



Disability Federation of Ireland

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

Newsletter – June 2013

SPECIAL LOCAL GOVERNMENT REFORM EDITION

Local Government Reform is also our Business

“Putting People First” published in October 2012 by the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government sets out the government’s strategy for the reform of local government. It represents a fundamental shift in the way that local government will operate in Ireland for the foreseeable future. Key decisions that were previously made centrally will be made locally, affecting funding and other resource allocations.

Among many other reforms a new local structure entitled the Socio Economic Committee, (SEC) will be established, which will have oversight and administration of many local development funding streams. A five year City and County Local Community Development Plan will be developed by the Socio Economic Committee. All local statutory agencies with a local development function will be represented on the Socio Economic Committee (including the HSE) as well as locally elected officials, and local authority personnel.

“Community interests” will also be represented but who this refers to, and how this will be decided has not yet been defined. The deadline for completion of the reform process coincides with the local elections in June 2014, and the new structures will operate from that point onwards. It is important at this stage to consider the impact of these changes on the disability sector.

Since the National Disability Strategy (NDS) was announced in 2005, DFI has drawn attention to the evolving links between the local implementation of the NDS and local government decision-making structures and the impact these have on the lives of people with disabilities. DFI established a dedicated team to work on the local implementation of the NDS, and held a conference in 2009 dedicated to this topic: ‘Count Me In: Including People with a Disability in Local Government Structures and Services’. The team continues to be actively engaged in delivering capacity building workshops with the broader community sector, the disability sector, umbrella organisations and support agencies across the country.

It is very important that people with disabilities and member organisations become more actively involved in the new local government structures. This can be achieved through representation on the new local structures and the formation of links with other community and voluntary sector organisations and agencies. If we do not engage in this process, the needs of people with disabilities will most likely not be visible in the new five year Local and Community Development plans. Key areas to be alert to are the allocation of housing, transport, children's services, as well as available funding to voluntary disability organisations.

A key question to ask is how people with disabilities are affected by the reforms in the context of mainstreaming of public services? We have dedicated this Newsletter to the issue of local government reform, as we are concerned about people with disabilities' future role in local structures.

If you have any questions or would like clarification on any of the points raised in this article please feel free to contact: PJ Cleere at 086 3811064 or pjcleere@disability-federation.ie

What will Local Government Reform Mean Locally?

Local Government Reform is in its infancy and more detailed decisions have yet to be made by the Department of the Environment, Community, and Local Government (DoECLG). However, it is possible at this stage to identify the main effects of these reforms as follows:

1. There will be fewer local authorities and power will be concentrated at county level.
2. There will be fewer locally elected representatives after the local government elections in June 2014 (almost half the present number).
3. Locally elected representatives will have greater decision-making powers in areas such as local development funding, business rates, property tax (after 2015) and in other key areas of our lives.

4. The Socio Economic Committee (SEC)¹ will have oversight and administration of the funding and resources of the local development agencies who will be 'aligned' to local government. This in effect means that the Socio Economic Committee will have a strong decision making remit with regard to how local development agencies spend their resources including decisions to fund projects / actions.
5. We estimate that there will be approximately five seats in total for both local authority representation and representation from 'community interests'. A number of seats will be allocated to statutory agencies with a local development function, as well as for locally elected representatives.
6. The Department of Environment Community and Local Government (DoECLG) is undertaking a national review of the Community and Voluntary Fora to identify their future role in the new structures. A national review of voluntary activity and resourcing is also underway. These reviews will not be completed until the end of 2013.
7. At national level an Inter Departmental Group (IDG) will be established to ensure that State agencies with local development functions work in partnership in a whole of government approach to ensure 'buy-in' from relevant government departments. The IDG is also developing a National Community Development Policy. This will determine the direction of community development in local government for the foreseeable future.

Issues for the Voluntary Disability Sector

1. Community representation seats have been defined as representing 'community interests'. There is no clarity at this time about where these community representatives will be drawn from, or how they will be selected. It is important to emphasise that the representatives of the 'Community Interests' in the Socio Economic Committee's must have a mandate from their local communities. Effective feedback mechanisms therefore, must be firmly in place to

¹ Pilot SECs are being established in 10 locations around the country. The experiences of these 'pilot SECs' will determine the basis on which all future SECs will be operated.

communicate decisions being considered / taken at the Socio Economic Committee which may directly affect the lives of people with disabilities and other people in the community.

2. It is important that support is available to community based representatives to enable them to equally participate in complex decision making.
3. It is critical that the issues and needs of people with disabilities are included in all local development plans. This is especially crucial in the development of the new 5 year City & County Local Community Development Plan which the Socio Economic Committee will be responsible for.
4. Voluntary disability agencies have a role to play in ensuring that community services and supports as well as other supports provided by voluntary disability organisations are visible in the 5 year City and County Local Development Plan. Organisations' strategic and operational plans must be set within Local Government Development plans. If this is not achieved the work which voluntary disability agencies carry out locally with and for people with disabilities will not be accounted for in local development planning. Equally services that support people with disabilities to live in the community will not necessarily be taken account of in local government funding and resourcing.
5. The HSE and other statutory agencies will be members of the Socio Economic Committee. A key question to consider is how local planning and resourcing decisions within the Socio Economic Committee will link with the individual plans developed by the statutory agencies.
6. It is the role of the IDG to ensure that statutory agencies work towards a whole of government approach however; it is unclear how departmental funding for agencies including disability organisations will operate at a local level in the new system.
7. The Pilot Socio Economic Committee's are currently being established but we still do not have any clarity on the representation of communities on the Socio Economic Committee's. This is an issue for the broader Community and Voluntary sector including the voluntary disability sector. Since clarity in this area will not be forthcoming until the end of 2013, the fore runner Socio Economic Committee's will have begun to establish their systems within the new structure, and effective community representation will be absent from this process.

How DFI Works with Local Government

Any national policy or strategy seeking to improve the lives of people is only as effective as its ability to change the lives of individuals where they live, work and socialise. DFI welcomed the National Disability Strategy (NDS) as a potential vehicle of positive change for people with disabilities and has contributed to the development of the NDS Implementation Plan, which has still not been finalised. As far back as 2005 we envisaged the importance of local government structures in effecting positive change in the lives of people with disabilities. In this regard, DFI set up an internal team to explore the application of the objectives of the National Disability Strategy to local implementation, to support a positive impact on the lives of people with disabilities in their own communities.

Prior to the publication of 'Putting People First', the reforms which took place from 1998 were moving local government towards stronger roles and responsibilities for local decision making. In 2005 DFI began working with local government structures across the country. Since that time we have been actively participating on City and County Development Boards, Social Inclusion Measures Groups, Community & Voluntary Fora and other local government structures to promote understanding of disability issues and to support the linkages needed for a whole of government approach to planning for social inclusion. Over the years DFI has established many connections in the broader community and voluntary sector, in local government and with a wide variety of mainstream agencies and service providers.

DFI works to develop the links between national policies, local government reform and community development. DFI has been active on a number of fronts to support the implementation of key national policies at local level:

1. DFI is represented on the Community and Voluntary Pillar and participates in bilateral meetings with the Department of the Environment, Community, and Local Government (DoECLG) where issues relating to local government reform and the alignment of local development agencies are considered.
2. In relation to the health services, DFI is represented on national, regional and local implementation and monitoring structures. These include the HSE

National Consultative Forum, Regional Consultative Fora and Local Consultative Fora; National, regional, and local implementation Groups relating to Congregated Settings, the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011 – 2016, and the Progressing Disability Services for Children Programme Aged 0 – 18 years.

3. DFI continues to work with key partners at national level such as the County and City Managers' Association (CCMA), Disability Equality Specialist Support Agency (DESSA), disability sector umbrella organisations, the Local Government Management Services Agency and others to develop and progress joint approaches and promote local implementation of national policies.
4. DFI is developing campaigns for the local government elections and the European elections in 2014.
5. DFI will hold a conference on local government reform in 2014.
6. At regional and local levels, DFI has been engaged in the provision of information sessions and training workshops to key stakeholders, including the HSE, local authorities, disability organisations, individuals with disabilities and the broader community and voluntary sector to support the development of linkages between local, regional, national, and international implementation of the National Disability Strategy, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
7. DFI is actively supporting the process of mainstreaming through local implementation strategies.

Summary of Local Government Reforms

1. All 80 town councils will be abolished with effect from the local elections in 2014.
2. 114 local authorities will be reduced to 31 City and County Councils.
3. City and County Councils in Tipperary, Limerick and Waterford will be merged.
4. 1,627 Councillors will be reduced to 950 (approximately one councillor per 4,830 voters).
5. Local government jurisdiction shall reside in County Council and Municipal Districts (Exception Dublin Cork and Galway).
6. There will be one plan per City and County.
7. Socio Economic Committees will be established in each county with responsibility for planning and oversight of all local and community development programmes. They will have 15 members represented from local government, local authority, local 'community interests' and state agencies.
8. 5 year City / County Local & Community Development Plan will encompass all state funded local and community development initiatives.
9. At national level an Inter Departmental Group (IDG) will be established to ensure the State agencies with local development functions work together locally and nationally and ensure Buy-in from relevant government departments.
10. County Development Boards and Social Inclusion Measure (SIM) Groups will continue until the end of 2013.
11. Community & Voluntary Foras will remain in place.
12. There will be alignment of local government and local development agencies (Family Resource Centres, Volunteer Centres, Partnerships, City and County Childcare Committees, etc.)*
13. Property Tax will be used to fund local authorities; Councils will be allowed to set the rate (2015-16).
14. County Managers will be renamed as CEOs reporting to the elected members

*There are 512 different agencies in total referred to on page 41 of the "Final Report of the Local Government / Local Development Alignment Steering Group" DECLG March 2012 (published October 31st 2012)

Sources: DECLG (2012) 'Putting People First', 'Final Report of the Local Government / Local Development Alignment Steering Group' DECLG March 2012 (published October 31st 2012)

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HR & Employment Law Update

Adare Human Resource Management provide HR and Employment Law Support Services to a large number of Organisations within the Community and Voluntary Sector.

Our HR and Employment Law Support Services include

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

Adare Human Resource Management support Organisations through minimising the risk of exposure to legal challenges by ensuring legal compliance for Organisations in their practices as well as policies and procedures.

Disability Federation of Ireland, in conjunction with Adare Human Resource Management, has in place a support structure for member Organisations to avail of discounted Human Resource and Employment Law Support Services exclusively for DFI members.

Constructive Dismissal

Constructive Dismissal, as defined in the Unfair Dismissals Acts, refers to the termination by the Employee of his/her contract of employment with his/her Employer, whether prior notice of the termination was or was not given to the Employer, in circumstances in which, because of the conduct of the Employer, the Employee was or would have been entitled, or it was or would have been reasonable for the Employee, to terminate the contract of employment without giving prior notice of the termination to the Employer.

For an individual to take an Unfair Dismissals claim for Constructive Dismissal they should meet the following criteria:

- Must have at least 1 years' service (Unless related to Trade Union activity, Pregnancy or availing of rights in relation to Maternity, Adoptive or Parental Leave).
- Should have utilised all available grievance or complaints procedures prior to resignation.

In general, dismissals are presumed to be unfair unless the Employer can show substantial grounds to justify same. Where the Employee terminates his or her employment and subsequently claims for Unfair Dismissal under the Acts, the Employee must be able to prove that the resignation was justified. There are two tests which can be applied to ascertain whether a constructive dismissal existed:

1. **The Contract Test** – Where the Employer has breached a fundamental condition of the contract of employment and thus the Employee is entitled to terminate the contract.
2. **The Reasonableness Test** – Where although the Employer may have acted within the terms of the contract of employment, their conduct may have been unreasonable thus entitling the Employee to terminate the contract.

In general, the claim must satisfy one of the tests above and the Employee must be able to prove that they had no option other than the termination of their Employment in order for a claim of constructive dismissal to be upheld.

In the same way that the Employer is expected to follow fair procedures prior to dismissal, an Employee too should invoke the Organisation's Grievance or Complaints procedure in an effort to make the Employer aware of their grievance, either formally or informally prior to resigning. Where the Organisation has been actually notified or provided with constructive notice of an Employee's issue or complaint, a failure to address this can expose the Organisation to an Unfair Dismissal claim. It is important for Organisations to note that having policies and procedures in place whereby an Employee can raise any issue they may have can act as a part of a defence in a constructive dismissal case.

If you have any questions relating to Constructive Dismissal, do not hesitate to contact us.

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

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

Telephone Peer Support – a Low-cost Support Service that Benefits Providers and Users Alike

Maeve Halpin, Social and Organisational Psychologist

In these times of financial rectitude, cost-effective alternatives to direct service provision are being explored by many organisations. Telephone Peer Support offers a robust and effective model for providing both capacity-building for relatively active members of a support organisation, as well as socio-emotional support for vulnerable and/or isolated service users.

Following a needs assessment of members by the Post Polio Support Group (PPSG), I was invited to devise and implement a Telephone Peer Support training programme, tailored to the needs of this specific group. Post Polio Syndrome (PPS) is a condition that affects polio survivors years after recovery from an initial acute attack of the poliomyelitis virus. Later in life, some polio survivors can experience gradual new weakening in muscles that were previously affected by polio. Fatigue and pain can significantly interfere with an individual's ability to function independently. The introduction of the polio vaccine in 1955 practically eradicated the disease, with the result that the survivors are now an ageing population, their PPS symptoms exacerbated by the challenges of age. Secrecy, isolation and depression resulting from a sense of stigma is not an uncommon pattern for this population.

Implementing a Telephone Peer Support Programme

A Telephone Peer Support Programme has been operated by PPSG for several years as a means of addressing the needs of isolated and lonely members. However, the service required expansion due to the increased number of people requesting the service. Leaders and Participants for the Programme were identified by means of a question in the PPSG's annual survey of members. Potential Leaders (i.e. those members willing to host the monthly half-hour support calls) were selected according to criteria determined by PPSG staff and invited to take part in a training programme. As the contracted trainer, I developed the programme around the particular needs of these trainees. As fatigue is an issue for many, training sessions would need to be short. Being a national organisation, the need to travel to and from training sessions also had to be kept to a minimum. To address these issues, the training was provided over two days, held two weeks apart, with no session lasting more than 1½ hours. Following the first day's training, each Leader was matched with two Participants (i.e. those members who expressed an interest in receiving a monthly

half-hour support call) based on common interests and background. They then made their first two calls over the following fortnight and the second day's training followed up on their experiences of this.

Training Content

The training itself focusses on the skills of active listening, including theoretical input, role play in small groups and large group discussion. Comprehensive hand-outs are provided for further reading. Issues of ethics, boundaries, confidentiality and dealing with suicidal participants are also covered. Having become more aware of what is required, prospective Leaders have the option of dropping out of the programme at the end of the first day. In practice, the vast majority choose to continue with the programme and the second training day begins with a frank discussion of the experience of making those first two phone calls. Typically, a broad spectrum of experience is revealed, providing Leaders with crucial reassurance and support from each other. Facilitating Leaders to process their doubts, anxieties and successes in the group setting is pivotal and this exercise consistently rates highly in the training evaluations.

Outcomes

To date, 48 Leaders have been trained, resulting in approximately 90-100 Participants receiving monthly phone calls. In-house evaluations demonstrate that outcomes are very positive for both Leaders and Participants alike, with mutually beneficial relationships being formed and maintained. Empowerment of the Participant is an integral aspect of the Programme, avoiding dependency. Participants report increased wellbeing and a decrease in loneliness and isolation, while Leaders report increased self-efficacy, confidence, self-esteem and a rewarding sense of giving something back. Telephone Peer Support Training presents an innovative approach to harnessing the latent resources inherent in a group, enabling members themselves to help meet the multiple and growing needs of service users. © Maeve Halpin May 2013

In conjunction with Maeve Halpin, Psychologist, DFI have launched an External Supervision and Support Service for staff and Boards of DFI member groups. More information is available at <http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=215>.

EDUCATION, TRAINING and EMPLOYMENT

Medical Card Retention and Employment

DFI is interested in making contact with people with disabilities who have difficulty in taking up employment or remaining in employment in case they lose their medical card eligibility. We are gathering some case studies together to understand better where the issues are and how best we can advocate on this issue.

In the run up to the coming budget and with the announcement last week that the Comprehensive Employment Strategy will be developed by the NDA, we want to ensure that people with disabilities have the best chance possible of being active in the labour market on par with everyone else.

In order to do this, we are putting together some case studies that outline people's real experience on the ground. If you or someone you know has direct experience of losing your medical card while you are working and having to give up work, or having a job offer you have been unable to take up because you would lose your medical card entitlement and cannot afford that, we would like to talk to you. If you know of someone that this might apply to, please share this information with them.

Please contact Joan O'Donnell, at (01) 4250122, (086) 3834587 or email joanodonnell@disability-federation.ie.

New Course at Abode

ATTAIN – Access Tertiary Training and Independence Now!

The transition to Further Education colleges can be daunting and difficult. Some find the change hard to cope with: larger groups, the pace of college life and the expectation that students will be able to work autonomously can be daunting.

In response to this, Abode has developed a new programme within FÁS Introductory Skills Training which is designed to prepare students with physical and sensory disabilities for the transition to Further Education

Through ATTAIN, students will complete FETAC Level 4 modules including Communications, Career Planning, IT Skills and Personal Effectiveness, working towards a FETAC Level 4 Common Award.

If you are hoping to attend third level but feel you are not quite ready to make the most of it, this could be the course for you.

For more information

Contact: Clodagh or Barbara at Abode, Kilbrack Grove, Skehard Road, Blackrock, Cork City. Phone 021 4916180, E-mail info@doorwaytolife.com

A range of academic and personal skills will be developed. These include note-taking, effective reading, essay and report writing, presentation skills and revision skills. Students will practise computer skills, time-management and target-setting.

A focus on career - planning and progression will be maintained throughout the year, with visits to Further Education colleges and an exploration of course options.

Personal supports which will be required by individual students in order to access further education will be identified and skills will be honed to help cope with college life.

Abode Independent Living Course

How do I find out if I am eligible for the programme?

You can contact your local FÁS Employment Officer to find out if you are eligible for Employability Skills training. FÁS will then refer you for the programme.

How do I apply?

You can fill out an application form and arrange to meet with the Training Co-ordinator at Abode to discuss your application. Application forms are available from Abode.

What if I just want to find out more?

You can contact the Training Co-ordinator or arrange to visit Abode to find out more about the programme

Contact Details

Abode Independent Living

Abode, Kilbrack Grove, Skehard Road, Blackrock, Co City

Phone 021 4916180; Email info@doorwaytolife.com; Website www.doorwaytolife.com

SEED Disability Activation Project in Sligo

The SEED Project developed by Sligo LEADER Partnership Company in collaboration with the Disability Network is one of fourteen projects nationally that has been selected by the Disability Activation Project (DACT) to offer training and support to people with disabilities.

DACT is co-funded by the European Union under the European Social Fund, and the Irish Government through the Department of Social Protection and Pobal. The target group for this funding is people with a disability, 16 to 65 years of age, in receipt of disability/illness welfare payments who reside in County Sligo.

The SEED Project is a person-centred, confidence building training programme which will allow members establish their own career plan. The outline of the programme will be determined by the needs of the participants with an overall focus of increasing their capacity and potential to participate in the labour market. The project aims to develop the skills of individuals so that they will become job/entrepreneurial ready and be in a position to access mainstream employment supports, further education and direct employment.

The project will have five hubs in rural and urban areas of Sligo, a summer introduction to the project will take place in each of these locations during June and July (see below for dates and venues). If you require any further information or wish to book a place and transport please contact Martina Di Lucia, SEED Project Co-ordinator 087 4175657, email mdilucia@sligoleader.com or Kathy Mc Gettrick SEED Project Development Officer 071 9141138, email kmcgettrick@sligoleader.com

GENERAL INFORMATION

Further Training with Charities Evaluation Services

How to Choose an Outcomes Monitoring Database - One-day

Tuesday 22nd October 2013

How to Collect, Analyse, Present and Use Data – Two day

Wednesday and Thursday, 23rd and 24th October 2013

Implementing PQASSO – Two Day

Wednesday and Thursday, 4th & 5th December 2013

All training will be held in the DFI main office.

More information is available here: <http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=10635>

Family Caring in Ireland: New Report Launched

Care Alliance Ireland has just launched a report that for the first time, brings together the key publications on Family Caring in Ireland in one succinct publication, and will be a great resource for those working with and supporting Family Carers.

With 219 references, this report will be a useful tool for all with an interest in the topic.

Sections include;

- Defining Caring
- Quantifying Caring
- Health, Financial and Employment Impacts of Caring
- Caring and Disability
- Young Carers
- Male Carers
- Life After Care
- Supports available for Family Carers
- NGO's providing Carer Supports
- International Carer Bodies

Available to download at <http://tinyurl.com/o84yq2v>

Work4You after a Brain Injury

Neuro-Rehabilitation Organisation Gets Brain Injury Survivors Back to Work in the Midlands

The first community based vocational neuro-assessment service of its kind in Ireland was launched recently by specialists Acquired Brain Injury Ireland in Mullingar. The service will provide practical assistance to people with acquired brain injuries (ABI), who are either struggling to hold onto their existing job, or aiming to return to education, training or employment.

Serving the Midlands area the new Work4You Programme office will be based Marlinstown Business Park, Mullingar Co. Westmeath where the Senior Occupational Therapist will assess the participants using the internationally recognised VALPAR vocational assessment tools. Work4You considers a holistic assessment of the individual; outlining the supports they need to achieve their set goals. The assessment takes into account the individual's functional and work capacity to identify transferable skills, beneficial for the potential work place

Speaking at the launch of the service in Mullingar Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Regional Manager Mary Heffernan said, "Brain injury ranges from mild to modern and traumatic.

Returning to work after a brain injury is a goal set by many brain injury survivors every day. As brain injury specialists we believe this is a goal that can come true, depending on the severity of their injury and the correct supports that can be put in place. The clinically supported Work4You service outlines and provides the exact supports that may be needed by either an employee or employer, working with a brain injury”.

“Neuro-rehabilitation supports the progression of those living with a brain injury, so we aim to maximise potential and ensure they are enabled to participate fully in their current working environment, or assist in entering into the world of work or study”, continued Ms Heffernan.

Work4You participants, and their families, will be at the heart of this new service, working to identify their own capacities and areas of vocational challenge in order to build on their vocational strengths.

Approximately 13,000 people acquired a brain injury in Ireland each year and face a dramatically altered life thereafter. Acquired Brain Injury Ireland provides community based neuro-rehabilitation to those who have acquired a brain injury; helping rebuild lives that have been shattered by the trauma of brain injury.

Funded by the Department of Social Protection and the European Social Fund under the Disability Activation Project (DACT) the programme titled ‘Work4You’ is the first community based neuro- assessment service of its kind in Ireland.

Work4You is available to those who have acquired a brain injury and currently in receipt of state benefit, assisting them to get back to work, on a full or part time basis. To avail of Work4You you must live and be available to work in the Midlands region, including counties; Offaly, Longford, Westmeath or Laois.

For more information about Work4You or to be referred for an eligibility check contact the Mullingar Work4You office on 044 933 8773, email work4you@abiireland.ie or see www.abiireland.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

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Newsletter, Tel 01 2804164 email: cbrack@abiireland.ie

http://www.abiireland.ie/docs/ABII_Newsletter_Spring_2010.pdf

Arthritis Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 01 661 8188

E-mail: info@arthritisireland.ie

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

Asthma Society News - Tel: 01-8788511,

E-mail: office@asthmasociety.ie

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

E-mail: info@migraine.ie

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

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

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

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

E-mail: georginawade@cleft.ie

Community Exchange Newsletter, E-mail: info@activelink.ie

Tel: +1 667 7326

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

E-Info Deaf Source— E-mail: info@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: 01-6236414, or 01- 6236415 E-mail: info@mdi.ie

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

E-mail: info@sirl.ie

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

E-mail: info@icsh.ie

Sonas aPc – Tel (01) 2608138. www.sonasapc.ie.

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

Volunteer Stroke Scheme News- Tel: 01-4559036. E-mail: info@strokescheme.ie

Wheel E-Bulletin Tel:01- 454 8727,

E-mail: info@wheel.ie





Disability Federation of Ireland is a national support and representation mechanism for voluntary disability sector organisations, covering all areas of disability and disabling conditions. There are currently over 100 voluntary disability organisations in the DFI Membership

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Personal Notes:



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

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

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

There are over 130 organisations within membership, or as associates, of DFI. DFI also works with a growing number of organisations and groups around the country that have a significant disability interest, mainly from the statutory and voluntary sectors. DFI provides:

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

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

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

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