



Disability Federation of Ireland

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

DFI Newsletter January / February 2012

THE YEAR AHEAD

As we start a new year, it is important to take time to consider our experiences of the year past, and to acknowledge the challenges we face, both as a community and as a country, in the year ahead.

Although the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste have both made disability, including mental ill health, their social justice priority, we cannot have confidence that Government understands the impact of the recession on this group. Successive cuts to disability services over the last two Budgets, cuts in the income of people with disabilities, the cut to people's secondary benefits, such as the fuel allowance, the increase in the threshold for the drug payment scheme, the undermining of the Community Employment schemes, the reduced availability of social housing and housing adaptation grants, all clearly demonstrate the lack of coordinated planning to protect disabled people against the worst effects of the recession.

However, we did make some significant progress in a number of areas that we might not readily identify. Towards the end of last year, Minister Kathleen Lynch reinvigorated the National Disability Strategy (NDS) implementation and monitoring structures, and in doing so she made a commitment to delivering an Implementation Plan within six months. Furthermore, she has involved the City and County Councils and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in the NDS implementation process. At the same time, the establishment of Consultative Fora structures in the HSE is something that we have been seeking for many years. This provides us with a real opportunity to work in partnership with the HSE on the realignment and reorientation of services to people with disabilities in the coming years. These are developments that DFI has been explicitly seeking for some time.

These moves by the Government, to pay closer attention to disability issues and engage with stakeholders, are welcome. But to achieve progress on the ground they have to be backed up with coherent, practical proposals from our side, proposals that do not ignore the environment in which the Government is operating. Moreover, we anticipate other developments that will help, particularly a requirement that substantive Cabinet memoranda be disability-proofed and the passage of mental capacity legislation that should allow ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

All of these changes make it easier for us to highlight areas where generic services can be improved to enable access for people with disabilities, and where disability-specific supports are critical to participation. We need to be alert to those opportunities, and share our information and experience to work effectively with the government at local, regional and national levels. In light of the challenges faced and the opportunities opening up, the voluntary disability sector must lead the way. From our work at the coalface, we are in a position to 'tell it like it is', and we have the local knowledge to enable us to offer creative, value for money solutions.

Unless we work actively to get practical implementation of policy, we will see the infrastructure that supports people with disabilities wither even further.

The Government has committed to disability as its social justice priority, and we can contribute to making that a reality. The NDS Implementation Plan is central. DFI will be a keen partner in that project.

John Dolan
CEO

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HR & Employment Law Update

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

Lone working: Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. Many Organisations have individuals who work from home or on their own and this level of flexibility can often assist Employees balance their work and home lives.

Employers have a duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of Employees working from home, as far as reasonably practicable. The Employer holds the main responsibility for protecting the safety and health of lone workers. Nonetheless, lone workers themselves have a responsibility to help their Employer fulfil this duty, and so they must:

- Take reasonable care to look after their own safety and health
- Safeguard the safety and health of other people affected by their work
- Co-operate with their Employer's safety and health procedures
- Use tools and other equipment properly, in accordance with any relevant safety instructions and training they have been given
- Not misuse equipment provided for their safety and health
- Report all accidents, injuries, near-misses and other dangerous occurrences

Prior to approval being granted for Home working, a Health and Safety Self-Assessment should be completed by a qualified person to ensure the home is suitable. The cost of such an assessment would be borne by the organisation.

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

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

Mental Health and Diet – the Missing Link

by Maeve Halpin, Social and Organisational Psychologist

The profound connection between nutrition and mental and emotional health is now being recognised through a growing body of international research. We are familiar with relationship between poor diet and physical conditions such as heart disease, obesity and diabetes, but the origin of mental health problems seems shrouded in mystery. Psychiatric medication has contributed greatly to the alleviation of many mental health issues, but long-lasting improvement may be underpinned by dietary improvements and individually tailored and targeted nutritional supplementation.

The Depletion of Modern Food

The development of industrialised food production in the 20th century was initially hailed as the answer to food poverty and malnutrition. The invention of additives and preservatives facilitated long-term storage and transport of food, making it cheaper and more available. What was not foreseen was the loss of the essential nutrients in food that was not consumed fresh. The quantities of salt, sugar and fat added to our food has increased, and these stimulate the brain to give an artificial “high”, leading to food addictions.

The Importance of Nutrition for the Brain

Essential nutrients for brain and nervous system functioning include omega 3 fatty acids (found in fish oil and flaxseed oil) and the B vitamins (e.g. in wholegrains, lentils, beans and yeast). Processed food is seriously deficient in these elements, causing increased incidences of mood disorders. Research studies worldwide have shown fish oil supplementation to be effective in treating anxiety and depression in adolescents, university students, mothers with post-natal depression, menopausal women, older people, and people with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Consuming trans-fats, found in processed food and industrially-produced cakes and biscuits, is associated with higher incidences of depression. Soaring rates of mental health problems among young people have been linked to the common teenage diet of fast food, fizzy drinks, crisps and chocolate, which is almost totally devoid of nutrients.

Nutritional Intervention with Different Groups

Schoolchildren who eat a healthy breakfast show better concentration, less disruptive behaviour and lower anxiety. Childhood conditions such as ADHD, autism and dyspraxia can sometimes respond to diet supplementation, if treated early, with improvements in behaviour and sleep patterns. Removing synthetic food colourings from the diet of children with hyperactivity has been shown to have a positive effect. Even serious psychiatric conditions such as schizophrenia, psychosis and bi-polar disorder can be related to significant nutritional deficiencies in some sufferers. Studies from the Netherlands and China demonstrate that those exposed to nutrient deficiencies during famine have an increased risk of schizophrenia.

The Minnesota Starvation Experiment (1944-45) demonstrated that depression, hysteria and emotional distress could be induced by prolonged semi-starvation. These symptoms are similar to those experienced by people with eating disorders. Numerous prison studies have shown that antisocial behaviours, including violence, are reduced by the addition of vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids to the inmates diet. Alcohol and drug addiction can result in malnutrition, especially if the addict's diet is poor. Correcting nutritional imbalances can dramatically reduce cravings, assisting recovery. Some smokers will quit almost effortlessly with the right supplementation. Sugar and caffeine can cause mood swings, and should be avoided in the early stages of recovery. "The Mood Cure" by Julia Ross details her successful nutritional interventions with recovering addicts in the US.

In Ireland, Dr Edmond O'Flaherty, Mount Merrion, (01-2881425) specialises in the nutritional treatment of psychiatric illness. See www.omega3.20megsfree.com

©Maeve Halpin Feb 2011

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>

Value for Money and Policy Review

The Review of the HSE's Disability Services Programme is coming to completion. Publication in the first half of this year is promised.

In anticipating the Review's recommendations, the Government, and Minister Kathleen Lynch T.D., point to the advice in the *Disability Policy Review*, published recently. This document focuses on the need to shift away from segregated disability-specific services towards greater reliance on mainstream health services, and also towards individualised funding for some disability services. Speaking in the Seanad on 25th January, the Minister said that "the value for money report will be published in this session and individualised budgeting will be introduced. While it will not be for everyone, anyone who is interested in being involved will receive any assistance necessary to do so."

DFI's submission on this policy review welcomed the focus on person-centred services for people with disabilities, so that they can experience the self-determination enjoyed by their non-disabled neighbours. However, we have emphasised that enabling people to participate also involves the supports provided by voluntary disability organisations. These organisations are led by, and work with, disabled people living in the community, and they facilitate access by building bridges to mainstream opportunities. Therefore it would be a set back if the Review fails to recognise the important role of voluntary organisations in supporting people with disabilities to have choice and greater control over their lives.

For further information, please contact lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie

Seanad Éireann Motion on Disability Policy

The independent group of Senators, led by Mary Ann O'Brien and Marie Louise McDonnell, moved a proposal in the Seanad on 25th January concerning several disability policy issues. The motion:

- Recognised the need to protect and maintain disability supports and services in order to enhance the participation and inclusion of disabilities in Ireland.
- Called for the immediate publication of the report of the Value for Money and Policy Review of Disability Services.

- Called for prompt action to enact the Legal Capacity Bill.
- Noted the need to move to best practice involving individualised funding.
- Regretted the exclusion of people with disabilities from recent labour activation measures.

Sixteen Senators spoke on the issue, all welcoming the motion for raising key concerns. The Minister, Kathleen Lynch T.D., addressed the Seanad during the debate, said that the Legal Capacity Legislation and the Value for Money and Policy Review report would both be advanced during the current session. The Minister strongly supported people with disabilities being directly involved in decision-making. She observed that the Government's position and the motion were very similar. The motion was subsequently endorsed without amendments.

DFI views the motion and the debate as a welcome public endorsement of the disability priority. We, along with Inclusion Ireland, had briefed the independent group of Senators prior to 25th January, and found them to be keenly interested in engaging on disability issues.

The debate suggests one important area meriting further attention, namely to explain why, along with individualised budgeting reforms, voluntary disability organisations are critical to underpinning the choice and control enjoyed by the people with whom they work. These organisations are well placed to show how people with disabilities determine what they do.

Further information from: lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie

Primary Palliative Care Report

Enhancing End-of-Life Care in the Community

The report, entitled '*Primary Palliative Care in Ireland. Identifying Improvements in Primary Care to Support the Care of Those in Their Last Year of Life*', is a collaboration between the Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF), HSE and the Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP).

Some 27,000 people die in Ireland every year, and 90% of their care in the last year of their life is provided for by the GP and primary care team. This report on primary palliative care recommends a series of measures to be adopted in enhancing the ability of GPs and primary care teams to deliver quality care in the community to people who are dying.

The primary palliative care initiatives, to be pursued over the coming year in the next phase of this programme, include:

- Creating a system to identify and respond to patients with palliative care needs in the community

- Developing a palliative care summary to update GP Out of Hours Services with relevant background information on the changing needs of dying patients
- Clarifying the extent and means to access advice and information from specialist palliative care on a 24 hour basis
- Encouraging professional bodies involved in training and development of primary health care staff to signpost existing education and training options in palliative care.

Further information: http://www.hospice-foundation.ie/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=679:report-announces-measures&catid=2:general-news&Itemid=11.

The 8th National Healthcare Conference

The 8th National Healthcare Conference will take place in the Convention Centre, Dublin on 22nd March 2012. This year's theme is "Benchmarking and Managing Healthcare".

Conference speakers will include Dr. James Reilly, Minister for Health, Professor Peter Smith, Health advisor to IMF - Imperial College London, Dr. Martin Connor, Head of Special Delivery Unit, Dr. Francis Elliott, CEO, NHS Quality Improvement Scotland.

The Conference will be of interest to

- Public, Independent and Private healthcare providers.
- Hospital managers.
- Health administrators.
- Policy makers.
- Service providers to the Health Sector.
- Healthcare Professionals.
- Technology providers to the Health Sector.
- Legal firms.
- Researchers

Please see the website for further details

www.nationalhealthcare.ie<<http://www.nationalhealthcare.ie/>>

National Disability Strategy Implementation Group

The Minister for Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People, Kathleen Lynch T.D., following her promise in November 2011 to have a National Disability Strategy implementation plan in six months, has initiated changes in the arrangements that affect the disability sector's involvement with and oversight of the Strategy.

The membership of the Disability Stakeholders Group (DSG) has been expanded to include direct participation by people with disabilities. In addition to officers from the six national representative organisations, John Redican, CEO, will speak for the National Service Users Executive. Four people with disabilities have been nominated as members of the Executive.

The Minister has set out the purpose of the DSG, as providing a forum within which disability stakeholders can work together to present one voice to Government, through the National Disability Strategy Implementation Group (NDSIG)

In the NDSIG, Minister Lynch has reconfigured the previous arrangement, appointing herself as Chair. Along with the DSG members and the Senior Officials Group on Disability, the NDSIG includes the National Disability Authority and the City and County Managers Association. The key Terms of Reference are:

- To re-energise the NDS, maximising what can be realistically achieved within available resources, towards enhancing the quality of life of people with disabilities.
- To guide the development of an Implementation Plan for the NDS, in accordance with the commitments in the Programme for Government, setting actions and targets that can be realistically achieved in a three year programme of work.
- To collaborate and monitor the implementation of the plan.

The NDA has been working to help the NDSIG identify priorities, in the context of agreed high level goals focussing on empowering people with disabilities.

Although the NDSIG has not yet convened, information sessions are being held for DSG members. At the first information session, chaired by a senior official from the Department of Justice, officials from several Government departments outlined what they regard as their disability responsibilities, and progress made to date. In one important area, the disability-proofing of

substantive proposals going to Cabinet, participants were informed that guidelines for departments to do this proofing were to be published and applied in the very near future.

DFI welcomes the Minister's actions to re-start NDS implementation. We will continue to work hard within the DSG and the NDSIG fora to achieve an implementation plan that contains, as far as possible, the features that we had set out in our own proposal in May 2011 to support the implementation of the NDS.

See: <http://www.disability-federation.ie/index.php?uniqueID=10352>]

For further information, please contact lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie

Community & Voluntary Pillar

Pillar members are holding two meetings to plan how they can best influence the social policy debate during this protracted period of fiscal and economic constraints. There is concern that the Government favours reducing public expenditure rather than increasing taxes. This bias responds to a widespread perception that 'less government spending is good', simplistically linking the current situation with previous increased government^{spending}. At the same time, Pillar members questioned the guiding principle that has shaped Irish policy, namely, to maximise economic growth.

DFI highlighted the potentially unequal consequences of that approach. Most of the hits are likely to affect those least able to absorb them, and, in addition, a further likely consequence is the erosion of the public service infrastructure, and the possibility of Government not achieving its vision for the future for people with disabilities. DFI also suggested that the community and voluntary sector should strongly urge Government to publish its plan for the protection of the most vulnerable over the course of successive spending cuts.

Pillar members continue to meet senior Government officials and others to discuss the impact of policies. They also explain the Pillar's alternative analysis of Ireland's predicament, and an alternative plan to steer a safer, more equitable course. Most recently the Pillar has sought a meeting with the Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton, T.D.

Further information from Lillian Buchanan, lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie

New Further Education and Training Authority - SOLAS

DFI Submission to Department of Education and Skills

Government has created a new Further Education and Training Authority, SOLAS, with responsibility for the co-ordination and funding of further Education and Training (FET). Recognising the continuum between further education and training, and that an integrated service would be most efficient from a value for money point of view, and most effective from an outcomes and policy point of view, it was decided to integrate them into a FET sector under SOLAS. A consultation process was initiated, and submissions on the Action Plan were sought from interested parties. The Action Plan will set out the 'roadmap' for SOLAS so that, together with the Department of Education and Skills (DES), it can implement the significant transformation programme needed to deliver the necessary changes.

DFI has made a submission to this consultation process, and invited its member organisation to contribute to the submission. Some of the issues highlighted by DFI are

Funding and administration

DFI highlighted the need for a well thought out, simple and integrated administration and funding system that works collaboratively, with the individual elements of this system providing well designed, relevant and accessible course content, person-centred fully accessible services, delivered in a timely manner. In addition, addressing issues relating to physical access, live register applicants, payment of grants and allowances, and course design, amongst others, will go a long way in developing a process that is efficient, adheres to best practice in universal design, is person centred and collaborative.

Deciding on what courses to deliver

Providing relevant courses, offered on an inclusive basis, is key to achieving positive outcomes. The current opportunity, available through the development of SOLAS, opens the door for the development of an inclusive further education and training system that strives to bring about greater participation, equality, and successful engagement for all learners.

Providing guidance and support to learners to make the right choices

DFI highlighted the need to assess people with disabilities not as "people with disabilities" who need some training, rather, assessment should be on the basis of ability, not disability. It was also suggested that Disability Officers, who are conversant with course content, relevant legislation, access requirements, and reasonable accommodation should be employed in all areas. This

would provide a central source of support and information for students and trainees with disabilities.

DFI's submission will be posted shortly in the website, www.disability-federation.ie, or contact Jacinta Dixon, jacintadixon@disability-federation.ie

Changes to Community Employment Scheme

In response to a Dáil Question regarding changes to Community Employment (CE) schemes, the Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton T.D., stated that, due to the current economic circumstances, and the need for the Department of Social Protection to find savings of €475 million in Budget 2012, it was necessary to examine all aspects of Departmental expenditure. She said that this has resulted in the changes being made to the Community Employment (CE) scheme, which were announced as part of Budget 2012. These are:

- A reduction in the training and materials grants from €1,500 to €500 per participant per annum.
- The ending of the concurrent entitlement to a CE payment and a social welfare assistance payment for new CE entrants.
- The ending of the dual payment of Qualified Child Dependant Increases to CE participants in receipt of certain DSP payments.

In relation to the reduction in the training and materials grant, the Minister noted that the Department will seek to minimise the effects of these changes on those schemes most affected, and will examine the income and expenditure of schemes with reference to their capacity to absorb the changes made to the grant. SOLAS will continue to provide access to its training programmes to CE participants.

The need for training on CE varies depending on the needs of participants, and how long they have already been on the scheme and the training already received. The Government has stated that progression to employment is the key aim in this context, the Minister stated that there is a need to ensure that the supports that are in place in place aim to substantially improve individuals' chances of securing employment.

The Minister also stated that, in the event that the changes to the training and material grant announced in the Budget create financial difficulties for schemes, the Department of Social Protection Department will continue to provide funding for those schemes until the completion of the financial review. In this context, Minister Burton confirmed that funding is available in her Department.

Dublin City Council and Housing

In response to a recommendation in the *National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability*, and a motion by its own Housing, Social and Community Strategic Policy Committee, Dublin City Council (DCC) has set up an ad hoc “Disability and Housing Steering Group”.

The Group met for the first time in January and agreed a work plan that focused getting better information about the extent and nature of housing need, building a directory of organisations and individuals who can contribute to housing solutions, identifying and developing possible sources of appropriate housing, and improving cross-agency case management arrangements.

The Group will have members to cover the different types of disabilities as well as senior Council and HSE officials. Sub-groups will be established to bring additional experience and expertise as required.

Recognising an accessible and appropriate home is a key building block for independent living, DFI is participating in the Group. We hope that, in a very difficult environment, it will highlight need and prompt more housing solutions for people with disabilities. We also anticipate that the Group’s work will produce the information required to respond to housing and housing support need when conditions on the supply side do recover. In addition the experience in Dublin should help stakeholders in other local authorities when they come to setting up their steering groups.

For further information, please contact lillianbuchanan@disability-federation.ie

Broadcasting Authority of Ireland

Proposed New Access Rules

The Broadcasting Authority of Ireland (BAI) have been engaging with the public on proposed new rules to govern the level of subtitling, sign language and audio description that Irish television broadcasters must offer to the public. The new rules will update the current Access Rules in place since 2005.

The proposals are aimed at making television more enjoyable and accessible for people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, partially sighted or blind. The new rules have been developed taking into account a review of the existing rules, and changes in broadcasting schedules and technology.

The proposed access rules also look at issues such as the inclusion of sign language in children’s programming, use of captions, audio description, the impact of Digital TV on access services, on-

going consultation between broadcasters and users on access, and the monitoring of compliance with the new rules.

Further information on this process is available at www.bai.ie.

<http://www.facebook.com/BAIreland>

<http://twitter.com/BAItweets>

TRAINING - EDUCATION – EVENTS - INFORMATION

"IT-4-2-Day": Funded Training Courses

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions, in partnership with DFI and 14 other organisations, has successfully run the "IT-4-2-Day" course funded by the Benefit3 as a pilot in a number of the Centers in the Congress Centers Network. The program has been well received and there has been excellent feedback to date with almost 300 learners having completed the six- hours training.

The course is designed to provide a click-start in computer basics. The project is now being rolled out the nationally. To be eligible of this free training applicants must either have no computer experience, or have not used a computer in the last eighteen months. In addition, you must comply with one of the following:

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| Be unemployed. | Be without recognised formal education |
| Have a disability. | Live alone. |
| Live in a rural area. | Be a single parent. |
| Be a member of the travelling community | Be an ex-prisoner |
| Be over 55 | Be an immigrant |

For further information contact Fiona Elward on 01 8897711 (ICTU), or Denis Cadogan (DFI) 01 7080100 deniscadogan@disability-federation.ie

Current Course Dates: www.ictu.ie/unionlearning/trainers/it42day/

Irish Congress of Trade Unions: www.ictu.ie/projects/it42day/

Autism Workshops

Irish Autism Action (IAA) and the Aspergers Syndrome Association of Ireland (ASAI) will hold two workshops in February 2012. The workshops will be beneficial to parents / caregivers & professionals who care for or work with children, young people and adults with an Autism Spectrum Disorders. The topics for the workshops are:

- 'Understanding and Teaching Friendship Skills, will take place on Friday 17th February, and will explore the challenges faced by individuals of all ages living with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome in making friends.
- 'Disclosure and Increasing Self-Esteem' will take place on Saturday 18th February, and will explore, across the age range, many issues related to how and when to discuss the diagnosis with individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The workshops will take place in the Aisling Hotel, Parkgate St., Dublin, 10 am - 4.30 pm. Fee: €35 per workshop per person, or two workshops €60 per person. Advance booking essential. Further information: Nicola: 042 9330252 nicola.patten@asdinitiatives.ie

Sarah: 086 0459068 or email sren@autismireland.ie

Quali-TYDES Research Project: Qualitative Tracking with Young Disabled People in European States

The purpose of this European States research programme, the Quali-TYDES project, is to investigate and explain how new developments in global, European, and national/local policies are impacting on the lives of young disabled adults in several European countries. By combining qualitative longitudinal methods (life stories) with critical policy analysis, the project aims to generate policy-relevant knowledge that is grounded in the experiences and aspirations of young disabled people themselves. Using these methods, the study aims to generate a comparative understanding of national policy regimes in relation to disability, family, work and welfare. As a consequence, the project also aims to investigate the potential for using qualitative case study methods to assist in monitoring states' implementation of international policy obligations, such as those arising from the United Nations and European Union.

Quali-TYDES Ireland is led by a team at the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin. It is one of a number of research projects operating under the Inclusion, Education and Society research theme in the School. The project aims are to:

- Explore the experiences, aspirations and expectations of young adults with Disabilities in 21st Century Europe.
- Find out how local, national, and global policies are influencing the lives of young disabled adults in the 21st Century.
- Find out about the resources available to young disabled adults to achieve their goals and to learn what other supports might help.
- Explore how gender, age, sexuality, religion and ethnicity contribute to the aspirations and opportunities of young adults with disabilities.
- Give greater voice to participants in influencing policy and practice.

Project findings and recommendations will be shared locally, nationally and internationally through conferences and publications, and through engagement with local and national Government. The Quali-TYDES Ireland researchers are conducting 'life-story' interviews with young people with disabilities NOW. They would like to hear about education, barriers and opportunities, successes and problems, important decisions, regret, dreams, and who or what helped. If you are willing to participate, or would like more information, contact Dr. Fiona Smyth, School of Education, Trinity College Dublin. Email: smythf2@tcd.ie 086-3153429. Quali-TYDES Ireland is funded by the European Science Foundation under the ECRP V scheme and by the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences.

eTenders - Procurement Survey-Suppliers

The National Procurement Service (NPS), in conjunction with DCU Business School, is undertaking Ireland's first national public procurement survey. Your experiences of tendering, and opinions on the workings of the public procurement system is essential in helping NPS to understand today's procurement landscape in Ireland.

Data gathered from the survey will be used to inform future procurement policy and strategy for Ireland. That is why your input to the survey is important.

The survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete, and the NPS would like to thank you in advance for your co-operation.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SuppliersandTendering>

Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups Training Courses Spring 2012

The Carmichael Centre for Voluntary Groups will offer the following courses in Spring 2012:

Tues 21 Feb:	Understanding Good Governance (Half day)
Tues 13 Mar:	Social Media, Blogs & Newsletters (Half Day)
Tues 27 Mar:	Understanding Outputs and Outcomes (One day) [NEW!]
Tues 3 Apr:	Financial Reporting for Charities (One day) [NEW!]
Tues 15 May:	Public Speaking & Presentation Skills (Half day)
Tues 12 Jun:	Fundraising for Small Community Groups (Half day)

Carmichael is also offering the following FREE Seminars in Spring 2012:

Thurs 16 Feb:	Introduction to Social Media
Thurs 8 Mar:	Data Protection & Freedom of Information [Speaker from the Law Library]
Thurs 26 Apr:	The Role of the Company Secretary [Speaker from Arthur Cox solicitors]
Thurs 24 May:	Managing Stress in the Workplace [Speaker from VHI]

<http://www.carmichaelcentre.ie/training-program> or contact the Training and Support Team for more information, E: tssinfo@carmichaelcentre.ie, T: 01 8735285

HIQA Standards Training: Residential Disability Services

The Open Training College is offering fundamental training opportunities to support staff in preparation for the implementation of the HIQA Standards for Residential Services.

In a recent survey 94% of staff in services for people with a disability indicated a lack of information about the HIQA Standards and a lack of opportunity to discuss them with colleagues. However, the value of the Standards was clearly recognised:

‘It is vital that services for vulnerable people such as people with disabilities are protected by national standards that are inspected.’ (Survey respondent)

The College offers three levels of training to suit your needs, budget and time constraints. Each level, offered **independently**, or as **part of a series**, informs participants about vital aspects surrounding the National Qualifications Standards: Residential Services for People with Disabilities.

- **Introduction to the HIQA Standards (Level 1) – ½ day workshop**
(€70 per person): For those wishing to build an essential foundation of knowledge regarding the HIQA Standards, boost confidence and reduce the fear of inspections.
- **Exploring the HIQA Standards (Level 2) – full day workshop (€120 per person):**
Following on from Level 1, participants at this level will acquire a deeper experience and understanding of the HIQA Standards. Participants will fully analyse and take a detailed look at the 7 Principle Sections to the Standards, learning through simulated inspections and self-assessment questionnaires.
- **Managing the HIQA Standards (Level 3) – full day workshop (€140 per person):**
Aimed at senior personnel working in residential units such as Service Managers and Heads of Units, this workshop focuses on the additional responsibilities for this group, such as decision-making, implementation, and inspection recommendations.

The Open Training College is a HETAC and FETAC approved specialist provider of professional education and training to staff working in services for people with a disability.

Contact Conor today for more information Tel: (01) 2988544;
Email cmurray@opentrainingcollege.com

<http://www.opentrainingcollege.com/site/studying-at-the-otc/courses/short-courses/hiqa-upcoming-workshop-dates/>

Irish Hospice Foundation New E-Learning Course

The Irish Hospice Foundation (IHF) E-Learning website allows subscribers to learn about best practice in bereavement support from recognised professionals in the field, and from the comfort of their home or workplace. All you need is a computer with good internet access.

The first course being offered by the E-Learning website, 'Lost For Words', is an introductory training course on providing basic support to people who are bereaved. It is aimed at the general public and professionals who wish to learn more about the grieving process, and how to provide effective support. It is particularly suitable and cost effective for organisations who wish to train staff in best practice bereavement support. The course is interactive and easy to use and participants receive a certificate of completion when they have finished the course.

To sign up for the course, go to: <http://elearningbook.hospice-foundation.ie>. If you would like to know more about the E Learning website and the 'Lost for Words course please contact Breffni Mc Guinness at (01) 673 0064.

Leargas Youth Action Projects

A number of Leargas Youth in Action training activities are scheduled for the first quarter of 2012 and cover a range of activities, themes and topics of interest.

- Training focused on improving the impact of Non Formal Education (NFE), principles and methods in empowering young people as real actors of the society (from local to European). The Power of Non Formal Education - Cultural Diversity & Intercultural Learning Netherlands 1-6 April 2012. Deadline to Apply February 1st 2012.
- Training course Exploring Citizenship, the complexity of it as a topic and practical ways to explore it with young people through Youth in Action – impACT!on Latvia 5-11 March 2012 – Deadline to Apply February 5th 2012.

- Training for EVS targeting those who are directly involved in the support system around the volunteer (mentors and task-related support persons) on the hosting, sending in European Voluntary Service (EVS Action 2) – SoHo France 31 March- 4 April 2012. Deadline to Apply February 7th 2012.
- Training for Beginners in International Youth Exchanges, the training will support youth workers and volunteers in having confidence to implement their first Youth in Action
- Youth Exchange – BTM Netherlands 17-21 April 2012 – Deadline to Apply February 8th 2012.
- X- Change Inc Contact Making Seminar for projects planning to develop Youth Exchanges in 2012 targeting Beginners to International Youth Exchanges and focusing on the theme of “Culture” . Participants will meet partners from 6 different EU programme countries and will develop concrete plans to implement international youth exchanges within Youth in Action for 2012. X-Change Inc Dublin, 23-25 March 2012, Ireland. Deadline to Apply February 10th 2012.
- Training course building on the results of previous experiences in the topic of Risk Management: The Training aims to increase the quality of international projects in the YiA through development of participants’ competence in risk assessment and management in Youth in Action projects – Risk n’Roll United Kingdom 5-9 June 2012 – Deadline to Apply April 13th 2012.

If you would like further information, would like to apply for any of these courses, or would like to make suggestions for future trainings please contact pdalton@leargas.ie .

Meitheal: Training Courses

Meitheal is a Community and Voluntary Development Support and Training Organisation that provides training to the community and voluntary sector, and other organisations working to create social change.

9 Day Advanced Facilitation Skills

This day course aims to increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of participants in the role of facilitator. The Learning Outcomes will include

- Knowledge of group theory
- Increased skills in the role of facilitator
- Enhanced confidence and self-awareness in the role
- Identification of personal boundaries and support needs in the role.

This training is for those who are currently working with groups and who wish to further develop their facilitation skills and confidence. The course will take place through February and March, and the cost is €600Aim

Staff Support and Supervision: Introductory Course

This 2 day course provides an introduction to a model of effective staff support and supervision. The Learning Outcomes include:

- Understanding of the role of staff support and supervision
- Knowledge of a model of effective support and supervision
- Identification and practice of the skills of staff support and supervision.

This training is for Voluntary management committee members and workers who want to develop in their staff support and supervisory role. The Course will run for 2 days in March 2012, and the cost is €150.

Outreach Training

Meitheal also delivers Outreach Training to groups and organisations in their own communities, or centres.

Application forms are available on the Meitheal website: www.meitheal.ie, and further information is available from Meitheal, 35 Exchequer Street, Dublin 2.

Tel: (01) 6719803 Email: info@meitheal.ie

NEWSLETTERS

For information please contact the relevant organisation directly

Ability - Newsletter of the Irish Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus, Tel: 01 4572329, E-mail: info@iasbah.ie

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

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

Arthritis Ireland - Newsletter—Tel: 01 661 8188

E-mail: info@arthritisireland.ie

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

Asthma Society News - Tel: 01-8788511,
E-mail:office@asthmasociety.ie

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

E-mail: info@migraine.ie

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

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

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

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

Community Exchange Newsletter, E-mail: info@activelink.ie, Tel:
+1 667 7326

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

E-Info Deaf Source— E-mail: info@irishdeafsociety.ie. Tel: +353
1860 1878

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Social Housing - Irish Council for Social Housing Tel: 01-
6618334; E-mail: info@icsh.ie

Sonass aPc – Tel (01) 2608138. www.sonassapc.ie.

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

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

Wheel E-Bulletin Tel:01- 454 8727,
E-mail: info@wheel.ie





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

National Office

Fumbally Court Fumbally Lane, Dublin 8
Tel: 01 454 7978 Fax: 01 494 7981
E: 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

Louise McCann
Dublin South City, Dublin South West,
Dublin West, Kildare, West Wicklow
(Dublin Office)
Mobile: 086 9189750
E: 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

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

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

Dublin North-East

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

Martin Naughton
Dublin North Central, Dublin North West,
Dublin North
Mobile: 086 8207196
E: martinnaughton@disability-federation.ie

West

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

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
Toni Gleeson,
Limerick, North Tipperary, East Limerick,
Clare
DFI, The Forge, Croke St. Thurles, Co
Tipperary
Mobile: 086 6004526
E: tonigleeson@disability-federation.ie

South

P.J. Cleere
Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary,
Waterford, Wexford
DFI, Tinryland, Carlow
Tel: 059 9179431
Mobile: 086 3811064
E: 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



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

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

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

There are over 126 organisations within membership, or as associates, of DFI. DFI also works with a growing number of organisations and groups around the country that have a significant disability interest, mainly from the statutory and voluntary sectors. DFI provides:

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

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

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

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

Tel: 01-4547978, Fax: 01-4547981

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

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