being accredited during 2007 to celebrate the good work being done by their services.

Date: 27th / 28th Nov 2007 Venue:
Tullamore Court Hotel
For further information please contact:
Oonagh Hayes on 01-8086411 or E-mail
oonagh.hayes@smh.ie or Margaret Farrell
on 01-8086402 or margaret.farrell@smh.ie.
The programme will be available on the
website www.outcomestopeople.ie

Adult Learners’ Festival 2008

The second annual nationwide AONTAS Adult Learners' Festival will take place from 4th - 8th February 2008. The festival will be coordinated and promoted by AONTAS, with the support and participation of their members and various adult and community education groups throughout the country.

If your organisation would like to be involved in the 2008 festival, please contact AONTAS on 01-4068220, E-mail: mail@aontas.com or see www.adultlearnersfestival.com

National Gallery of Ireland ISL Tours

The National Gallery of Ireland has arranged a series of Irish Sign Language

tours to take place on Thursday, December 6th 2007 and Thursday, February 7th 2008.

These tours will take place at 6.30 pm, meeting in the Shaw Room and no booking is required.

Community and Voluntary Sector Insurance

The Wheel in conjunction with Arachas Corporate Brokers, are delighted to announce the introduction of CV cover. It is a unique service for community and voluntary organisations wishing to secure insurance advice, quotations, or cover. The site contains useful information around various aspects of risk associated with the sector such as, Directors & Officers, and Professional Indemnity insurance.

Questions can be submitted online or directly from Arachas. Please see check the Arachas website <http://www.arachas.ie>

Consumer Guide for People With Disabilities and Older People

The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) and the National Disability Authority (NDA) has published a consumer guide entitled ‘Phones and Broadband – a guide for people with disabilities and older people’.

The purpose of the guide is to give straightforward, accessible and useful information on the services available for people with disabilities and for older people. It includes information on services such as Textphone which is a service that converts voice messages into text and SMS to Speech which allows people to listen to text messages. The Guide also provides information on accessibility features of home phones and mobile phones as well as

specific information on phones that are compatible with hearing aids.
An accessible electronic version is available on www.askcomreg.ie,

Entitlements for Over Sixties

In Ireland Positive Ageing Week marked the importance of this age group and now the Citizens Information Board has published 'Entitlements for Over Sixties'. This booklet explains as clearly as possible the various income support payments, benefits and other services available to people over 60 in Ireland. It is a practical guide that includes information on qualifying for a state pension, early retirement, benefits in kind, health services, tax, legal matters equal status and equality.

Copies are available by contacting the Citizens Information Board at (01) 605 9000 or by E-mailing info@ciboard.ie.

Creating Supportive Environments for Older People In Ireland

The National Council on Ageing and Older People is holding its 2007 Healthy Ageing Conference on Thursday, 6th December 2007 at Croke Park Conference Centre, Dublin 3

More information to follow on the website: www.ncaop.ie

Health Action Overseas

Health Action Overseas is seeking a new Board member who has specific knowledge of disability service provision, to provide advice and direction to the development of the organisation's disability services in Romania and China.

For more information call Audrey on 01 8733171

The Wheel E-magine...E-nable...E-ngage

This is an initiative offering free software and training to community and voluntary organisations.

The way in which we use technology can help us to work smarter, not harder. Working smarter helps us to reduce costs. The Wheel, in partnership with Enclude, want your opinion on your needs, so get involved in one of our upcoming workshops. Through your participation you will be in with a chance to win a laptop computer. Also, participants may have the opportunity to be part of the pilot for an exciting project designed to bring the benefits and efficiencies of technology to community organisations. The Wheel plans to hold four such sessions:

- Tuesday 27th November 10.30 to 12.30 p.m., Dublin
- Tuesday 4th December, 10.30 p.m., Cork
- Thursday 6th December 10.30 to 12.30, Dublin
- Tuesday 11th December, 2 to 4 p.m., Carmichael Centre, Dublin

Further information from www.wheel.ie

Combat Poverty Agency Annual Conference

The Annual Conference of the Combat Poverty Agency, 'Having Your Say – Participation in Policy – Making it Work', will take place in Dublin Castle on Tuesday 11th December, in the Dublin Castle Conference Centre. This Conference will share the learning of how disadvantaged

groups have engaged with the policy system in Ireland at local and national level and explore methodologies for engaging vulnerable groups to enable them to have their say in policy and decision-making processes.

Full information, and conference programme is available email: havingyoursay@combatpoverty.ie.

Dun Laoghaire – Rathdown County Council
Public Consultation Regarding Accessibility Implementation Plan (Sectoral Plan)

Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown Council Council (DLRCC) invites all residents and interested parties, including people with disabilities or special needs, their families, friends, carers and advocates, as well as their representative and / or service provision organisations, to attend one of three meetings in order to consider the contents of the Authority's draft local Accessibility Implementation Plan and to provide the Authority with your thoughts, comments and opinions on the Plan. This Plan is being prepared in line with the requirements of the Disability Act 2005 and the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government's Sectoral Plan.

The meetings will take place as follows, and both venues are fully accessible:

- 3rd December, 11 a.m., County Hall, Dun Laoghaire
- 14th January, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., Taney Parish Centre, Taney Road, Dundrum

It is important that your voice is heard, so please come along. There is no need to book, but if you have any specific requirements, please contact Pat Coffey, Equality Access Officer, Tel: 01 204 7269,

Email: access@dlrcoco.ie. The draft Implementation Plan will be available to download from the Council's website, www.dlrcoco.ie from 13th November 2007.

If you are unable to attend, you make a submission to Pat Coffey.



DFI Newsletter Information

DFI Newsletters are available for download from our website:

www.disability-federation.ie

Send newsletter submissions by e-E-mail to:

newsletter@disability-federation.ie

Send newsletter subscription requests by e-E-mail to:

newsletter@disability-federation.ie

or

<http://www.disability-federation.ie/newsletters.htm>

Newsletters Available

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@irishdeafsociety.ie. Tel: +353 1860 1878

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

National Association for Deaf People - Link Magazine - Tel: 01 8723800, E-mail: nad@iol.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: vmcutch@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 - Comhairle 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 the national support mechanism for voluntary disability organisations in Ireland covering all areas of disability and disabling conditions: intellectual, physical, sensory, hidden and mental health. DFI has ongoing involvement with over 150 organisations and groups across the country, 70 of which currently comprise its National Council, and 42 of which are Associate Members. Allied to this, it works with and supports over 200 organisations and Groups around the country that have a significant and growing disability interest, mainly coming from the statutory and voluntary sectors.

DFI provides:

- Information
- Training and Advice
- Organisation and Management Development
- Research and Policy
- Advocacy and Representation

Support Officers

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

Dublin Mid-Leinster

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

Anthony Carrick
Dun Laoghaire, Dublin South East, Wicklow
(Dublin Office),
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

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
Mobile: 086 8207196
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
DFI, NRC, Forthill, Sligo,
Tel: 071 9144614,
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 9158111
Mobile: 086 3811064
E: pjcleere@disability-federation.ie

Alison Ryan
Cork, Kerry
On leave
Please contact : Eleanor Scanlan, Dublin Office
eleanorscanlan@disability-federation.ie