



Disability Federation of Ireland

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

DFI Newsletter March 2012

President Higgins Reflects on Community and Voluntary Organisations

In a recent speech Ireland's President, Michael D. Higgins, reflected on the importance of the community and voluntary sector in underpinning the resilience and cohesion of our society. His remarks at an *Advocacy Initiative Forum* are highly relevant for us involved in the voluntary disability sector (Dublin City Council, 13th Feb 2012).

He recognised the pressures we face, saying "Unfortunately, just when we most need a dynamic and effective community and voluntary sector, its capacity is under pressure as a result of the financial resources it receives from the public and the private sectors being reduced." At the same time he suggested that the promotion of cohesion across the diversity of not for profit organisations would strengthen our capacity to achieve a better future. A case in point is DFI's training events to increase the ability of people with disabilities and their organisations to work with local groups to influence decisions about services in their communities.

The President also has some useful observations about keeping our focus on the persons we seek to support. In an aside he criticised the tendency to use bureaucratic language, and refer to 'service users' and 'clients'; he insisted instead on the word 'citizen'. He pointed out that the quality of life in our society, and the

ultimate health of our communities, is greatly influenced by people becoming involved and active citizens. DFI and its members know that enabling people with disabilities to be full citizens is the ultimate test of our effectiveness as voluntary organisations.

A further point was made, about achieving real change, that DFI would strongly endorse. President Higgins commented that while advocating on behalf of the marginalised is important, “The tasks of advocacy, it is sometimes assumed, end with a success in achieving legislative initiative or change. You will know that the administrative delivery following a legislative change is often more important if more difficult.” We in the disability sector have realised considerable legislative and policy change, but we have a very long and hard way to go in changing practice on the ground. We in DFI welcome our new President and his thoughtful and practical contributions to the conversation on Irish social policy.

John Dolan
CEO

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HR & Employment Law Update

DFI, 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.

Pregnancy & Health and Safety

Employers have a responsibility to ensure that in so far as is reasonably practicable that the safety, health and welfare at work of their Employees is maintained.

When an Employer is notified of an Employee's pregnancy they should assess whether there are any risks to the health and safety of the Employee or their unborn child in the place of work. What may pose as a risk to a pregnant employee may not be a risk for others and for this reason it is important for Employees to inform their Employer if they are pregnant so that a risk assessment can be carried out.

Where a risk has been identified an Employer should see if there are any ways in which the risk can be avoided such as;

1. Adjusting the working conditions and/or the hours of work (or both) of the Employee concerned so that exposure to such risk is avoided.
2. Providing suitable alternative work which does not present a risk.
3. If 1 and 2 are not feasible - assisting the Employee in receiving health and safety leave under Section 18 of the Maternity Protection Acts.

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

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

Developing an Effective Approach to Advocacy.

By Maeve Halpin, Social and Organisational Psychologist

At the recent Advocacy Initiative Knowledge Exchange Forum in Dublin, Dr H elene Clark from the US commented that public discourse there has become so polarised that even to use words like “social justice” and “fairness” is to risk being called anti-American and socialist (a pejorative term). In times of unprecedented austerity measures, it falls to the Community and Voluntary Sector to give priority to ensuring that the rights of marginalised and disenfranchised citizens are upheld, through effective and co-ordinated advocacy work.

Understanding Advocacy

The Advocacy Initiative's Project Report (Aug 2010) presents a comprehensive overview of the aims and functions of advocacy in Ireland and the challenges currently presented. It recognises that the collapse of credibility of the major public institutions of business, church and politics has led to the re-shaping of the values and attitudes of Irish society. This presents a unique opportunity for the C and V sector to provide leadership, articulating common concerns and influencing decision making. Cross-organisational collaboration could produce a more proactive and strategic approach to advocacy as distinct from the sometimes ad hoc and reactionary nature of advocacy work that currently exists.

Definition of Advocacy

Advocacy can be defined as the pursuit of influencing outcomes - including public-policy and resource allocation decisions within political, economic, and social systems and institutions - that directly affect people’s lives (Cohen, 2001). Advocacy is essential because it offers some degree of compensation for the ‘democratic deficit’, the recognised design flaw in the parliamentary system of representative democracy. By speaking up for the interests of marginalised groups, NGOs provide an important consultative mechanism that contributes to democratic governance, balancing the interests of larger, more organised and better financed groups.

The Irish Context

Qualitative research summarised in the Project Report provides an enlightening perspective on the experience of advocacy from both sides of the fence. Both policy makers and external observers, on the one hand, and C and V advocates, on the other, were interviewed on their views on the effectiveness of C and V Sector advocacy. The majority

of policy makers and external observers did not have a clear and considered view of the role of civil society advocacy. They felt that that many NGOs do not acknowledge that progress is being made on their agenda and, instead, engage in a never-ending critique of Government, which could be quite personal in nature. They reported that many advocates from C and V organisations did not interact in a respectful way and did not seem to understand the genuine constraints policy makers are working under. The issue of respect was also emphasised by the C and V sector interviewees, who felt that they were not always treated as equals by the policy makers. Several felt that additional training and support is required to improve the standard of advocacy work by organisations.

Some Recommendations

The development of advocacy knowledge and skills is vital, through access to training and the provision of a manual and/or toolkit. Relationships between NGOs and policy makers need to be strengthened through providing opportunities for informal contacts, to develop mutual understanding. Greater co-ordination and collaboration within the C and V sector will lead to a clearer definition of advocacy, shared ownership of the process and more effective practices and outcomes. See www.advocacyinitiative.ie for more information.

Maeve Halpin is a practising counsellor and Social and Organisational Psychologist, with many years' experience in the Community and Voluntary sector, latterly as Chair of the Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups. In conjunction with Maeve, 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>.

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“How to Demonstrate Outcomes”

Two-Day Training Course – Tuesday 15th & Wednesday 16th May 2012

DFI are hosting a series of two day courses in 2012 which will be delivered by Consultant Trainers from the CES (Charities Evaluation Services) in the UK, the inventors of PQASSO. DFI is the only location in Ireland where CES deliver this training.

CES will deliver a two day training course on “How to Demonstrate Outcomes” on 15th and 16th May 2012 in DFI premises.

Course summary

This two-day core course is based on the Charities Evaluation Services, evidenced based self-evaluation model, which is an aims and objectives model of evaluation with a strong Outcomes focus.

This introductory course offers a practical approach to linking monitoring and evaluation of outputs and outcomes to the planning and delivery of an organisation’s work. This course may assist organisations with implementing and evidencing some of the Quality Areas in PQASSO such as Quality Area 1, Planning; Quality Area 4, User-Centred Service and Quality Area 11, Monitoring and Evaluation.

Using case studies and examples, participants are offered the opportunity to apply their learning to their own projects. Participants bring their learning together into a self-evaluation framework that will enable them to collect vital information both for internal use and for funders and other stakeholders.

Is this course for you?

The “How to Demonstrate Outcomes” two-day training course is appropriate for small to medium sized voluntary sector organisations, and/or organisations that are just beginning to implement a monitoring and self-evaluation system to collect information on their outputs and outcomes.

You will benefit most from this course if you:

- are new, or fairly new, to monitoring and self-evaluation
- wish to have time within the training to explore issues of monitoring and self-evaluation
- want to implement a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system in your organisation to collect information on the outputs and outcomes of your work
- are implementing PQASSO or other quality management system in your organisation.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the two-day course, participants will be able to:

- understand key evaluation concepts and terminology
- identify and clarify aims and objectives, outputs and outcomes
- set indicators to help assess achievement of outputs and outcomes
- identify the requirements for basic monitoring systems
- develop their own self-evaluation frameworks
- identify some simple ways to collect information

Registration

If you would like to register for this course, please email Eleanor Reece on eleanorreece@disability-federation.ie or and if you would like more information on the course or on PQASSO Quality System, please contact Dermot O’Donnell, Support Officer for Organisations and Licensed PQASSO Mentor on 086-7808639 or by email on dermotodonnell@disability-federation.ie

Registration Fee and Terms and conditions

Fee for the two-day Training course is €275 per participant.

Refreshments on arrival and at break times, including lunch are provided.

All places will be confirmed in writing.

Bookings cancelled within 10 working days of the training unfortunately cannot be refunded.

Cancellations with 10 working days or more notice will be refunded subject to an administration charge of 10% of the total cost of the course.

Cancellations must be made in writing and cancellation charges will apply whether or not payment has been received.

Please note that non-arrival at a course, with or without notice, counts as a cancellation.

Bookings may be transferred to another course date.

Please note that DFI reserves the right to cancel any course and in such cases, a full refund of course fees will be made.

Charities Need to Engage with Users to Improve On-Line Giving, Says Report

A recent article at Civilsociety.co.uk describes how charities need to rethink the way they seek donations on their websites. With the recession in full swing charities are finding it naturally much harder to secure on-going donations to support their aims and objectives. The article discussed the importance of carrying out four key steps in relation to online donations including how to promote outcomes, make steps clear, show progress and always thank users.

It then links to the full report from “Nomensa Humanising Technology” where they discuss the fall in donations and the fact that 47% of people give up before they have made a donation because the online journey is not intuitive and engaging.

Both articles links are available at the following links.

http://www.civilsociety.co.uk/it/news/content/11393/charities_need_to_engage_with_users_to_improve_online_giving_says_report

<http://www.nomensa.com/about/news-items/charities-fail-make-online-impact>

Just Social -Social Media for Just Causes

This is an initiative to bridge the gap between charities and Social Media technology to help them to utilise the potential of this new medium for the purpose of fund-raising and awareness/educational campaigns.

The concept encompasses helping through experience, where experienced IT professionals can donate their time and knowledge to progress Social Media Campaigns, and related programs, to address the needs of their preferred charities. The idea is that Just Social acts as an intermediate to provide structure and continuity to the overall Social Media programs for the participating charity, while the IT professional can get involved and disengage when it suits him/her, having identified a clear objective to work towards. Work is currently being done on the requirements for developing a web portal to allow IT professionals and charities to interact using video conferencing and cloud computing. Therefore, no travel costs are incurred, and there is a direct relationship and contact with secure data protection and policy controls in place to protect all parties.

For further information please contact: Sean Brady, Just Social, Tel 061 513110, Email sean@justsocial.ie,

HEALTH

HSE Consultation Fora

The National and Regional parts of the HSE's Consultative Structure have been active during the first quarter of 2012, and steps are underway to establish local fora.

Two sets of national meetings have been held since the start of the year. The first included a workshop session at DFI for our member organisations to learn about the HSE's planning regarding disability services as well as the likely budget cuts and the efficiency savings expected for 2012. It was also an occasion for organisations to feedback their own plans for the future. A similar session was held for organisations belonging to the other two umbrella bodies, the Federation of Voluntary Bodies and the Not for Profit Business Association, at which DFI also participated.

At the meeting of the National Consultative Fora (NCF) on the 14th March the arrangements for developing a NCF Work Plan 2012, including the identification of working groups on which stakeholders would be represented. Setting time frames for establishing local fora also was on the agenda.

DFI raised issues regarding the PA service and the need for information about it, especially given the importance of PAs in underpinning independent living. The Assistant National Director for Disability, Cate Hartigan, agreed to look into the issue and get back at the next NCF.

All four Regional Fora met during the first quarter and each addressed similar topics, consisting of a mix of immediate issues, such as the budget cuts and emergency places for school leavers and longer term issues such as the implications of the recently released day services report. Common discussion points included ways to include service user representation, arrangements for the local fora, and developing a Work Plan for 2012. The recently published reports on Respite/ Residential Care with Host Families in Community Settings and on the National Review of Autism Services also received attention.

For more information on the terms of reference of these fora and their work, please contact the Support Officer as follows:

Dublin Mid Leinster: Louise McCann, louisemccann@disability-federation.ie

Northeast: Martin Naughton martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie

West: Toni Gleeson, tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie

South: Alison Ryan, a.ryan@disability-federation.ie

HSE Publishes Three Disability Care Group Reports

The Health Service Executive has published three Disability Care Group Reports that will assist with the strategic planning and implementation of the major change programme for disability services that is underway. The reports are:

- “New Directions – Personal Support Services for Adults with Disabilities”
- “National Review of Autism Services”
- “Respite/Residential Care with Host Families in Community Settings”

Over the past few years disability service provision has been moving towards a community based and inclusive model, rather than being institutional and segregated. It is hoped that the key learning from these reports, together with the pending Value for Money and Policy Review from the Department of Health, will provide a catalyst for achieving more effective, person centered disability services, in line with international best practice. The implementation of these reports will be progressed through the HSE's National Disability Governance Group, and through the National Consultative Forum. The radical change is not the sole responsibility of the Health Service Executive, but rather will require a collaborative responsibility shared by the HSE with the individual, their families and carers, a multiplicity of agencies, and Government and society as a whole. The budget for the provision of disability services for 2012 is €1.541 billion.

Report: New Directions – Personal Support Services for Adults with Disabilities

Day services for adults with disabilities provide a vital network of support for over 25,000 people. Those who use these services have a widely diverse set of interests, aspirations and personal circumstances. They are people with physical and sensory disabilities, with learning disabilities and with mental ill health. They include young people, people who have been in day services for many years, and older people of retirement age. They live in small communities, in isolated rural areas, and in cities and towns.

The focus of the report is on the requirement to accommodate a wide diversity of need among service users, ranging from those with severe and profound disabilities, challenging behaviours and high support needs, who are likely to need long-term, specialist service provision, to people with lower support needs and greater potential for community participation and inclusion.

The central approach of the report focuses on the core values of person-centeredness, community inclusion, active citizenship and high quality service provision, underpinned by good governance, monitoring and guidance to service providers. The vision contained in the report will, it is hoped, provide people with the personal individualised supports that they require to access a whole range of community services as well as providing for their health related needs.

The ambitious changes envisaged in New Directions will depend on and benefit from an acceleration of the policy of mainstreaming that is central to the National Disability Strategy

(NDS). This will require joint planning between the HSE and key Government departments to maximise the approach outlined in the National Disability Strategy.

New Directions can be downloaded at: [New Directions – Personal Support Services for Adults with Disabilities”](#)

Report: National Review of Autism Services

This national review outlines the historical background, current models, gaps in service provision and the need for a consistent clear pathway for individuals to access services in the least restrictive way. The report highlights the imperative for a clear focus on the individual and their family in ensuring that the needs of the individual remain at the centre of service provision.

Geographically, current services can vary from robust, comprehensive and integrative to isolated, patchy and ineffective. Moreover differing models and approaches to the provision of health services are evident across Local Health Office (LHO) areas and HSE Areas. Future provision of services for children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) must be in line with the Government’s commitment to mainstreaming, where people with a disability have access to the same services as the general population and, in addition, receive the appropriate support and intervention to address individual needs. The recommendations of this report will be implemented as highlighted through the reconfiguration of existing provision, as detailed in the following documents:

- Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People (0-18s);
- Time to Move on from Congregated Settings;
- New Directions-Personal Support Services for Adults with Disabilities
- Respite/Residential Care with Host Families in Community Settings.

The HSE has indicated that, given the current economic climate with reducing resources in the public sector, all such reconfiguration will be progressed as appropriate within available resources. This integrated approach to meeting the health needs of people with disabilities is designed to ensure that generic health needs, which can be met at primary care level, are addressed by primary care teams, and that only needs where specialist knowledge, skill or expertise is required are referred to specialist services.

The National Review of Autism Services can be downloaded at:

[National Review of Autism Services”](#)

Report: Respite/Residential Care with Host Families in Community Settings

A working group was established by the National Director, Integrated Services Directorate, HSE, to carry out an overview of models of respite and residential care with host families in community settings nationally, and to determine the viability of these models of service delivery for future development for people with an intellectual disabilities. The working group comprised representatives from HSE, the National Home-sharing and Short Breaks Network (NHSN) and the Department of Health. This model of service provision is in line with national and international trends towards meeting the needs of people with intellectual disabilities in more appropriate, inclusive, settings and offering greater choice and more person centred services. There is evidence to suggest it is a more cost-effective model that will deliver better value. It is recommended that each area reviews and reconfigures respite/residential service provision to include the Host Family Support Model of service provision as an element of the overall respite/residential package available.

There is evidence that an accelerated move towards a new model of individualised person-centred service provision in the community can help to achieve efficiencies, particularly in relation to services for those with mild or moderate intellectual disability.

The report, Respite/Residential Care with Host Families in Community Settings, can be downloaded at:

<http://www.hse.ie/eng/services/Publications/services/Disability/Homesharingrreport%202012.pdf>

HSE National Lottery Grants

The Health Service Executive has been allocated National Lottery Funding for distribution to community based groups and voluntary organisations under the following terms:

1. Respite Care Grant Scheme

2. National Lottery Grant Scheme

Applications are invited from groups and organisations involved in the provision of Health and Personal Social Services for once off funding for viable projects (non major capital projects) which can be completed within a reasonable period of time:

Click your area below for further information and an application form

[HSE Dublin Mid Leinster - CLOSING DATE 5pm, Friday 20th April 2012](#)

[HSE Dublin North East - CLOSING DATE 5pm, Friday 20th April 2012](#)

New Severe Bleeding Disorder Alert Cards

Severe Bleeding Disorder Alert Cards have been issued to persons with severe haemophilia to assist hospital staff to ensure these patients get immediate appropriate treatment for their condition in hospital emergency departments. The new cards have been issued by Specialist Treatment Centres for the condition at the National Centre for Hereditary Coagulation Disorders, St James's Hospital, Dublin, Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin, Dublin and Cork University Hospital. The card will alert Emergency Department staff that the individual has a severe bleeding, disorder and give contact details for one of the Specialist Treatment Centres.

The HSE has contacted the country's acute hospitals to make them aware that if a person with severe haemophilia attends at their emergency department, they may carry the card. The cards give contact numbers, where expert advice can be obtained on immediate treatment required. People with severe haemophilia need to be treated without delay with factor concentrates, for any bleeding episode, and all hospitals in the state stock an emergency supply of these medications.

"People with severe haemophilia presenting at emergency departments have, on some occasions, had a delay of several hours before being treated with these vital medications. Such a delay could potentially lead to permanent damage or even death," said Brian O' Mahony, Chief Executive of the Irish Haemophilia Society (IHS). "People with severe haemophilia need to be triaged immediately and treated with factor concentrates for any bleeding episode without delay even in advance of carrying out scans or other diagnostic tests. The Specialist Treatment Centres have issued all patients with severe haemophilia with Alert Cards which advise emergency department staff to contact the Specialist Centre without delay if they present," he added.

To minimise the risk of delayed treatment the IHS and the HSE are working together to ensure that staff in the hospital emergency departments are aware of the cards and the reason for them. The IHS produced the cards for the Specialist Treatment Centres. “Contacting the Specialist Centre immediately should ensure that the appropriate treatment is administered without delay and may save lives” said Dr. Barry White, HSE National Director for Clinical Strategy and Programmes.

Brian O’Mahony, Chief Executive of the Irish Haemophilia Society added: “If a person with haemophilia attends an Emergency Department and shows this card, we want the staff to immediately phone the expert centre to get advice on appropriate treatment. A simple phone call can save lives or prevent serious or permanent damage.”

IHS member Gerard O Reilly, who has severe haemophilia, welcomed the introduction of the card saying: “I am aware that, in the event of an accident or trauma, I may have to attend a hospital which is not a specialist Haemophilia treatment centre. The Severe Bleeding Disorder Alert card is always in my wallet and may save my life if it means I am treated in a timely manner.”

The Justice System and People with Mental Illness

Mr. Alan Shatter TD, Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Mr. James Reilly TD, Minister for Health and Ms. Kathleen Lynch, TD, Minister of State at both Departments, with special responsibility for Mental Health at the Department of Health, have tasked an Interdepartmental Group with examining the issue of people with mental illness coming into contact with the criminal justice system. This is in line with the recommendation of the Thornton Hall Project Review Group.

While there have been a number of positive developments since the Thornton Group reported, including the decision by this Government to proceed with a new replacement for the Central Mental Health Hospital, nevertheless the interaction between the mentally ill and the criminal justice system gives rise to particular concerns, and a complete review of the area is needed.

The Interdepartmental Group includes representatives from the Department of Justice and Equality and the Department of Health as well as relevant services including the H.S.E, the

National Forensic Mental Health Service, the Garda Síochána and the Irish Prison Service and is jointly chaired by both Departments. The Group is to report back by mid-2012.

Terms of Reference

Pursuant to the recommendation of the Report of the Thornton Hall Project Group (July 2011) the Cross Sectorial Health/Justice Team is charged by the Minister for Health and the Minister for Justice and Equality with examining issues relating to people with mental illness or a mental disorder interacting with the criminal justice system and its agencies and having regard to Government policy in relation to the delivery and future development of the Forensic Mental Health Services, including the principles which should underpin the delivery of such services as set out in A Vision for Change shall endeavour in particular:

1. To identify the circumstances where such interactions take place, the agencies and services potentially involved and the issues that arise (including interaction with the Gardaí, decisions to prosecute or not to pursue criminal charges, diversion, persons in custody including imprisonment and post custodial arrangements);
2. To establish if practicable an indication of the annual number of incidents or individuals involved in the different circumstances;
3. To set out existing practices, background and developments;
4. To take into account evidence of good practice in other jurisdictions;
5. To take into account relevant reports and recommendations;
6. To consult as appropriate;
7. To consider the circumstances where it might be appropriate to divert people suffering from a mental illness or mental disorder away from the criminal justice system to more appropriate services, how best to achieve this and whether guidelines, principles or statutory provisions should be introduced to facilitate or inform such diversion;
8. Taking into account the resources available and international evidence as to good practice in the field, to consider how best to deliver mental health services to persons properly in the criminal justice system, to facilitate their return in due course to the community and to ensure necessary treatment continues after release
9. To report to and make recommendations to the Minister for Justice and Equality and Minister for Health for consideration by the Government by mid 2012.

Further information is available at: <http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR12000045>

Health Protection Surveillance Centre Urges at Risk Groups to be vaccinated against Flu

The HSE Health Protection Surveillance Centre has urged people in high-risk groups to be vaccinated against influenza, as the number of reported cases of influenza-like illness (ILI) in Ireland has almost doubled.

ILI rates have risen from 15.7 per 100,000 to 26.2 per 100,000 during the second week of February and are now above threshold levels which means that flu is actively circulating in the community, according to Dr Joan O'Donnell, Specialist in Public Health Medicine.

'People who are at risk of the complications of flu need to get vaccinated against the disease now. The vaccine is available free of charge from GPs for all people in at risk groups, and from pharmacists for everyone aged 65 and over. An administration charge may apply to people who don't hold medical cards or GP visit cards'.

Those at risk include:

- Everyone aged 65 years and over
- Anyone over six months of age with a long term illness requiring regular medical follow-up such as chronic lung disease, chronic heart disease or diabetes
- Pregnant women
- Those with lower immunity due to disease or treatment
- Children or teenagers on long-term aspirin therapy
- Residents of nursing homes and other long stay facilities
- Healthcare workers and carers

"People who were vaccinated last year still need to get their flu jab this year as immunity from the vaccine lasts twelve months and wanes over time.

"Flu is different from the common cold. Flu usually develops quickly over a matter of hours and symptoms include a high temperature, sore muscles, dry cough, headache and sore throat. The common cold tends to come on gradually and symptoms usually include a runny nose and a normal temperature. Anyone in the at-risk categories who develops influenza symptoms should contact their GP.

Further information on influenza and flu vaccine is available at: www.hpsc.ie

BreastCheck – The National Breast Screening Programme

New-Look Website Offers Equal Access to all Women

BreastCheck – The National Breast Screening Programme is committed to providing information and services that are equally accessible to all women, including those with special needs. In line with this commitment, BreastCheck has a re-designed website to ensure it operates in line with the highest accessibility standards.

The site is designed in accordance with the W3C WAI Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and is compliant with Level 2AA standard. A range of accessibility-friendly changes have been made to the design of the site and it is fully compatible with screen readers. It also offers three text size options – normal, large and largest – which can increase the size of the text viewed on the page.

Images are only used where necessary and audio files are available in various sections throughout the site. A printer-friendly version of the site is available at the bottom of each page to remove all web-based formatting and print the pages in a logical A4 format.

BreastCheck has looked at every aspect of its screening service to ensure accessibility. Accordingly, all BreastCheck information leaflets have been granted the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) Plain English Mark. An illustrated 'Guide to breast screening' has been developed for women with an intellectual disability that simply explains the breast screening process. Certain letters and information leaflets are available in Braille. Information is also available regarding the BreastCheck screening service in other accessible forms including a video tape and a DVD.

As part of the commitment to accessibility, all BreastCheck screening units are fully accessible to people with disabilities and are wheelchair accessible for most types of wheelchair. Additionally, a loop system for the hard of hearing is available in all static BreastCheck units.

BreastCheck has appointed an access officer to facilitate access to, and provide information about the programme specifically for women with special needs. The BreastCheck access officer can be contacted on (021) 4649736 / 464 9700 or by email at lynn.swinburne@cancerscreening.ie

For further information: Sheila Caulfield/Aoife O’Sullivan, National Cancer Screening Service, Tel: 01-8659 300.

NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY

Disability Stakeholders Group

The Disability Stakeholders Group met in its new configuration which consists of representation from the previous five members, including DFI, the National Service Users Executive and number of persons with disabilities nominated by Minister Lynch. Under the Chairmanship of Siobhan Barron, Director of the NDA, the Group considered the overarching priorities which should guide an NDS implementation plan. The Group is scheduled to meet the reconstituted National Disability Strategy Implementation Group (NDSIG) at the end of March.

The terms of reference for the NDSIG, as set by the Minister include the re-energisation of the NDS, “maximising what can be realistically achieved within available resources, towards enhancing the quality of life of people with disabilities. The NDSIG includes a representative from each of the main government departments and from the City and County Managers Association as well as a NDA nominee. It is chaired by the Minister.

During the month Minister Lynch also launched a new disability forum, to be convened by the NDA. She explained that she wanted to hear the voice of people with disabilities on issues affecting their lives. The announcement can be viewed at

www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR12000056

Disability-proofing Guidelines for Government

On 28 March the Department of Justice, Equality & Defence released a publication, *How to Conduct a Disability Impact Assessment: Guidelines for Government Departments*. The Guidelines were announced jointly by Minister Shatter and Minister Lynch. Minister Shatter explained that the document was developed by his Department with the Equality Authority and the NDA.

Government procedures now require all substantive proposals submitted to cabinet to take account of the impact on persons with disabilities. DFI is studying the Guidelines, and will report its assessment of their significance.

To view the Guidelines, click www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR12000056

TRAINING - EDUCATION – EVENTS - INFORMATION

Living a Quality of Life with a Long Term Condition

Living with a long term condition can often be challenging. A long term condition can be anything from cardiovascular disease, asthma, back pain, depression, neurological problems or Crohn's disease to high blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, obesity or multiple sclerosis. In fact, it is any condition that detrimentally affects health in the longer term.

Being in control of a long term condition will result in greater confidence and better health and wellbeing. You probably know quite a lot about your own condition already, and you may even feel that you are managing your condition very well. However, there are lots of support available to assist you to make the choices that suit you, in areas where you may feel you need that little bit of extra help.

The HSE in Donegal is providing a self-management course that promotes self-care. The course is aimed at people with long term conditions, and carers of people with long term conditions. Self care means looking after yourself and your general health so that you can manage your life and not just your condition. Participants, to date, have reported a significant positive impact on their lives from implementing the skills they have learned from previous courses. They have also enjoyed learning from other people with long term conditions in an informal setting. The course is free of charge and is run over six weekly sessions, each lasting 2 ½ hours. Courses are being provided across the county.

If you would like some more information on this course or would like to book a place on a course, you can contact the HSE Consumer Services Department on **(074) 9189016** or email paula.quinn@hse.ie

Citizens Information Board Training Services

The Citizens Information Board provides training services nationwide to Citizens Information Services, the Citizens Information Phone Service and other voluntary and statutory bodies.

- National Calendar of Training Events: [View the Latest National Calendar of Training Events](#)
- Information Providers Programme (Accredited): [View programme information](#)
- Advocacy Practice Courses (Accredited): [View programme information](#)
- Training Resources: [View resources including 'Managing Volunteers'](#)

For enquiries please email training@ciboard.ie or phone 0761 07 9000.

TSS Carmichael Centre Spring 2012 Training Programme

The Carmichael Centre provide a bi-annual Training and Development Programme. These courses address the unique needs of people working within the Community and Voluntary sector in both a volunteer and paid capacity.

Training and Development Programme courses are delivered in Carmichael Centre at Coleraine House and various locations throughout Ireland.

Carmichael Centre Free Seminars

- [The Role of the Company Secretary](#) - Thursday, 26th April 2012, 12-1pm
- [Managing Stress in the Workplace](#) - Thursday 24th May 2012, 12-1pm
- [Cloud Computing](#) - Thursday 13th September 2012, 12-1pm
- [Employment Law: An Overview](#) - Thursday 4th October 2012, 12-1pm
- [Energy Efficiency](#) - Thursday 1st November 2012, 12-1pm

Communications and Promotion

- [Public Speaking and Presentation Skills](#) - Tues 15th May 2012, 10am to 4pm
- [Effective Meetings and Minutes](#) - Tues 4th September 2012, 10am-4pm

Planning and Quality

- [Developing a Strategic Plan](#) - Tues 18th September 2012, 10am to 4pm
- [Introduction to PQASSO: practical quality assurance](#) - Tues 23rd October 2012, 10am-4pm
- [Workplace Safety](#) - Tuesday, 6th November 2012, 10-4pm

Governance and Leadership

- [Board Roles & Responsibilities](#) - On request

Managing Money

- [Financial Reporting for Charities](#) - Tues 3rd April 2012, 10am-5pm
- [Fundraising for Small Community Groups](#) - Tues 12th June 2012, 10am-1pm

For more information contact Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups
www.carmichaelcentre.ie

Carmichael house, North Brunswick Street, Dublin 7
Tel: 01-873 5702
Fax: 01-8735737

Coleraine House, Coleraine Street, Dublin 7
Tel. 01- 873 5285
Fax. 01- 873 5283

Brain Aware Training Programme

Established in 2000, Acquired Brain Injury Ireland (formerly the Peter Bradley Foundation) was set up to provide a range of pioneering, flexible and tailor-made services to people with Acquired Brain Injury (ABI). The services provided by the organisation place a critical emphasis on client-centeredness, quality, effectiveness and value for money. Rehabilitation and clinical support are key aspects to the service.

This programme will be of interest to Family Members caring for and supporting someone with an Acquired Brain Injury. The aim of the programme is to develop family carers' skills and knowledge of Acquired Brain Injury, and to enable them to respond more appropriately to their family member's needs. Approximately 10,000 people suffer from a head injury in Ireland each year and face a dramatically altered life thereafter. People with ABI progress at different rates, and may need to access services at different points in time as their needs change. Within each stage of rehabilitation a range of different service providers is involved, which must be coordinated. Once back in the community the emphasis is on more extended activities of daily living, integration, and return to work or education. Interventions focus on enhanced participation, improved quality of life, psychological adjustment and carer stress. Acquired Brain Injury Ireland is filling a vital service gap, in collaboration with statutory bodies

The programme modules will help carers to better understand ABI and the effects of brain injury on a person's emotions, behaviour, communication, attention and memory.

Attendees will also learn how to cope with the emotional and psychological aspects of the role of 'carer', and how ABI can affect the family environment.

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland staff, along with external trainers who are specialists in their field, will facilitate the 6 sessions

There is no charge for this Training Programme but numbers are restricted and booking is recommended. The event will take place at the Abbey Hotel, Roscommon, on 13th, 20th and 27th March, and 3rd April, 17th April and 24th April 2012, from 9.30am to 1pm.

For more information please log onto our website at www.abiireland.ie or contact Aoife Prendergast, Project Co-Ordinator at Acquired Brain Injury Ireland, 43 Northumberland Avenue, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin; (01) 2804 164 Ext. 207 or aoprendergast@abiireland.ie.

Examining Theory & Practice in Inclusive Education

A One Day Conference in Trinity College Dublin

25th April 2012

This conference will offer an opportunity to explore and critique both current and historical theories in relation to educational inclusion. New research investigating key elements of inclusion policy and practice will be presented by Irish researchers along with staff and students of the School of Education.

Keynote Speakers are, Professor Mel Ainscow, University of Manchester, and Professor Michael Grenfell, Trinity College Dublin. The Opening Address will be given by Dr Patrick Prendergast, Provost TCD

The event will be held on 25th April, 2012. To book your free place contact Valerie Kelly, kellyva@tcd.ie or Tel: 01 8963942

Inclusion in Education and Society Research Group, School of Education, TCD. Trinity College Dublin

Volunteer Opportunities

SHINE is a residential Summer Programme full of activities, challenges and fun for teenagers and adults with Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus nationwide. Volunteer and staff opportunities available in Education, Health, Sports, Arts, Social Care and lots more. The Programme will take place in Dublin in July and August over 5 separate weeks.

The Association is seeking male and female volunteers for a minimum of one week.

Minimum age is 18 years. Experience not essential, full training provided

Enthusiasm, caring nature and sense of fun is a must. Accommodation, food and activities will be provided by the Association

The Association conducts a strict screening process on all potential applicants.

For more information and/or to fill in an application form online today, go to:

www.sbhi.ie SHINE@sbhi.ie Tel: +353 (0)1 4572329

NEWSLETTERS

For information please contact the relevant organisation directly

Ability - Newsletter of the Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, info@iasbah.ie

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Newsletter, cbrack@abiireland.ie

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

Arthritis Ireland – Newsletter: info@arthritisireland.ie

Aspire - Asperger Syndrome Association of Ireland. 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 - Tel: 01 7036100 www.homelessagency.ie/research/cornerstone.asp 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

Cystic Fibrosis Association of Ireland : <http://issuu.com/cfai>

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: vmmcutch@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

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

Sonass aPc – Tel (01) 2608138. www.sonassapc.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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**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 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 126 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

Disability Federation of Ireland, Fumbally Court, Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8

Tel: 01-4547978, Fax: 01-4547981

email: info@disability-federation.ie web: www.disability-federation.ie

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