



## **Disability Federation of Ireland**

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

### **DFI Newsletter April 2012**

#### **Call for the timely release of the Implementation Plan for the National Disability Strategy**

We welcome Minister Lynch's commitment to the development of an Implementation Plan for the National Disability Strategy. This is greatly welcomed in the context of the recent Budget cutbacks to welfare supports, funding for essential services and the loss of therapists, counsellors, advocates and other supports. It has been a time when people faced increasing levels of uncertainty about the future. Although we have just recently learnt that this Plan, due to be completed by the end of May, has been pushed out for another three months we would encourage the Minister to prioritise this work which can be used to inform the development of Budget 2013.

This Plan offers us the opportunity to respond to what we know are the needs and wishes of people with disabilities. These are clearly spelt out in the 402 recommendations of the *Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities* (1996) and more recently in the Department of Health's (DoH) *Report of the Disability Policy Review* (2011). They are also strongly articulated through a number of government documents, including those on congregated settings, day services, neuro-rehabilitation reports, and the housing needs of people with disabilities, all of which are replete with recommendations.

The publication of the Implementation Plan offers us a genuine opportunity to fully operationalize the vision for people with disabilities "to lead full and independent lives, to participate in work and society and to maximise their potential". We would encourage the Minister to publish this Plan and support the timely implementation of its commitments.

**John Dolan**  
**CEO**

# ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## DFI Series of Two-day Courses with CES

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

**“How to Demonstrate Outcomes” will take place on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2012 in DFI premises in Fumbally Court.**

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:dermotodonnell@disability-federation.ie)

## **HR & Employment Law Update**

Adare Human Resource Management provide HR and Employment Law Support Services to a large number of Organisations within the Community and Voluntary Sector. Adare Human Resource Management aims to enable organisations to focus on their core operations, by providing management with the knowledge and support to assist them to deal effectively with people management and organisational change. We support organisations through minimising the risk of exposure to legal challenges by ensuring legal compliance for organisations in their practices as well as policies and procedures.

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

## **Best Practice Recruitment and Selection**

All Organisations should plan, prior to commencing a recruitment process, their requirements. This includes drafting a detailed job description and person specification, planning the key mediums to advertise/source candidates, shortlisting all candidates against agreed (essential) criteria (and desirable criteria also if needed), identifying competent members for the interview panel and timeframes for the process, from sourcing to appointment.

### Key stages within the Recruitment and Selection Process

Stage 1 – Planning, Management & Pre Recruitment

Stage 2 – Sourcing & Vetting

Stage 3 – Assessing & Recruitment

## **Equality in Recruitment**

The Employment Equality Acts 1998-2008 set out nine protected grounds under which discrimination is prohibited. These nine protected grounds are gender, age, race, religion, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, membership of the traveller community and disability. Every Organisation and person acting on behalf of the Organisation is obliged to ensure Equality with regard to access to employment under the Acts.

## **Record Keeping**

In order to be equipped to defend an allegation of discrimination, all recruitment records, including copies of unsuccessful applications, interview notes and applicant screening records should be retained for a minimum of 13 months after the competition is closed. The reason for this is because an allegation of discrimination may be brought under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2008 for up to 12 months after an alleged act of discrimination. The 13th month is to allow for notification of the complaint from the Equality Tribunal.

In all cases an applicant may request access to any personal data held about them under the Data Protection Acts 1988 – 2003. This would include their recruitment records. An Employer has 40 days during which to accede to such a request, and is required to provide the following;

- a copy of the personal data held.
- an explanation of the purpose for which the data is held.
- the identity of those to whom the data is disclosed.

- the sources of the information.
- the logic involved in any automated decisions made using personal information e.g. outputs of psychometric testing.

Adare Human Resource Management has extensive experience in recruitment in the Community and Voluntary Sector. If you are considering recruiting Senior or Management positions please contact us for further information on how we can assist you in your recruitment campaign.

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

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

## **The Governance Code – a Free Online Tool for Charities**

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

Good governance can be described as the process of running an organisation with integrity, based on appropriate and agreed systems and procedures. A number of organisations, including DFI, have come together to develop a comprehensive resource, called The Governance Code, to support the understanding and implementation of the principles of good governance for Community and Voluntary Organisations.

### **Principles of Governance**

Compliance with the Code is voluntary, and is based on engaging with principles rather than with rules. It addresses the ethical climate that prevails in organisations, providing clear guidance for identifying and measuring good governance practice and behaviour. It aims to become the standard definition of good practice for the Community and Voluntary Sector in Ireland, while continuing to inform the standards that will be required by both funders and regulators.

The five principles of good governance identified are :

1. Leading the organisation.
2. Exercising control over the organisation.
3. Being transparent and accountable.
4. Working effectively.

## 5. Behaving with integrity.

Each principle contains 3 sub-principles. e.g. under “Leading the Organisation”, these are:

(a) Agreeing our vision, purpose and values and making sure that they remain relevant.

(b) Developing, resourcing, monitoring and evaluating a plan to make sure that the organisation achieves its stated purpose.

(c) Managing, supporting and holding to account staff, volunteers and all who act on behalf of the organisation.

### **Tools for Implementation**

The Code provides a choice of checklists for implementing the principles, depending on the size and complexity of the organisation. This flexibility means that the tools are accessible and relevant to all organisations, from those with no paid staff to those with a national reach. Organisations are classified as Type A, Type B or Type C, depending on size. User-friendly tables are supplied which allows any organisation to systematically compare themselves to the standards outlined in the Code on a “comply or explain” basis. This quickly highlights the areas that need to be addressed in order for compliance to be achieved. Evidence of compliance can then be included on the organisation's promotional material and funding submissions. If it is not possible to make all the changes required, it is still possible to adopt the Code, by supplying an explanation of what actions were not taken and why. Organisational practice is then reviewed against the Code on an annual basis.

### **Building a Community**

The Working Group is in the process of compiling a register of compliant organisations, as well as developing an online networking platform for sharing tips and resources among those working with the Code. The goal is to maximise the uptake of the Code's principles, guidelines and implementation tools, so providing a standardised, transparent and accessible model for continuous improvement across the sector in relation to governance.

**Members of the Working Group:** Boardmatch Ireland, Business in the Community Ireland, Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups, Clann Credo, Disability Federation of Ireland, ICTR, Volunteer Ireland, and The Wheel, in association with The Corporate Governance Association of Ireland (CGAI), Arthur Cox (Solicitor) and Sheila Cahill Consulting. Training is provided by DFI and by The Carmichael Centre Training and Support Service. See [www.governancecode.ie](http://www.governancecode.ie). Contact [info@governancecode.ie](mailto:info@governancecode.ie)

*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>.*

### **C & V Organisation, WALK, first to attain PQASSO Level 2 in Ireland**

WALK (formerly known as Walkinstown Association) celebrates being the first and currently the only organisation in Ireland to be awarded PQASSO at Level 2, an internationally recognised Quality Award. WALK's journey towards accreditation began on the 15th December 2008 when they underwent the DFI "Organisation HealthCheck" and were introduced to the PQASSO quality management system.

This award complements WALK's other quality systems, including achievements of the highest quality standard in providing community based services, using the internationally recognised human rights based approach of the Council on Quality and Leadership, and the National Human Resources Standard, 'Excellence Through People'. The achievement of these awards confirms WALK as a first class, leading organisation in the Community and Voluntary sector, firmly committed to the provision of high quality human services.

Attaining the PQASSO Level 2 award also highlights WALK as a service that not only has the person at the centre of all of its activities, but also as an organisation that proactively demonstrates good governance and provision of quality assured services in advance of the impending legislation and HIQA standards. Facing into a future where growth and renewal are essential for organisational survival, WALK has every confidence that the energy and commitment of all of its members will combine to bring it through the challenging times ahead.

The PQASSO implementation experience for WALK has been very a positive one, that has played an important role in embedding and enhancing a culture of quality throughout all aspects of its organisation.

The tremendous work and effort taken to inculcate systems wholly in to the organisation in an effort to achieve this award demonstrates WALK's commitment to deliver the highest quality services.

DFI would like to congratulate WALK on its success with this programme. If you would like further information on PQASSO, please contact Dermot O'Donnell, [dermotodonnell@disability-federation.ie](mailto:dermotodonnell@disability-federation.ie).

## HEALTH

### **HSE Universal Access Working Group to Develop PA Policy for Mainstream Health Care**

DFI is currently Chairing a group on behalf of the HSE Universal Access Working Group, which is looking at the development of a policy on the role of personal assistants for people with disabilities in mainstream healthcare. A number of service users/patients have highlighted inconsistent practices regarding the recognition of the need for a personal assistant to support some persons with a disability in mainstream health, particularly in acute hospital settings.

In order to provide clarity and governance on this issue, the group is currently looking to get a clearer picture of what is happening in current practice. We are particularly interested in:

- What is working?
- What isn't working?
- What would improve existing practice?
- Particular areas of risk that we need to be aware of?

DFI members and service users have already been contacted to provide their feedback. However if you have not had an opportunity to do so, please send your comments to [louisemccann@disability-federation.ie](mailto:louisemccann@disability-federation.ie) or phone Louise at 01 4250126 Please do this by the end of May 2012.

It would also be appreciated if you could forward to Louise any written definitions that you have for the role of a personal assistant, or policies that you are aware of in other

jurisdictions. This will help us in defining to whom this policy applies. DFI members will be kept informed on the outcome of the work of this group.

### **HSE Disability Consultative Structure**

DFI has been actively participating in the HSE's Consultative Fora at national, regional, and (emerging) local levels. This has involved considerable work in developing briefings and preparing representatives from member organisations to participate in the fora.

We believe that these consultations are critical for people with disabilities and their voluntary organisations, offering the opportunity to influence reforms in disability services and the wider health system. We know that the HSE, with reports such as the Day Services Review under its belt, and the Value for Money and Policy report imminent, plans to change the way in which funding is allocated, and to focus more on what it considers to be its core business. We need to make sure that mainstream health services are accessible to all, and that the disability-specific supports necessary to health and participation are protected. We need to remind the HSE that many people with disabilities, although not be heavy users of residential or day services, nonetheless require disability-specific supports and access mainstream services.

Following the workshop meeting, reported in the March Newsletter, the **National Consultative Forum** (NCF) met to progress the work plan. Shortly thereafter the working group on cross-geographic working and restructuring held its first session. At the NCF meeting, in a discussion about the 2012 budget cutbacks, DFI pointed out the differences amongst organisations in relation to the 3.7% cuts, noting that some had already made significant savings, while the small amount of funding given to others put in question the viability of the service. The impact on people with disabilities of the contraction across health services was highlighted.

DFI also raised the issue of PA services, in the context of the drive to support people living and participating in the community. The HSE undertook to investigate and report back.

Meetings of the four **Regional Consultative Fora** also dealt with the fall-out from the budget and the implications of the various HSE reports on disability programmes. The inclusion of people with disabilities in consultations, and getting local fora up and running,

were among the other topics covered. Again Working Groups and work plans to implement change are getting underway.

In April, DFI circulated information on the first quarter activities of the National and Regional Consultative Fora to all CEOs of member organisations. Further information on the HSE Consultative Fora from [lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie)

### **Children First – Information and Update**

A revised edition of “Children First: National guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children” was published in 2011 by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. It was followed closely by a companion “Child Protection and welfare Practice handbook” published by the HSE. The Programme for Government of the current Government has committed to progress the active implementation of this Guidance and are demonstrating their commitment by producing a suite of legislation, namely:

a) Criminal Justice Bill 2012: Withholding information bill - (Justice)

see [http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/child\\_protectionPR](http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/child_protectionPR)

b) National Vetting Bureau Bill 2011 draft: This will include soft information. (Justice)

<http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR11000151>

c) Children' First Bill 2012 draft:

<http://www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?Docid=1919&CatID=13&mn=&StartDate=1+January+2012>

The heads of the above bill (c) were published on the 25<sup>th</sup> April. This will be the legislation that will put children first on a statutory footing. This will include obligation to report (DCYA). On first reading there are a few salient points for organisations that should be noted: the Aims and Principles are essentially ‘the well-being of the child’.

Transport services are now included e.g. school buses;

Not included are: 3<sup>rd</sup> level institutions, Gymnasiums, Public Parks.

The HSE will be required to produce a document called “Safeguarding for organisations” and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs will produce a document called “Guidance for Reporting Abuse”.

All Organisations providing a service to children will be required to develop a “Keeping Children Safe” plan; the requirement to vet employees will extend to volunteers (there are exemptions for once off activity). A code of conduct will be required and each organisation will be required to have a designated Liaison person (CEO or senior person), set up an Independent Internal Review group consisting of three people, one to have experience of childcare that will monitor the organisations policies, practices, complaints etc. Failure by organisations and professionals to comply with the legislation could result in a prosecution or closure of a service

Should an organisation or group wish there is an opportunity to make a submission to the Department of Children and Youth Affairs that has been extended to 11<sup>th</sup> May.

A National Group for the implementation of Children First in the Disability Sector has been set up and The Disability Federation of Ireland is represented on this group by Toni Gleeson, email: [tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie](mailto:tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie) there will be further information for circulation at the DFI AGM on the 23<sup>rd</sup> May. There will also be a more comprehensive article in the newsletter in the coming months. This is a serious piece of legislation, the Government is committed to proceeding with haste and to have all in place by January 2013 so Organisations will need to be au fait and prepared. If you wish to get further information or stay in the touch with the progress of this group please feel free to contact Toni Gleeson.

### **Phased Introduction of Free GP Care**

Roisín Shorthall, T.D., Minister of State for Primary Care, has announced that the Government has given its approval to the preparation by the Department of Health to draft legislation to progress the phased introduction of a free GP care in line with the commitment in the Programme for Government.

It is envisaged that the first phase in the Programme will provide for the extension of access to GP services, without fees, to persons with illnesses or disabilities, to be prescribed by regulations under the new legislation.

The Minister indicated that it was her intention that the legislation be drafted and enacted before the summer recess.

## **NATIONAL DISABILITY STRATEGY / TOWARDS 2016**

### **National Disability Strategy**

The National Disability Strategy Implementation Group (NDSIG) met under the chairmanship of Minister Kathleen Lynch T.D on the 30<sup>th</sup> of March. The Group consists of senior officials from a range of departments, the NDA and the Disability Stakeholders Group (DSG).

The DSG had submitted an initial proposal setting goals for people with disabilities to be progressed by the Plan, namely

- Maximise potential
- Equal citizenship and equality before the law
- Independence, choice and control
- Participation – to live ordinary lives in ordinary places

The DSG indicated that it would elaborate further on these goals by identifying actions, outputs and outcomes and timeframes for progress.

The Chair highlighted the cross government nature of the Plan, noting the role of Departments, such as the Department of Education & Training, who do not have a Sectoral Plan. The preparations for enabling Ireland to ratify the UN Convention (UNCRPD) were reviewed as well as considerations affecting the timeframe for developing the NDS Implementation Plan.

The impact of the austerity environment was discussed, and it was noted that people with disabilities, who have been adversely affected on every front, see public servants being prioritised ahead of service users under the Croke Park Agreement. DFI emphasised the

importance of sustaining basic service provision and proposed that the Implementation Plan be specifically linked to the Public Service reform Agenda. The NDSIG will reconvene at the end of June to further develop upon these issues.

## **Department of Social Protection Disability Consultative Forum**

### **Update**

The Department of Social Protection host quarterly meetings of the Disability Consultative Forum. The following are some the issues raised in previous meetings.

#### **Disability Sectoral Plan Update**

The current Department of Social Protection Sectoral Plan covers the period 2009 to end 2012. Work on a new Disability Sectoral Plan, reflecting the integration of FÁS Employment Services and the Community Welfare Services, will commence in 2012. DFI Members will be kept informed of developments on the Plan via the newsletter.

#### **The National Disability Strategy Implementation Group (NDSIG)**

Minister Kathleen Lynch, T.D. Office for Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People, has established a new NDS Implementation Group to develop, monitor and progress an Implementation Plan for the NDS. This group will replace the former NDS Stakeholder Monitoring Group (NDSSMG) while maintaining its cross-departmental focus and collaboration with stakeholders.

The purpose of the NDSIG is to provide a forum, under the leadership of the Minister, within which Government officials and disability stakeholders can work together to guide the development of a National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan, and to collaborate on its implementation, including advising on the resolution of implementation difficulties. The NDSIG will also bring the lived experience of people with disabilities to bear on strategic and cross-sectoral implementation issues and, support the Minister in reporting on the Implementation Plan, as required, to the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy.

#### **Changes made in Budget 2012**

##### *Disability Allowance*

There were two major measures relating to Disability allowance announced in Budget 2012. One was to increase the eligibility age limit from 16 to 18 years, and the other was to reduce rates of payment for persons aged between 18 and 25 years. These are now paused. The Advisory Group on Tax & Social Welfare is reviewing these measures in terms of policy objectives and impact.

The approach to be taken by the Advisory group has not been decided. DFI has made a submission to the group, which can be viewed on our website. We will keep members informed of updates in this regard.

#### Activation

New participants on Community Employment schemes cannot claim more than one social welfare payment at a time. The Training and Materials Grant was reduced from €1,500 to €500 per participant per annum. A financial review of the schemes is currently taking place.

#### Partial Capacity Benefit

Partial Capacity Benefit has been introduced. Regulations have been drafted, as required by the legislation, providing for the Partial Capacity Benefit Scheme. The scheme applies on a voluntary basis to recipients of Illness Benefit (over 6 months), and Invalidity Pension. Those recipients, currently on exemptions, will be diverted to Partial Capacity Scheme when their exemptions run out. The Department will fast track those who have the offer of a job, to make sure they can take it up without delay. Medical Assessment for the Scheme will be desk assessed, based on a Medical Diagnostic Report. There will be no earnings limit. As this is a new scheme DFI will continue to review its progress, and will raise any issues arising from members at Department level.

If you have any queries about the DSP Disability Consultative Forum please contact Louise McCann, DFI Support Officer at [louisemccann@disability-federation.ie](mailto:louisemccann@disability-federation.ie) or 01 4250126.

### **The Integration of Local and Rural Transport Services**

On February 28<sup>th</sup> this year, Minister of State for Public and Commuter Transport, Alan Kelly T.D. announced major plans for the integration of rural and local transport services. This announcement follows a value for money survey carried out by the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, which highlighted a number of key issues with services as they currently operate. These include:

- Services are operated by a range of state agencies with little or no link up between those services.
- Value for Money is not being achieved.
- Lack of transparency in allocation of costs and financial reporting.
- Little or no reporting of any income earned through fares by RTPs.

Following the announcement in February of the Government's new plans to integrate rural transport, Minister Kelly established a high-level Committee to oversee the initiative. Membership of the Committee consists of senior representatives of the National Transport Authority, the Department of Education and Science, the Department of Environment, Community and local Government representatives, the HSE, the Rural Transport Network, Pobal, Irish Rural Link, the City and County Managers Association and Bus Éireann. The first meeting took place on April 4<sup>th</sup> and was chaired by Minister Kelly. The Minister reiterated that it is vital the Committee is now up and running so it can urgently begin addressing the issues that integrating rural transport will involve.

The Minister noted that 'this is new territory for the Government, but what we are doing here is examining how we can work smarter with existing resources, reduce duplication, waste and to preserve and build on existing services. We need to change our mind-set. Public transport isn't just an urban issue it's also a very real issue in rural Ireland.

The purpose of the Committee is to establish and implement a policy that will see the full integration of State transport services and eliminate duplication and provide some saving for the taxpayer while improving and enhancing services'.

DFI members who operate transport are likely to become involved in this process, as much of the transport in the sector has been funded by public means to provide a service for service users in the community. It is also likely that local government will play a significant part in this process, given the commitments made by the Minister for Environment, Community and Local Government, Phil Hogan, T. D. in the Programme for Government 2011, This noted that 'we will give local communities more control over transport and traffic, economic development, educational infrastructure, and local responses to crime and local healthcare needs...'. This view is borne out by participation on the high level committee by representatives of both the HSE and the City and County Managers Network. Furthermore it is likely that school transport will eventually feature in the process.

The National Disability Strategy is centrally about how people with disabilities can live and participate as equals in their own communities. If the integration of local and rural transport makes it easier for people with disabilities to participate more equally in the community in an accessible manner, then surely this is one of major areas where the NDS can become a reality.

It is important that DFI member organisations are aware of these changes taking place, and what is being decided locally, and should continue to build and develop relationships with the local authorities and the broader Community and Voluntary sector in their areas. Join the Community and Voluntary Forum and be involved at grass root level in local decision making and local interagency initiatives. Integrated transport should not be seen as a project in isolation but as part of the promised devolution of decision making on a variety of issues to local government.

To join your local Community and Voluntary Forum please contact your Local Authority or visit their website. For further reading on the roll out of the integration of local and rural transport services follow the links below to the press releases from the Department of Transport Tourism and Sport.

<http://www.transport.ie/pressRelease.aspx?Id=504>

<http://www.transport.ie/pressRelease.aspx?Id=530>

### **Update on Community & Voluntary Sector Activities**

Members of the Community & Voluntary Pillar met senior officials in the housing and health policy areas to raise concerns about the impact of the budget cutbacks on marginalised groups. A meeting has been sought with officials in the Community division of the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government (DOECLG), but no date has been set.

Pillar representatives are active on the National Economic and Social Council where projects on employment, quality and standards in Irish social services and the social dimensions of the economic crisis are underway.

A Pillar member, Social Justice Ireland, published *Shaping Ireland's Future: Securing Economic Development, Social Equity and Security* in April. This Review for 2012 covers issues of concern to people with disabilities and the organisations working with them,

including health, employment, education, participation. It can be viewed at [www.socialjustice.ie](http://www.socialjustice.ie)

In a report for SIPTU's Community Sector Committee, entitled *Downsizing the Community Sector: Changes in employment and services in the voluntary and community sector in Ireland, 2008-2012*, Brian Harvey highlights the contraction that has occurred in the sector and explains why further decline is inevitable unless policy changes. For people with disabilities, who rely on the services and supports in the community, the analysis is cause for concern. Brian Harvey notes that by the end of the programme of fiscal rehabilitation in 2015 "we may be looking at a voluntary and community sector a third smaller than it was before the start of the crisis. To view the report please go to [www.siptu.ie](http://www.siptu.ie)

## **Housing Update**

### **Conference on Housing Rights**

A Galway-based conference, "Contemporary Housing Issues in a Changing Europe" discussed people's rights to housing, including the right of people with disabilities to choose independent living. The limited statutory rights enjoyed under the European Social Charter were explored as well as entitlements created under domestic legislation, for example for tenants in private rented housing.

The rights incorporated in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities were considered in a paper on the synergy between the provisions on legal capacity and independent living. A presentation by a DFI staff member looked at Ireland's experience in facilitating appropriate housing through good and bad times, without the benefit of a statutory human rights framework.

The issue of security of tenure, which, since the bursting of the housing bubble, extends from occupants to private and social rental housing to home owners with mortgages, was threaded through the conference proceedings.

Minister, Jan O'Sullivan T.D., promised the announcement of multi-annual funding for the Capital Assistance Scheme (for special needs projects to accommodate people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups), but she warned that the amount would be disappointingly small.

For more information, please contact the Centre for Housing Law, Rights and Policy at NUI Galway, [www.nuigalway.ie](http://www.nuigalway.ie)

### **National Housing Strategy for People with Disabilities**

Although the Government's implementation plan has not yet been published, the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government is organising the establishment of a Strategy Monitoring Group in anticipation. Five voluntary organisations are being invited to participate including DFI.

### **Dublin City Council's Ad Hoc Disability & Housing Steering Group**

In response to the Housing Strategy's recommendation, Dublin City Council established such a steering group on an ad hoc basis. The Group is evaluating the information on the nature and extent of social housing need available on the waiting list and it is beginning to explore potential sources of appropriate housing supply, including NAMA nominations. It is also considering ways of reducing the incidence of crises where people with disabilities become emergency cases.

For more information please contact [lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie)

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### **Submission Paper to the Review of the White Paper on Irish Aid**

DFI submitted a response to the Consultation Paper for the review of the 2005 White Paper on Irish Aid. DFI endorsed the views of the Disability Inclusion Taskforce, a group convened by Dóchas in 2010 to assist with creating cross-sectoral momentum for the full inclusion of people with disabilities in Ireland's overseas development assistance (ODA) programme.

DFI's paper explored the changing national and international contexts since 2006, and emphasised good policy and practice principles in the inclusion of people with disabilities in Irish Aid's programmes as well as guidance on ways of achieving this.

DFI recommended that Irish Aid adopt disability as a cross-cutting issue in their development programming. Ireland's forthcoming ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) will have significant implications for Ireland's ODA, as the Convention contains a specific article (Article 32) which provides a framework for mainstreaming disability in the development agenda. Following ratification the Irish Government through Irish Aid will be required to demonstrate how they are complying with Article 32. Further details are available here: <http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=10531>

### **Newsletter by the National Disability Authority**

The NDA has launched a newsletter to which one can subscribe to via the website, at [www.nda.ie](http://www.nda.ie). The first issue has features on the following:

- Building for everyone's needs
- Assessing the needs of children with disabilities
- Attitudes towards people with disabilities harden
- Historic buildings and places can be accessible too

The newsletter informs readers about work at the NDA, and will be an excellent resource for anyone interested in disability policy and practice.

## **Brain Aware Training Programme**

For Family Members caring for and supporting someone with an Acquired Brain Injury

Venue: Royal Marine Hotel, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Dates: 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st May and 7th, 14th June 2012

9.30a.m. to 1p.m.

Come along to the first training session on Thursday 10th May from 9.30a.m. to 1p.m.

The aim of the programme is to develop Family Carers' skills and knowledge of Acquired Brain Injury and enable them to respond more appropriately to their family member's needs.

For further information please contact the Project Co-ordinator: Aoife Prendergast at (01) 2804 164 ext. 20 or 087 1307746 [aoprendergast@abiireland.ie](mailto:aoprendergast@abiireland.ie) or see [www.abiireland.ie](http://www.abiireland.ie)

## **Dublin Volunteer Management Seminar as part of [National Volunteering Week](#)**

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 2012

Venue: Pearse Street Library, 138 - 144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2

Dublin Volunteer Centres have organised a Volunteer Management Seminar looking at topics affecting Volunteer Involving Organisations.

### **Speaker Biographies**

Etain O' Kane is a Training & Development Officer with Volunteer Now (Northern Ireland). She has worked for charities that address social issues for over twelve years providing training on a wide range of issues. She has a background in charity finance and governance, project management and lobbying to influence public policy, and has a broad range of experience working with voluntary and community groups of varying compositions and capacity. Her academic qualifications are to Masters level in psychology and counselling along with a range of training and professional qualifications.

Stuart Garland is the Manager of Fingal Volunteer Centre. Stuart has worked in a wide range of roles in the Voluntary and Community sector since 1993 and comes from a background in youth work. Stuart is a national accreditor for European Voluntary Service (EVS) in Ireland. More recently Stuart has been a Volunteer Coordinator managing a team

of 192 volunteers. He was a board member of a number of youth and volunteer involving organisations over the last number of years. Stuart holds a Diploma in Human Resource Management and a Diploma in First Line Management and is a graduate of the National College of Ireland. He also holds a Certificate in Teaching & Learning.

Tricia Nolan is manager of South Dublin County Volunteer Centre. Tricia has been with the centre since it's foundation in 1998. As well as managing the volunteer centre, Tricia has been instrumental in driving forward the development of a national infrastructure for volunteering having being a founder member and chairperson of Volunteer Centres Ireland. Tricia sat on the national committee on volunteering from 2000 - 2002 and was part of the subcommittee tasked with writing "tipping the balance" which laid the foundation for the present volunteering infrastructure in Ireland. Alongside her work in the volunteer centre, Tricia is also involved in volunteering with several local and national projects in the youth, sports and arts sectors.

### **Who Should Attend?**

- Groups and organisations from the Greater Dublin Area (large and small) currently involving volunteers or those thinking of involving volunteers.
- Individuals (paid or unpaid) working directly with volunteers or who are responsible for managing volunteers in some capacity.

### **Registration**

To attend this free seminar you must register via the online booking system:

(<http://volunteerdublin.eventbrite.ie>) Please note that entry is by ticket only and tickets are limited to 100.

Please note there is also a volunteers event in Galway for further information on the Galway event please visit. <http://www.volunteergalway.ie/voluntary-orgs/seminars>

## Rehab People of the Year Awards 2012

The People of the Year Awards, organised by Rehab, provide a unique opportunity for the Irish public to honour those who have made a real difference to people's lives, whether as unsung heroes or household names.

It's true. You have to be pretty amazing to win a People of the Year Award. That's what makes winning one so very special! Do you know a potential winner? Someone who has put themselves in harm's way to rescue a person from immediate danger? A local hero who has made a big change in the lives of people in your community? Perhaps a campaigner who has selflessly championed a cause to right an injustice?

Then why not tell Rehab all about them at [www.peopleoftheyear.com](http://www.peopleoftheyear.com)!

2012 marks the 38th People of the Year Awards, organised by Rehab, and which will be broadcast live on RTÉ One on Saturday 15th September.

In addition to a number of People of the Year Awards, there are also specific awards for:

- Young Person of the Year — an individual under 25 years who has been a real hero and role model for others
- International Person of the Year — an Irish person who has contributed with distinction to the wider world, or a non-Irish person who has done something exceptional to enhance our lives in Ireland
- Sports Person of the Year — a person or a team that has broken records, overcome the odds, caused the nation's heart to skip a beat
- Community Group of the Year — a community group that has stepped up to do something really epic
- This is your chance to honour those inspiring people who change our world. All it takes is one nomination.

Fancy mingling with heroes and stars at the social diary event of the year? To purchase tickets for this glittering gala awards ceremony, [click here to find out how.](#)

For further information, see [www.peopleoftheyear.com](http://www.peopleoftheyear.com) or call 01 205 7268

Closing date for nominations: June 29<sup>th</sup> 2012

## **Open Information Session with the Open Training College**

You are invited to an upcoming information event where you can explore the adult education opportunities that are available to staff and managers working, or currently seeking work, in the non-profit/human services sector.

**What are the expected qualifications for someone working in the non-profit / human services sector today?**

**Are Continuous Professional Development (CPD) modules available to the sector, and can past-pupils update their qualifications with newly developed accredited CPD modules?**

What are the choices open to you regarding blended learning? What is it exactly?

**What options are available to you in your region?**

These are just a few of the questions that will be answered by Course Directors to those attending the Open Information Sessions in Dublin, Cork and Galway.

Please feel free to come along and enjoy some discussions around the current options open to you in your area regarding accredited Applied Social Studies and Applied Management courses, and accredited CPD modules.

**Dublin: St Michaels House, Willowfield Park, Goatstown, Dublin 14. Tel: (01) 2988544**

Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, anytime between 4:30p.m. and 7:00p.m.

**Cork: Cork Association for Autism, Greenville House, Carrigtwohill, Co. Cork. Tel: 021-4883789 Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012, anytime between 4:30p.m. and 7:00p.m.**

**Galway: Woodlands Conference Centre, Brothers of Charity Services, Woodlands, Renmore, Co. Galway. Tel: 091-755241 Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012, anytime between 4:30p.m. and 7:30p.m.**

a professional, accredited qualification specific to the non-profit/human services sector.

Please contact Conor Murray on (01) 2988544 or [cmurray@opentrainingcollege.com](mailto:cmurray@opentrainingcollege.com) for further information.

## **World MS Day Wednesday, 30th May**

Join Multiple Sclerosis Ireland this World MS Day, Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> May to raise awareness, raise issues and raise funds! Meet the faces of MS – people affected by MS, staff and volunteers at one of our information and support events around the country. Ask local representatives to face the facts that many treatments are not available to people with MS. And get out and about in your community or workplace by organising a collection or a McVitie's Digestive Tea Party.

### **Five things you can do to mark World MS Day:**

- Write a letter for our 'Letters to My Newly Diagnosed Self' publication. If you were asked to write a letter to yourself today, to be read on the day you were first diagnosed, what would you say? Would you tell yourself to slow down and take stock? Or advise yourself to dive head first into living?
- Find out about events in your local area. Meet people, talk about living with MS, share stories and laugh.
- In your local community spread the word about World MS Day. Put posters up in your local shops, do an interview with the local paper, post something about it on your Facebook page or email your friends, families and work colleagues
- Write to your local TD about Gilenya and Tysabri, two drugs that people with MS cannot access as the HSE is not funding them properly
- Support services in your local area by organising a collection, running your own event or by taking part in our McVitie's Digestive Tea Party. Organise a get together in your home, community or workplace and use some of the yummy recipes from our ambassador Clodagh McKenna

# 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)

Clar 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: [vmcutch@crc.ie](mailto:vmcutch@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)

Sonass aPc – Tel (01) 2608138. [www.sonassapc.ie](http://www.sonassapc.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**

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

#### **Dublin Mid-Leinster**

Anthony Carrick  
Dun Laoghaire, Dublin South East,  
Wicklow (Dublin Office),  
Mobile: 086 8206736  
E: [anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie](mailto:anthonycarrick@disability-federation.ie)

Louise McCann  
Dublin South City, Dublin South West,  
Dublin West, Kildare, West Wicklow  
(Dublin Office)  
Mobile: 086 9189750  
E: [louisemccann@disability-federation.ie](mailto:louisemccann@disability-federation.ie)

Jacqueline Grogan  
Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath  
(Dublin Office)  
Tel: 01 454 7978 Fax: 01 494 7981  
E: [jacquelinegrogan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:jacquelinegrogan@disability-federation.ie)

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

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

#### **Dublin North-East**

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

Martin Naughton  
Dublin North Central, Dublin North West,  
Dublin North  
Mobile: 086 8207196  
E: [martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie](mailto:martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie)

#### **West**

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

#### **North-West**

Jennifer Van Aswegen  
Sligo, Leitrim, Donegal  
Disability Federation of Ireland  
Model Niland, The Mall, Sligo  
Co Sligo  
Mob: 086 3811261  
E: [jennifervanaswegen@disability-federation.ie](mailto:jennifervanaswegen@disability-federation.ie)  
Toni Gleeson,  
Limerick, North Tipperary, East Limerick,  
Clare  
DFI, The Forge, Croke St. Thurles, Co  
Tipperary  
Mobile: 086 6004526  
E: [tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie](mailto:tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie)

#### **South**

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

Alison Ryan  
Cork, Kerry  
101 North Main Street, Cork  
Tel: 021 4271752 Mobile 086 3816323  
E: [a.ryan@disability-federation.ie](mailto:a.ryan@disability-federation.ie)



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

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