



## **Disability Federation of Ireland**

An Advocate for the Voluntary Disability Sector

Supporting Organisations to Enable People with Disabilities

### **DFI NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2011**

#### **GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS**

This is a very busy time for your organisation, just as it is for DFI. While it may be tempting to speculate and worry about what Budget 2012 has in store, DFI urges instead that each of us, during these precious weeks, exert every effort to influence the decisions being taken by the Government in its first Budget.

In Budget 2011 we were successful in keeping service cuts down to 1.8%. At the same time we were unable to prevent severe cuts to people's income support. The situation is even more threatening for 2012.

We must get the message across, that any further undermining of the income and service supports for people with disabilities has seriously negative social consequences, and that these consequences will emerge while this Government is in office.

In all of DFI's work with Government Departments, political parties, member organisations and with members of the Oireachtas, we are repeatedly naming disability and mental health, not as sectoral issue, but as a societal issue which requires an infrastructure of services, supports, and income levels to be available. We are trying to get Government to focus on the consequences of decisions to cut services and income levels, namely that cuts erode Ireland's social infrastructure.

As mentioned last month, DFI, along with nine other umbrella / cluster disability organisations are making the point that we are now bordering on unsustainability in relation to on-going service provision. We are working closely with other organisations in the sector, through the Disability Stakeholders Group (DSG) and the Community and Voluntary Pillar to convey the message that social justice is in jeopardy. For example, we strongly made these points when Pillar members met Ministers Noonan and Howlin recently.

Given the damage further cuts would bring, it is beholden on each of us involved in disability to 'pull out all the stops' so that this Government is under no illusions about their

responsibilities to people with disabilities, and the effects of decisions that they will make in Budget 2012.

**John Dolan**

**CEO**



## **BUDGET 2012**

### **Launch of DFI Pre-Budget Submission**

The Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) hosted a Pre-Budget Discussion Forum at the Mansion House on Wednesday 5th October 2011, at which our Pre-Budget Submission was launched. The Minister for Disability and Mental Health, Kathleen Lynch, attended and spoke at the event, as well as DFI members, Party spokespersons, media representatives and other key stakeholders.

DFI seeks to make disability a social justice priority for decision-makers across government, and to generate support for actions to sustain the NDS through these difficult times. There are three key messages to those responsible for Budget 2012:

1. Budget 2012 must at a minimum protect the existing benefit payments and public service entitlements of people with disabilities.
2. Budget 2012 needs to recognise that funding voluntary disability organisations is a sound investment, improving the lives of people with disabilities, strengthening communities and saving on hospital and other care costs.
3. The Implementation Plan for the NDS must be published and incorporated into the Government's Public Service Reform, Comprehensive Review of Expenditure, Budget 2012 and subsequent budgets

DFI's pre-Budget Submission is available at [www.disability-federation.ie](http://www.disability-federation.ie)

Further information from Lilian Buchanan, [lilianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lilianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie)

### **C&V Pillar Budget Briefing for Oireachtas Members**

On 19<sup>th</sup> October the members of the Community and Voluntary Pillar, including DFI as the disability lead organisation, held an event to inform both the media and members of the Oireachtas of its position with regard to the forthcoming Budget.

After the launch of a press release, Pillar members briefed Dáil and Senedd members. There were three successive sessions with Oireachtas members to allow sufficient time for

discussion of the issues, and to explore particular concerns such as those for people with disabilities.

The Pillar's briefing highlighted the importance of an equitable economic recovery plan for Ireland. It questioned the feasibility of the Government cutting spending at the rate planned to reach the deficit reduction goal. Pillar members pointed out that the consequent dampening of growth would worsen the fiscal balance rather than improve it while at the same time harming vulnerable groups and undermining Ireland's social infrastructure.

### **Organisations Representing 800,000 People with Disabilities issue Joint Statement to Government**

This article was published in the October 2011 edition of the DFI Newsletter. However, DFI believes that it is important enough to repeat this month, prior to the Budget. DFI would urge disability organisations to continue to apply pressure on national and local representatives to ensure that cuts to disability services and supports are kept at an absolute minimum.

Ten of the leading umbrella organisations in the Disability Sector met in Dublin on this Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September in Buswell's Hotel, Dublin, to issue a joint statement of concern, regarding economic and service issues now confronting hundreds of thousands of people. The organisations involved are, Care Alliance Ireland, CIL Carmichael House, Disability Federation of Ireland, Genetic & Rare Disorders Organisation, Inclusion Ireland, Mental Health Reform, Neurological Alliance of Ireland, People with Disabilities in Ireland, The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, The Not for Profit Business Association.

The full text of the statement follows below:

#### **Joint Statement: Preventing the Collapse of Ireland's Disability Strategy**

We the under-signed national voluntary disability organisations, representing the diversity of people with disabilities and disabling conditions including mental health, make this joint statement to Government regarding Budget 2012.

Disability is not a sectoral issue; it is a social issue. 18.5% of the Irish population have one or more disabilities, and the percentage is increasing as our population ages.

The Taoiseach, the Tánaiste and the Programme for Government have named people with disabilities including mental health as the Government's social justice priority. Yet the

Government cannot tell what has been the impact of the recession on this historically disadvantaged group. The adverse effects have been obscured by the absence of clear lines of accountability and ineffective monitoring of outcomes for people with disabilities.

Those of us in the sector however are acutely aware of the effect of the cumulative reductions in essential income and service supports on people with disabilities that have occurred since the onset of the recession in 2008. It is our view that further pressure on people with disabilities would be unsustainable. We consider Ireland's National Disability Strategy to be on the point of collapse into empty promises.

We jointly call on the Government, through the Comprehensive Review Expenditure and Budget 2012, to deliver on its social justice priority, and ensure that "the quality of life of people with disabilities is enhanced" in Budget 2012. [*Programme for Government*, page 54]

Action by the Government is urgently needed to:

**1. Halt reductions in the income supports for people with disabilities dependent on benefits.**

People with disabilities are most likely to experience real poverty because on top of the recent cuts in benefit levels and new charges, they have to pay for extras required due to their disability.

**2. Maintain funding for the services needed by people with disabilities.**

Cutting the services required by people with disabilities not only undermines their lives, it also leads to a growing public burden in terms of hospital stays and expensive care costs

**3. Publish and Implement Plan for the National Disability Strategy and incorporate it into Budget decision-making by all Departments and public agencies.**

Ireland must plan for this long period of austerity in a manner that protects services and supports for people with disabilities and ensures that real progress is achievable when economic conditions ease."

# ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## HR & Employment Law Update

The 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. As part of this support structure, each month in the Newsletter we will address a specific issue which may be of interest to our readers.

### Internal Communications

Effective communication in times of change is very important for Organisations as any kind of uncertainty can have an effect on morale in the Organisation. As Organisations go into planning for the New Year it is important to remember that early and frequent communication is key.

In all cases when change is being considered, organisations need to decide

- What changes or savings are required
- How they propose to achieve those changes or savings
- How this may affect an Employee's terms and conditions or rights
- What steps they can take to ensure morale, and hence productivity are not adversely affected
- How any proposed changes can be best communicated

Employers need to ensure that changes to an employee's terms and conditions are done through agreement and are clearly documented. It is always recommended that any changes are confirmed in writing and signed by both the employer and employee.

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

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

## **The Effects of Funding Uncertainty on Individuals, Groups and Organisations.**

***By Maeve Halpin, Social and Organisational Psychologist***

Coping with funding uncertainty challenges our tried and tested methods of responding to problems, as the future contains so many unknowns. The psychological effects of threats that are vague and unpredictable can be just as detrimental as when threats are specific and certain. The consequences of uncertain threats, such as those of climate change, or of terrorism after the 9/11 attacks, have been studied at individual, group and societal levels.

### **The Effects of Uncertain Threats on the Individual**

Typical responses to perceived threat include fear, panic, denial, hyper-vigilance, withdrawal, paranoia, and guilt. The task of the CEO is to recognise and manage these responses, both within him/herself and among staff. A very common response of leaders to problem situations is to over-reassure, in order to prevent panic by suppressing bad news. The opposite of over-reassurance, and the best way to deal with fear, panic, and denial, is to legitimate people's fear. The goal is to help people bear their fear, rather than to try to persuade them not to be afraid. Denial results from people feeling overwhelmed and helpless, so giving people opportunities to take practical action alleviates this. After 9/11, the single factor that protected most against post-traumatic stress symptoms was "active coping" immediately after the event. The likelihood of experiencing on-going stress increased among people who disengaging from coping through distraction, denial or "giving up".

### **Group Dynamics under Stress**

Several factors which hinder effective group decision-making in stressful and uncertain conditions have been identified. These include **availability bias**, whereby we estimate the future probability of events based on easily remembered experiences from our past; **expectation bias**, whereby we look for and select data which confirms our pre-existing expectations and ignore or discount data that does not; the **ambiguity effect**, whereby we avoid considering variables for which we have partial or incomplete information; and **groupthink biases**, whereby we seek to minimize conflict and reach consensus without critically testing, analysing, or evaluating ideas. "Scenario planning", which has its roots in military strategy studies, is a creative process which has been developed to overcome these biases by generating alternative future possibilities that are not based on past experiences. The stresses of funding uncertainty require Boards and CEOs to be open to

new ways to conceptualise and problem-solve, and to seek external advice as necessary.

### **Challenges to Staying in Command**

We respond to threat, real or imaginary, by using our neo-cortex or the intelligent part of our brain less and using the limbic or emotional/reactive part of our brain more. We literally become less thinking-oriented and more emotional and reactive. The physiological response to high stress involves surges of energy to the large muscles, and a narrowing of attention to focus on the source of the stress. This can seriously undermine our capacity for decision-making. Pilots, for instance, have to learn not to react in this automatic way when a crisis occurs, as they need to execute precise movements and be alert to all incoming information. They are trained to be “in command”, rather than allowing the “fight or flight” response to take over. The sense that there are many important variables outside our control can be very stressful. The challenge in uncertain times is to accept that we cannot always be “in control”, but we can be “in command”.

### **Confronting Isolation**

Recent research in neuroscience has demonstrated that men and women differ in how they respond to stress. Men's ability to read facial expressions, perceive emotions and experience empathy with others decreases, while for women these functions increase. This means that while men are inclined to withdraw under pressure, women are more likely to "tend and befriend," engaging in communication and social networking. Isolation and lack of support were identified as issues by chairpersons surveyed in the DFI Chairpersons as Effective Leaders Project (78% male respondents). A combination of multilevel factors can therefore lead to organisations in the current funding climate to become more insular, missing opportunities for support and information sharing, and losing the bigger picture of disability as a whole.

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*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>.*



## HEALTH

### HSE Performance Report August 2011

The HSE Performance Report for July 2011 was published on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September. This report provides an overall analysis of key performance data from the HSE. The activity data reported is based on Performance Activity and Key Performance Indicators as outlined in the HSE's Service Plan 2011.

The report highlights that the HSE will have a deficit of €320m at the end of 2011 unless significant corrective measures are put in place. The report highlights that measures have been put in place to address this overspend, but that the data has not improved sufficiently to deliver a balanced vote by year end. Some of the other key points in the report include:

- Hospital services are currently running at a deficit of €142.2m to the end of August, with University Hospital Limerick, Galway University Hospital, AMNCH and Our Lady of Lourdes causing continued concern.
- The number of individuals covered by a medical card is up by an additional 111,295 (+7%). There has been an additional 74,100 individuals issued with a medical card since December 2010.
- Only 20% of assessments of need are taking place within the timeframes as provided for in the regulations.

Further information from Lillian Buchanan [lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie)

### Value for Money Disability Policy Review Seminar

The Minister of State, Department of Health and Children and Department of Justice, Equality & Defence, Kathleen Lynch, has asked for submissions regarding the *Disability Policy Review*, to be sent to her no later than the 4th November.

To improve outcomes for people with disabilities, the Review proposes major changes in how the HSE allocates funding for disability services, for example, comprehensive commissioning, individualised budgeting, separate management of personal and social services and a different needs assessment approach.

For the Report, please click <http://www.dohc.ie/consultations/open/>

DFI held a seminar on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October with member organisations to discuss the key issues raised in the Review, and share ideas for making individual submissions. DFI's presentation introduced the key themes in the report, and suggested that the approach adopted had significant implications for voluntary bodies and people with disabilities. In the context of making a submission several points were made:

- The Disability Policy Review names clear policy objectives that would enable people with disabilities to participate fully in society.
- It identifies changes in how needs are assessed and funding is allocated, and in how social services are planned and delivered across Government, in keeping with those objectives.
- One the key issues is the challenge of facilitating people who currently rely on segregated, residential accommodation and day-time services to live in the community.
- The challenge of enabling people with disabilities who already live in the community to lead full lives gets much less attention, as does the work by voluntary disability organisations that support those people to access the services and opportunities that they seek.

The Policy Review is available at [www.dohc.ie/consultations](http://www.dohc.ie/consultations)

For further information on the review, please contact Lillian Buchanan at [lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie).

### **neuronetwork.ie**

On the 27<sup>th</sup> October 2011, the Neurological Alliance of Ireland (NAI) and the Disability Federation of Ireland (DFI) launched [www.euronetwork.ie](http://www.euronetwork.ie).

[www.neuronetwork.ie](http://www.neuronetwork.ie) is a unique online tool which will allow those who provide care to people with neurological conditions to source information on the services and supports offered by non-statutory organisations. Through close collaboration with primary health care teams to ensure the site meets their needs, [www.neuronetwork.ie](http://www.neuronetwork.ie) will provide a “shop window” to services, with information available at the click of a mouse.

In developing [neuronetwork.ie](http://www.neuronetwork.ie), NAI and DFI have created a unique resource, which has the potential to be replicated for other conditions and disease areas. The site has been

developed in close consultation with potential users to ensure that the information is provided in a way that meets their needs. Information searches can be performed under a number of criteria including:

- a specific service
- a specific neurological condition
- the county in Ireland

[www.neuronetwork.ie](http://www.neuronetwork.ie) is the culmination of extensive work by NAI and DFI to identify how those working in primary care can better support people with neurological conditions in Ireland.

Speaking at the launch, Denise Dunne, Development Manager of NAI said: *“Neuronetwork is a very important website which will allow people with a neurological condition, primary carers and healthcare workers to access a diverse and comprehensive database of supports, events and details about non-statutory organisations and the work they are doing. While we are launching the website today, it is the start of the process, not the end, and the site will continue to grow and develop with use.”*

Dr Joanne McCarthy, Senior Executive Officer - Policy and Research with the Disability Federation of Ireland, noted the unique nature of the project: *“[www.neuronetwork.ie](http://www.neuronetwork.ie) is the first website of its kind in Ireland and we are delighted to have worked so closely with the NAI, the members of both of our federations, and the HSE to ensure the site meets the needs of the target audience. We will continue to work closely with these groups to make sure this unique portal is the go-to resource for anyone supporting a person with a neurological condition in Ireland.”*

## National Council for Special Education

### Information Booklet for Parents of Children with Special Educational Needs

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) has announced the publication of a new information booklet. This booklet gives parents information on the full range of educational supports available in schools for children with special educational needs.

Parents can download a new publication, “Children with Special Educational Needs – Information Booklet for Parents”, which, for the first time, gives them information on the full range of educational supports available in schools for children with special educational needs.

A recent survey of parental views, commissioned by the NCSE, identified a clear need for greater availability of information for parents. The survey of 1,400 parents of children with special educational needs showed that almost 9 out of 10 (87%) parents thought that their child was in the right school placement. Just over 1 in 10 (12%) parents surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with the level of support that their child received in school – parents of children in secondary schools tending to be less satisfied with the support compared to those with children in primary or special schools. Parents also wanted more information about special education and how schools support children with special educational needs.

Teresa Griffin, CEO, NCSE, stated that: “All parents need to know about the supports that are available in schools across the country for their children with special educational needs. The NCSE works with many parents every day. This booklet provides answers to questions that parents ask on a daily basis about the educational options and supports available for their children with special educational needs.”

As well as giving information on the range of educational supports in schools, the booklet provides information on how a child’s educational needs are assessed and on what a child will learn at school.

Áine Lynch, CEO, National Parents Council Primary, welcomed the new publication

and said that "it will be a valuable and empowering resource for parents which will allow them for the first time to access all of this important information in one place." An Irish language version of this booklet will be available shortly. The NCSE intends to publish information pamphlets on different areas of special educational needs. When published, these will be available in hard copy and on the NCSE website

Please click [here](#) to view the information booklet. Further information from [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie).

### **Special Needs Education**

Senior officials from the Department of Education and Skills, who have responsibilities for the education of children with disabilities, appeared before the Oireachtas Committee on Jobs, Social Protection and Education on 18th October. There was an extensive discussion of the provision of Special Needs Assistants and Resource Teachers in the current school year, and about keeping parents informed about the policies that apply. Other subjects discussed were the provision of additional special classes in mainstream schools, the transition of children to secondary level and co-operation with the HSE in the supply of therapeutic services to children.

To see the debate, please click [www.debates.oireachtas.ie](http://www.debates.oireachtas.ie)

### **Community & Voluntary Pillar**

#### **Meeting with Department of Education & Skills**

Members of the Community & Voluntary Pillar, including DFI, met senior officials of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) to review the implementation of social inclusive policies. The commitment in the Programme for Government, to plan for the full implementation of the Education for Persons with

Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN Act) was raised by Pillar members. DES officials responded that the Department was examining provisions in the Act that could be implemented in a 'cost neutral' manner, but that considerable negotiation was required, especially with some functions being shifted to the Department of Health and Children.

The Department official responsible for special needs admitted that more national dialogue was needed to ensure collaborative working between the HSE and DES staff members at ground level, and he referred to an imminent cross –agency meeting to address planning for local delivery. He also admitted that the adoption of Individual education plans for children with disabilities in mainstream schools was very slow, and that discussions would be held with the Inspector of Schools.

The current number of psychiatrists in NEPS was reported to be 127, higher than a year earlier, but the original target of 210 is unlikely to be achieved in the foreseeable future.

DFI asked if third level institutions could facilitate the development of equality action plans, to improve overall inclusiveness and reduce the call on access officers to fire-fight barriers for individual students.

## **Sectoral Plan Progress Report**

### **Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government**

DFI and other stakeholders met with Departmental officials to review the progress report on implementing the Sectoral Plan during 2011. In addition to the launch of the '*National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities*', the review covered developments in creating an accessible built environment, local authority efforts to ensure information and services are accessible, and reduced capital funding for social housing to meet special needs and for housing adaptation grants.

DFI highlighted the value of voluntary disability bodies advising on the development of the implementation plan for the housing strategy. There was an up-date on the work of local authority access officers, and the sharing of good practice through their network, for example in preparing for 'Accessibility Week', 28th November to 3rd December 2011. DFI suggested that it could work with the Department and the Local Government Management Services Board to strengthen the capacity of local government to incorporate the disability perspective into planning and practice. DFI also requested that the Department include it's 'communities' remit in the next progress report.

## TRAINING - EDUCATION - EVENTS

### AHEAD

#### **Event for Students and Graduates with Disabilities and Specific Learning Difficulties**

AHEAD, the Association for Higher Education Access & Disability will hold an event on 11<sup>th</sup> October for students and graduates with disabilities and specific learning difficulties. It is aimed at those seeking tips on making the successful transition to the world of employment.

The event aims to help graduates with disabilities polish their job seeking skills and give them some invaluable pointers on successfully adjusting to the world of work and building a fulfilling career.

High profile employers, such as Google, Citi, ESB, Sigmar Recruiting, Bord Gais, Abbott Ireland, Convidien, and others, will be on hand to speak to graduates one on one about their expectations as employers, and will field questions relating to their organisations and sectors.

Practical seminars will take place advising graduates on topics such as stress management and considering self-employment.

The event is free of charge, but booking is essential. Registration closes on 4<sup>th</sup> November. For further information please visit [www.ahead.ie/buildingthefuture2011](http://www.ahead.ie/buildingthefuture2011).

### **Acquired Brain Injury Ireland**

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland will be hosting an **ABI Information & Education Day** for Family Carers and Healthcare/Allied Professionals on **17<sup>th</sup> November 2011 in the Citywest Hotel**, Saggart, Co Dublin. (just off the N7, Naas Rd).

Further information from [www.abiireland.ie](http://www.abiireland.ie)

## **Care Alliance and Trinity College**

### **Research Report on the Needs of Family Carers**

Following the launch of the Report of the joint research in collaboration, between the Care Alliance and the School of Nursing and Midwifery in Trinity College Dublin, the Report of the research project, entitled **Between Worlds: The Experiences and Needs of Former Family Carers** is now available to download from the Care Alliance website, [www.carealliance.ie](http://www.carealliance.ie). The Care Alliance is looking forward to disseminating this research widely, in the belief that it will make a positive impact on the lives of former Family Carers into the future.

## **The Centre for Disability Law and Policy NUI Galway**

### **Conference on Genetic Discrimination**

The Centre for Disability Law and Policy, NUI Galway will co-host a one-day conference entitled 'Genetic Discrimination - Transatlantic Perspectives on the Case for a European Level Legal Response', in conjunction with the Burton Blatt Institute, Syracuse University, USA. The conference will take place in NUI Galway, on Saturday, 19th November, 2011.

The purpose of this conference is to examine the case for a European level legal and policy response to protect the privacy of genetic information, and to prevent genetic discrimination, particularly in the employment and insurance contexts.

The conference will recount recent scientific advances that make genetic testing more and more accurate and more sophisticated, and which offers the prospect of being able to detect the onset of future disabilities. It looks at the ethical debate on how to balance competing rights and interests, such as the right to privacy of the individual and the 'need to know' of business and other interests. It examines the balance struck in the Genetic Information Non Discrimination Act (2008) in the USA. Keeping in mind the technological advances, and their future orientation, the ethical context and the balance struck in the US legislation, it will examine the options for a European legal response, possibly in the shape of a new non-discrimination genetic information Directive, or an amendment to existing Directives, and whether a sufficient case exists for such a response.

The conference is aimed at legal practitioners, medical practitioners, academics and researchers, NGOs and those involved in disability issues and practice. It is also aimed at



those interested in medical testing generally, as well as genetic testing specifically, and the implications of these practices.

For further information please see the Centre for Disability Law and Policy event page at <http://www.nuigalway.ie/cdlp/events.html>

To register for this event please visit

<http://www.conference.ie/Conferences/AddRegistration.asp?Conference=139>

For other enquiries and special requirements please contact: Róisín Fitzpatrick at +353 91 495888 / +353 87 6660634 / [info.cdlp@nuigalway.ie](mailto:info.cdlp@nuigalway.ie) or Aisling de Paor at +353 91 494017 / [aisling.depaor@nuigalway.ie](mailto:aisling.depaor@nuigalway.ie).

## ICTR Annual Conference

The 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference or Irish Charities Tax Research (ICTR) will take place on Thursday 10th of November 2011, from 9 am to 2 pm, in the Ashling Hotel, Parkgate Street, Dublin 8.

Celebrating its 20th Birthday this year, ICTR is taking the opportunity to reflect on the past twenty years and what has been achieved, before asking our contributors to gaze into their crystal balls to suggest what is in store for the next ten or twenty.

The Conference will be opened by Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence, Alan Shatter TD, who assumed responsibility for charities regulation in May. This will be a first opportunity for Minister Shatter to outline his plans for advancing implementation of the legislation.

Speakers include Brendan Keenan (Economics Editor, Independent Newspapers), Jane Ryder (Outgoing CEO of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator), John McCormack (Chief Executive, Irish Cancer Society), Jonathan Irwin (CEO, The Jack and Jill Children's Foundation), Sheila Nordon (Executive Director, ICTR) and Kathleen O'Meara (Chair, ICTR). The theme of the Conference is: Whither or Wither with Charities?

The Conference Brochure will be available shortly.

**Conference costs:** €110 for non-members (or €105 per attendee if 2 or more attendees)  
€80 for ICTR members (or €75 per attendee if 2 or more attendees)

[Advance Members Registration Now Open - Click here to register](#)

## Countdown to the European Year for Active Ageing

### Meeting the Challenge of Europe's Ageing Population

The European Union is experiencing a process of significant demographic change as people live longer and healthier lives. Projections indicate a decline of about 6.8% in the number of people of working age by 2030, therefore, two people of working age will be needed to support one retired person.

As 2012 is designated as the '**European Year for Active Ageing**', this symposium seeks to raise awareness, stimulate debate and trigger policy discussion around improving the vitality of older people, enhancing involvement in society and removing generational barriers. Active ageing requires the creation opportunities for older people to continue working and to contribute to society through volunteering, and this needs to be supported by wide-ranging policies at all levels of governance. The EU has a key role to play in areas such as employment, social protection and inclusion, public health, information society and transport, but the primary role is for national, regional and local governments, as well as civil society and the social partners to adopt clear frameworks to promote active ageing. The Symposium will support the exchange of ideas and encourage delegates to engage in thought-provoking topical debate.

Delegates will:

- Understand and assess the implications of the EU's ageing population for local, regional and national authorities
- Learn about the key opportunities and goals to be created by the 'European Year for Active Ageing' in 2012
- Support the European Commission's key measures for intergenerational solidarity and raising awareness of active ageing
- Discuss how to improve services for older people at local and regional levels
- Explore how to reduce economic dependency and promote greater participation in employment and society
- Exchange best practices, local case studies and lessons learnt

The symposium will take place in The Silken Berlaymont Hotel, Brussels, on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2011. Further details are available on the [Website](#), or contact Alexandra Kelly, Public Policy Exchange, Tel: +44 (0)845 606 1535.

## **Irish Hospice Foundation**

### **Launch of “Think Ahead” Project**

Irish people are being urged to think about and pre-record their wishes in the event of serious illness or death, using the *Think Ahead* form launched in October at the Forum on End of Life in Ireland.

The Forum [www.endoflife.ie](http://www.endoflife.ie) is an Irish Hospice Foundation initiative which began in 2009, conceived in order to open up dialogue about all matters relating to dying, death and bereavement which might be of concern to Irish people.

The **Think Ahead** project has formed a key part of the Forum's work this year. A detailed *Think Ahead* form has been prepared, which allows people to fill in their personal details and other information which could be crucial at some time in the future in ensuring that their wishes and preferences are known to others - family, emergency services, hospital services, solicitor, etc.

#### **Dedicated website**

The form is divided into six sections: *Key Information, Care Preferences, Legal Matters, Financial Matters, When I Die* and *Sharing of Information*, with an appendix entitled *Where to Find My Important Documents*. See [www.thinkahead.ie](http://www.thinkahead.ie)

## **The Log On Learn Programme**

IT or computer literacy is often an issue for older people who may not have had the opportunity to learn how to use a computer or discover the Internet. One effect of the widening of the digital divide is the exclusion of older people from many aspects of modern life. The three partner organisations, Intel, Microsoft, and An post therefore, devised a user-friendly method to engage our older population in computer training, using the principles of the one-to-one training method.

How does it work? 8-weekly training sessions take place in the school's computer lab/room. The student tutor shares knowledge of how to use a PC and mouse, basic word processing and internet applications. The older person shares the ability to relate and to communicate, memories of culture, rituals and life experience. The 1:1 learning experience ensures the pace of learning meets the end user's needs.

Log On, Learn represents a scalable, successful approach to digital inclusion for older adults. To date more than 180 schools have trained approx. 2,000 senior citizens with the same number of students participating in the training program. Older adults can embrace technology with confidence and have skills to research their health conditions, access e-government services, remain connected to family and friends.

**Commitment:** By the end of the European Year 2012 Logon Learn will aim to expand the programme by a further 50% and is happy to share experiences and materials with any countries wishing to replicate this initiative.

Further information from <http://www.logonlearn.ie/>

## **Rathmines Community Pembroke Partnership WRAP – Wellness Recovery Action Plan Programme**

### **Why participate in WRAP?**

This course enables participants to take back control of their recovery and mental well-being through the development of an individual wellness plan.

The plan is designed and managed by the individual. It has been shown to help to reduce intrusive or troubling feelings and behaviours, increase personal empowerment, improve quality of life and assist the person to achieve their life goals and dreams in spite of mental health obstacles

The programme will incorporate the following elements:

- Wellness Toolbox
- Daily Maintenance Plan
- Identifying Triggers and an Action Plan
- Identifying When Things Are Breaking Down and an Action Plan
- Crisis & Post Crisis Planning
- **The course starts in November 2011 and will be held on Saturday Afternoon. It will continue from November 2011 – January 2012 Further details will be available nearer the time. For more information contact Martha at Rathmines Community Pembroke Partnership on 01 4965558.**

## **“Home from Home” - MDI’s self-catering apartments**

“Home from Home”, Muscular Dystrophy Ireland’s self-catering apartments, consist of a four bedroom self-catering apartment. Three of the four bedrooms have ceiling track hoists and two are en-suite. There is also a fully equipped kitchen and a lounge / recreation area. On arrival, the kitchen will be stocked with milk, sugar, tea, coffee, salt & pepper. Bed linen is provided in each bedroom, and all beds are profile beds. Pictures of the apartment are available on the MDI Website

<http://www.mdi.ie/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=169>

The accommodation is available on a short stay basis only to anyone with a disability who requires wheelchair accessible accommodation. MDI members, however, have priority! A contribution of €25 per room per night is requested. The accommodation is available all year round, but bookings must be made in advance between Monday / Friday, 9am-5pm

Full information on the accommodation is available from Sandra at (01) 6236414 or email:

[sandra@mdi.ie](mailto:sandra@mdi.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](mailto:info@iasbah.ie)

Acquired Brain Injury Ireland Newsletter, Tel 01 2804164  
email:[cbrack@abiireland.ie](mailto:cbrack@abiireland.ie)

[http://www.abiireland.ie/docs/ABII\\_Newsletter\\_Spring\\_2010.pdf](http://www.abiireland.ie/docs/ABII_Newsletter_Spring_2010.pdf)

Arthritis Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 01 661 8188

E-mail: [info@arthritisireland.ie](mailto:info@arthritisireland.ie)

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

Asthma Society News - Tel: 01-8788511,  
E-mail:[office@asthmasociety.ie](mailto:office@asthmasociety.ie)

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

E-mail: [info@migraine.ie](mailto:info@migraine.ie)

Brainwave - Quarterly Newsletter, Tel: 01 4557500, E-mail:  
[info@epilepsy.ie](mailto:info@epilepsy.ie)

Care Alliance Ireland - E-mail: [ndo@carealliance.ie](mailto:ndo@carealliance.ie)

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

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

Community Exchange Newsletter, E-mail: [info@activelink.ie](mailto:info@activelink.ie), Tel:  
+1 667 7326

Connect - Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association. E-mail:  
[info@imnda.ie](mailto:info@imnda.ie), Freefone 1800 403 403

Community Workers' Co-operative – Community Work News. E-mail:  
[info@cwci.ie](mailto: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](mailto:homeless@dublincity.ie)

Cumhacht - People with Disabilities in Ireland  
[http://www.pwdi.ie/news\\_events/newsletter/index.htm](http://www.pwdi.ie/news_events/newsletter/index.htm), E-mail:  
[info@pwdi.ie](mailto:info@pwdi.ie), Tel: 01-8721744

Debra Ireland Newsletter, Tel: 01 678 5044, E-mail:  
[info@debraireland.org](mailto:info@debraireland.org)

Down Syndrome Ireland - Tel: 01-8730999, E-mail:  
[info@downsyndrome.ie](mailto:info@downsyndrome.ie)

Enable Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 1850 204 304 E-mail:  
[communications@enableireland.ie](mailto:communications@enableireland.ie)

Equality News - Tel: 01-4173333, E-mail: [info@equality.ie](mailto:info@equality.ie)

E-Info Deaf Source— E-mail: [info@irishdeafsociety.ie](mailto:info@irishdeafsociety.ie). Tel: +353  
1860 1878

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

Fighting Blindness - Tel: 01 7093050, E-mail:  
[avril.daly@fightingblindness.ie](mailto:avril.daly@fightingblindness.ie)

Frontline of Learning Disability -Tel: 01-2862649. E-mail:  
[frontline@indigo.ie](mailto:frontline@indigo.ie)

GROWing - Information on Mental Health, Tel: 1890 474 474, E-mail:  
[info@grow.ie](mailto:info@grow.ie)

Guidelines - Irish Guide Dogs Association. Tel: 021 4878200 E-mail:  
[info@guidedogs.ie](mailto:info@guidedogs.ie)

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

Heart News: - Newsletter of Irish Heart Foundation. Tel:  
01 668 5001  
E-mail: [info@irishheart.ie](mailto:info@irishheart.ie).

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

Heatwave - Irish Raynauds Scleroderma Society,  
E-mail: [info@irishraynauds.com](mailto:info@irishraynauds.com), Tel: 01 2020184

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

Inclusion Ireland - Tel: 01 8559891, E-mail:  
[info@inclusionireland.ie](mailto:info@inclusionireland.ie)

Irish Deaf News - Irish Deaf Society. Minicom: 01-  
8601910; 01-8601878; E-mail: [info@irishdeafsociety.ie](mailto:info@irishdeafsociety.ie)

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

Kerry Network of People with Disabilities - Network News  
066-7180611, E-mail: [kerryPWDI@eircom.net](mailto:kerryPWDI@eircom.net)

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

Muscular Dystrophy Ireland - MDI News Update Tel: 01-  
6236414, or 01- 6236415 E-mail: [info@mdi.ie](mailto:info@mdi.ie)

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

NCBI News - Newsletter of the National Council for the  
Blind of Ireland, Tel: 01 8307033, E-mail: [press@ncbi.ie](mailto:press@ncbi.ie),  
[www.ncbi.ie](http://www.ncbi.ie)

Neuro News - Neurofibromatosis Association of Ireland,  
Tel: 01-8726338, E-mail: [nfaireland@eircom.net](mailto:nfaireland@eircom.net)

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

Post Polio Support Group - Newsletter, Tel: 071 64791  
E-mail: [newsletter@ppsg.ie](mailto:newsletter@ppsg.ie)

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

Rehab News -Tel: 01-2057200 E-mail:  
[dara.duffy@rehab.ie](mailto:dara.duffy@rehab.ie)

Simon News - Simon Community, Tel: 01-6711606 E-mail:  
[info@simoncommunity.com](mailto:info@simoncommunity.com)

Shine News - Schizophrenia Ireland, Tel: (0)1 8601620  
E-mail: [info@sirl.ie](mailto:info@sirl.ie)

Social Housing - Irish Council for Social Housing Tel: 01-  
6618334; E-mail: [info@icsh.ie](mailto:info@icsh.ie)

Sonas aPc – Tel (01) 2608138. [www.sonasapc.ie](http://www.sonasapc.ie).

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

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

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





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

#### **National Office**

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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 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 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](http://www.disability-federation.ie)

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

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**email: [info@disability-federation.ie](mailto:info@disability-federation.ie) web: [www.disability-federation.ie](http://www.disability-federation.ie)**

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