

Scope and DIAL

Serving the disability advice network

Contents

Scope DIAL UK news	1
Members news	2
Legal update	3
Employment	5
Policy and campaigns	6
Items of interest	7
Funding	16
Calendar of events	16
Training	17
Publications	17
Useful websites	18
Other matters	19

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Scope DIAL UK news

'Meet the funders' event

Have you booked your place on the meet the funders' event yet? If not, please could you make sure that you book a place on this? It takes place on Wednesday 13 July 2011, at The Bordesley Centre, Birmingham B11 1AR.

The event will enable you to explore a range of possible funding streams, meet some major funders face to face, and will mean you can open dialogue about possible projects or ideas you might be looking for funding for.

Training Resource and Handbook

We are pleased to announce that the Training Resource and the Handbook is now at the printers and will be available for groups very shortly.

You will receive a copy of both manuals in the post and it will be available from our

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member's area of the web site, to download if required, from July 2011.

We do hope you find this resource useful and we would welcome any feedback.

Jane Thompson-Brierley
Head of Scope DIAL UK

Members news

West Lancs Disability Helpline - Queen's Award for Voluntary Service Winner 2011

After a very rigorous assessment before Christmas, Scope DIAL UK is proud to announce that Her Majesty the Queen has agreed to confer the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service on West Lancs Disability Helpline.

This award is the highest given to volunteer groups across the UK for outstanding work done in their local communities. It is awarded to charities that meet a need for people living in the local community. These charities are recognised and respected by the local community and the people who benefit.

West Lancs Disability Helpline, who also celebrate their thirtieth anniversary this year, will be presented with a signed certificate from Her Majesty the Queen, a domed glass crystal, permission to use the official crown logo on their correspondence and four invitations to a Royal Garden Party in Buckingham Palace.

Tony Lewis, Manager of West Lancs Disability Helpline, noted that the distinction has happened in part due to Scope DIAL UK's support through the years.

Visit: www.disabilityhelpline.org.uk

Silver Anniversary

We would like to congratulate DIAL Lowestoft and Waveney on their twenty fifth anniversary, which was celebrated on Wednesday 29 June 2011.

Our warmest congratulations and best wishes go to everyone at DIAL Lowestoft and Waveney, and we look forward to working with you over the coming years.

Call: **01502 511333**

DIAL Doncaster have new services

DIAL Doncaster, the disability advisory service, can now offer additional services, they are:

A 'High Dependency Mobile Changing and Toilet Facility' which is now available for hire (funded by the Aiming High Project in Doncaster).

The Unit is endorsed by the Changing Places Consortium and MENCAP.

The Unit has been specifically designed for easy use by disabled people and their carer(s). It incorporates a fully automatic hoist, a height-adjustable changing couch, support handrails for easy mobility and an emergency call alarm. The toilet is centrally located within the Unit to provide sufficient room for the carer(s) to assist. There is also a curtain to ensure privacy at all times.

Other features include warm water, hand soap, hand towels, a wide tear paper roll to cover the couch, and a waste bin for disposable pads. The Unit has a RADAR Key entry and locking system for security.

The facility can be hired on a long or short-term basis, dependent upon availability, for events in Doncaster and other areas within a 50 mile radius of Doncaster.

Further consideration will be given if the destination is further away. The cost of the hire will include transportation of the Unit to and from the destination and to clean the Unit after use.

The second new service from DIAL Doncaster is a holiday caravan for let. The caravan is situated on the Haven Holiday Park, Golden Sands at Mablethorpe, near Skegness.

This 35ft by 12ft, three-bedroom holiday accommodation sleeps up to eight people and includes the following features:

- Fully fitted kitchen.
- Bathroom / toilet and separate shower room.
- One double bedroom, two twin rooms and a fold out double bed in the lounge.
- Full length veranda with lockable gate and ramp to level car parking area (please note the caravan has no adaptations).
- Colour TV, DVD player, microwave, fridge, cooker, toaster, iron and ironing board, and all kitchen utensils.
- Child proof locks on all lower level cupboards.

Prices include 10 Fun Works Passes.

Visit: www.dialdoncaster.co.uk

Call: **01302 327 800**

Any news?

If any group would like to have an article featured in this section, please contact us at Scope DIAL UK.

Call: **01302 310123**

Email: paul.carr@scope.org.uk

Legal update

Peer's bill would fast-track rights to portability

Baroness [Jane] Campbell of Surbiton has introduced a Private Members' Bill on 'Social Care Portability' to the House of Lords.

The Bill would place a duty on local authorities to work together to ensure that when disabled people move, they have equivalent care and support in place on arrival.

The Bill would also ensure disabled people do not have to wait until 2015 for new legal rights around their care and support.

The government looks likely to give disabled people new rights to ensure some continuity of care when they move to a different local authority area, for example when they find a new job.

But Baroness Campbell recently told fellow peers and MPs that disabled people could not wait until 2015 for the government to implement the social care legislation that could give them these new rights of "portability".

The joint meeting of several all party parliamentary groups – including those on disability and social care – was discussing the recent Law Commission report on the reform of adult social care law, which makes several recommendations on portability. These include promoting co-operation between local authorities when a disabled person moves to a different area, and imposing a duty on the new authority to carry out an assessment of the person's needs.

If the new local authority decides to provide a "significantly different support package" – the Law Commission recommends – it would have to produce

“a clear written explanation”.

Care services minister Paul Burstow MP, welcomed the report’s emphasis on the importance of portability, although he made no specific pledge that there would be any such rights in the government’s social care bill.

The government is due to publish an adult social care white paper later this year, followed by a bill next May, but the minister confirmed that the new laws would not come into force until April 2015.

Baroness Campbell told the meeting that she was “thrilled” to see portability mentioned in the Law Commission report, but she warned that “for many of us time is very pressing”, and that disabled people could not wait until 2015.

She said her private members’ bill on portability had been prepared in “a very collaborative way” and “fits in very well with the Law Commission report”.

She said that – with services and disability benefits being “cut and cut” – the ability to find work would be “very much central to many disabled people’s ability to participate and maybe even survive” in the current economic climate, and so they would need to be able to move quickly to new parts of the country, particularly to find work.

Baroness Campbell suggested that if her private members’ bill was to become law it could eventually be incorporated into the government’s new social care bill.

Visit: www.justice.gov.uk
www.livingwithdignity.info/

www.disabilitynewsservice.com

Scope’s view of Social Care Portability

Commenting on Social Care Portability, Richard Hawkes, Chief Executive of disability charity Scope, said (22.06.11):

“At present, many disabled people are being prevented and delayed from moving home because they cannot take their social care support with them.

“These unnecessary legal barriers seriously restrict where disabled people can live and for many, where they are able to work. In some cases people have a job offer waiting for them but cannot accept it until the local authorities reach an agreement.

“The Government wants to see more disabled people in work, but many are being prevented from doing so by this bureaucracy.

“We urge the government to give disabled people the same opportunity to move as everyone else by cutting this red tape and supporting this bill.”

Email: policy@scope.org.uk

Call: **020 7619 7718**

Visit: www.scope.org.uk

Charity Commission role

The Charity Commission has consulted widely in order to form its plan for a future with staff numbers reduced by a third over the next four years.

Two key principles emerged:

- 1) The Commission exists to serve the public, rather than charities themselves
- 2) The Commission should focus on those things which only it (as regulator) can do

The latter ‘core regulatory role’ includes maintaining the register, publishing guidance on charity law and investigating the most serious cases of mis-management.

Visit:

www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Wright Vigar Charities Bulletin – Summer 2011

CIO status soon

The status of Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is expected to become available this summer. It is a new legal form for charities that has been planned for many years. It is particularly important for charities which are not companies.

The launch date of the status will depend on whether the Charity Commission can get a slot in the Parliamentary diary during July.

Visit:

www.charity-commission.gov.uk

Voluntary Action Sheffield – Enewsletter June 2011

Employment

Approved mileage allowance

HMRC authorised mileage rate is now 45p per mile up to 10,000 miles and 25p per mile thereafter.

This is not negotiable where an employee is using their own vehicle (though it may be if there is a company car).

Volunteers may use this rate or calculate the actual cost. If actual cost is used, full supporting documentation must be retained.

The driver may also claim 5p per mile tax and NI free for a passenger, so long as the passenger is an employee and the journey is a business journey for him.

This will not, therefore, apply to travel schemes giving people lifts to doctors appointments etc.

Charities may wish to pay at a high rate, or to keep the 45p per mile even over 10,000 miles.

Visit: **www.hmrc.gov.uk**

Wright Vigar Charities Bulletin – Summer 2011

Workers rights reduced

The government has announced it is reforming workers rights, as part of its review of employment red tape – including collective redundancy consultation periods, the Transfer Undertakings Protection of Employment Regulations (TUPE) and compensation for discrimination awarded by employment tribunals.

Consultations have closed on simplifying the employment tribunal system and extending the period before an unfair dismissal claim can be brought.

The Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned an independent review of sickness absence and a review of the compliance and enforcement regimes for employment law.

Please see the Guidance Note included in this month's mailing.

Visit: **www.dwp.gov.uk**

Caritas Magazine – June 2011

New Enterprise Allowance

On 5 October 2010, the Secretary of State announced that the government will give extra help to unemployed people who want to start their own business through the New Enterprise Allowance (NEA).

Initially, the NEA will be available in those areas likely to particularly benefit from an increase in the share of private sector employment.

The Allowance will be available to Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) customers who have been claiming JSA for more than 6 months.

Customers will get access to a business mentor who will provide guidance and support as they develop their business idea and through the early stages of trading.

Once a customer can demonstrate that they have a viable business proposition

with growth potential, they will be able to claim financial support which will consist of a weekly allowance payable at a level broadly equivalent to their JSA payments for three months, and then at half that rate for a further three months.

And if they need start-up capital, they may also be able to access a loan of up to £1,000 to help with their start-up costs.

The total package of support could be worth around £2,000 to each unemployed person who wants to start their own business.

Visit: www.dwp.gov.uk

Calderdale DART Spring 2011 Newsletter

Project to involve unemployed people in volunteering

In a new project, led by the Prince's Trust, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is inviting voluntary sector organisations into Jobcentres to encourage volunteering.

The idea is both to help organisations recruit volunteers and to give unemployed people, personal and informed support to consider volunteering.

Any interested organisation can join a rota of organisations staffing a 'volunteering enquiry desk'.

Visit: www.princes-trust.org.uk

Visit: www.dwp.gov.uk

Voluntary Action Sheffield – Enewsletter June 2011

Policy and campaigns

Scope's comment on welfare to work

Commenting on the Government's Welfare to Work Programme, Richard Hawkes, Chief Executive of Scope, said (10.06.11):

"When it comes to welfare reform, the crucial test for the Government will be how many people found fit for work actually get a job. As a charity that works closely with disabled people who are looking for jobs, we know that employment support is a vital piece of the puzzle. But without an accurate fitness-for-work test or moves to improve the job market, the good work is in danger of being undermined.

"The government must work more closely with employers to give them the confidence to employ disabled people by tackling attitudes, promoting the financial support available and stepping up the practical training on offer.

"At the same time the Government needs to re-think its Work Capability Assessment, so that it captures the multiple, complex barriers to finding jobs and points people towards the right kind of support."

Email: policy@scope.org.uk

Call: **020 7619 7718**

Visit: www.scope.org.uk

www.dwp.gov.uk

More discrimination against disabled people

Matthew Parris' description of playground insults in 'The Times' about people with cerebral palsy will make uncomfortable reading for anyone that assumes we've consigned discrimination against disabled people to the history books.

Some 40 years since the first piece of disability legislation and 15 years since the Disability Discrimination Act it would be easy to assume that the issue of disabled people's place in society is settled.

But Matthew's report of kids using the term 'Scopers' – as modern alternative to

‘spastics’ – shows we have a long way to go.

Scope’s latest survey suggests that in fact attitudes are getting worse with disabled people experiencing increasing amounts of discrimination, sometimes on a daily basis.

The ComRes survey, commissioned by Scope, revealed that despite 41% of the British public saying that they have not witnessed discrimination against a disabled person; more than half of disabled people say they have experienced hostility, aggression or violence from a stranger because of their condition or impairment.

Visit: www.scope.org.uk/news

Email: policy@scope.org.uk

Call: **020 7619 7718**

Scope response to the report stage of the Welfare Reform Bill

In response to the report stage of the Welfare Reform Bill, Richard Hawkes, Chief Executive of Scope, commented (14.06.11):

“Despite disabled people raising serious concerns, we have got to the report stage of the Welfare Reform Bill and major problems remain.

“We back moves to simplify the benefit system and remove the financial disincentives from finding work. But many of the reforms are in danger of backfiring. They will hit disabled people disproportionately hard and make it even tougher for them to live independent lives and contribute to their community.

“Take Disability Living Allowance (DLA), a lifeline that covers the extra costs disabled people face on a daily basis – such as the extra cost of travel.

“DLA needs to be reformed – but the medical assessment proposed by the Government won’t tell you anything about

how much more it costs a disabled person to live their lives.

“Removing it from people in residential care will leave people increasingly isolated, and broader plans to cut the number of people that receive it could leave many others in real financial distress.

“We want to see the Government introduce a more holistic assessment for DLA that accurately picks up the extra costs disabled people face. A better assessment would mean the Government could provide more targeted support, which would reduce costs without risking disabled people’s independence and inclusion.”

Visit: www.scope.org.uk/news

Email: policy@scope.org.uk

Call: **020 7619 7718**

Items of interest

14.06.11 Government’s UN report ‘wilfully ignores’ spending cuts

Disability News Service reports that a government report on how it is implementing the United Nations ‘Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities’ fails to include a single mention of how the coalition’s spending cuts and welfare reforms will undermine disabled people’s rights.

The draft version of the report – the first that will be submitted to the UN on the UK’s performance on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – has just been published by the Office for Disability Issues (ODI).

It describes measures that have been and are being taken across the UK on each of the convention’s articles.

But it skates over the public sector

funding cuts being carried out by the Coalition Government, and their likely impact on disabled people's human rights – such as the right to live independently, have an adequate standard of living, participate in public life, and enjoy equal access to justice.

In the section on Article 28, which describes disabled people's right to an adequate standard of living and social protection, the report accepts that disabled adults in Britain are twice as likely to live in persistent poverty as non-disabled adults.

But it makes no mention of the impact of ever-tightening eligibility criteria for care services being introduced by local authorities, government plans to impose a one-year time limit on claiming "contributory" Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and cut spending on Disability Living Allowance (DLA) by 20 per cent, or the closure of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) to new members.

And there is no explicit mention of plans to remove the mobility component of DLA from disabled people in residential care.

Instead, the report says that the design of the new Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – which will replace DLA – will "include any subsequent changes to the mobility component of the DLA for people in residential care".

There is also no mention in the report of the Work Capability Assessment (WCA) – which tests disabled people's 'fitness for work' and has led to widespread protests and campaigns around its unfairness. The assessment has been central to the welfare reforms introduced by both the Labour and the Coalition governments.

Visit: <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk>

www.disabilitynewsservice.com

Barriers facing one billion disabled people 'are avoidable'

There are now more than a billion disabled people across the world, but many of the barriers they face are avoidable, according to a major new report, the 'World Report on Disability'.

The World Health Organization (WHO) and The World Bank, which have published the report, hope their findings will provide the evidence for new policies to improve the lives of disabled people and help rich and poor countries alike to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The 'World Report on Disability' should also force donors to take access issues into account when funding development projects.

The report aims to provide the "best available survey" of what is known about the barriers facing disabled people across the world and how to remove them and "enable disabled people to participate in mainstream services".

Dr Tom Shakespeare, a leading British disabled academic who now works for WHO and is one of the authors and editors of the report, said it was clear there was good and bad practice spread across both high and low income countries.

But he added: "The message is absolutely that these barriers are avoidable."

The report estimates that about 15 per cent of the world's population are disabled, or more than a billion people – the first such estimate in 40 years. Previous WHO estimates suggested a figure of 10 per cent.

The report highlights barriers such as negative attitudes in employment, education, healthcare and social participation; inadequate funding for

services, even in high income countries; lack of accessibility in the built environment, transport and information; and a failure to consult with disabled people and involve them in decision-making.

And it says that these barriers mean disabled people across the world experience poorer health; lower educational achievements; lower rates of employment; higher rates of poverty; and increased levels of isolation and dependency on others.

The report makes nine major recommendations for countries to follow, such as enabling access to all mainstream services; drawing up a national disability strategy; involving disabled people in forming policies and laws that affect them; providing adequate funding for services; and increasing public awareness of disability.

And it offers suggestions for how countries can translate these recommendations into action, such as moving disabled people out of institutions and providing support for them to live in the community, and introducing mandatory minimum standards of accessibility.

Visit: <http://www.who.int/en/>

www.disabilitynewsservice.com

Birmingham legal victory ‘could open door for other cuts cases’

People in Birmingham fear losing local authority-funded support, despite a High Court ruling overturning the Council’s decision to restrict eligibility to people assessed as having critical needs.

Birmingham City Council’s programme of cuts included savings of £51million from its adult social care spending in 2011 – 12 and a major part of this was to be achieved by withdrawing Council-funded services from people assessed as having

“substantial” needs. The Council had said that it would signpost them to possible alternative sources of support, such as the voluntary sector, but no detailed plans were in place when the Council made its decision.

However, a landmark legal victory for four disabled people could open the door for others across the country to challenge their local authorities over cuts to care services.

The court case was brought by the families of four disabled people who had been told by Birmingham City Council, in April, that any of their care needs that were not “critical” would no longer be funded.

Handing down his full judgement in the case, Mr Justice Walker said the setting of the council’s budget and its decision to tighten its eligibility policy from “substantial” to “critical” were unlawful because they failed to have due regard to promoting equality under the Disability Discrimination Act.

He also found that the council’s attempts at a consultation over its plans had been flawed and “had not involved any attempt to look at the practical detail of what the move to ‘critical only’ would entail”.

And he said the council had failed to consider what other “alternative resources in the community would be available for those with substantial needs” or identify any other steps to “mitigate the impact on disabled people”.

The judge also concluded that the consultation process had not been clear about who would be affected by the cuts and what their options would be if they had their care packages removed.

But as the High Court ruling relates to the process the Council went through rather than the decision itself, disabled

people in Birmingham are concerned that the cuts will be made in the future services.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) said many other councils had already restricted care to those with “critical needs”, leaving people without the support they needed to live independently.

An EHRC spokeswoman said: “Not providing care to those who clearly need it fails to protect some of our most basic human rights – having a decent quality of life and being treated with dignity and respect.

“It denies disabled people the right to choose how to live their own lives and the freedom to make their own choices.”

The EHRC is already investigating whether councils are protecting the human rights of older people in England who receive care and support at home, and is set to report its findings later this year.

Visit: www.equalityhumanrights.com

www.disabilitynewsservice.com

MP asks ATOS bosses why their company is ‘feared and loathed’

Disability News Service reports that bosses at ATOS Healthcare, the company that carries out ‘fitness for work’ tests for the government, have been asked by MPs to explain why their organisation is so “feared and loathed” by disabled people.

The three senior executives from ATOS Healthcare were asked a series of searching questions about the performance of their company and the healthcare professionals who conduct the tests.

The trio were giving evidence to the Work and Pensions Select Committee as part of its inquiry into the reassessment of long-term claimants of Incapacity Benefit (IB) through the unpopular Work

Capability Assessment (WCA).

The WCA is the most important piece of evidence used to decide whether disabled people are eligible for Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), the new out-of-work disability benefit that is gradually replacing IB.

The Liberal Democrat MP Stephen Lloyd said that for many disabled people and their families and friends, ATOS was “feared and loathed probably in equal terms”, and he asked how they could “transform this attitude”.

Lisa Coleman, ATOS Healthcare’s general manager for its Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) contracts, claimed much of the “fear and misunderstanding” was due to claimants “not really understanding the role that ATOS plays”.

Professor Michael O’Donnell, the company’s chief medical officer, said ATOS needed to “find a way to explain to people that failure to be awarded ESA is not the same as being classed as a malingerer or classed as someone who doesn’t have a disability or someone who is not ill”.

But Stephen Lloyd MP suggested that the “glass half-full” attitude of senior executives about the WCA was not trickling down to staff who carried out the tests, as shown by the number of “fearful” disabled people contacting MPs with complaints.

Asked to explain why up to 40 per cent of appeals against being refused ESA (Employment and Support Allowance) were successful, Coleman claimed this was because relevant evidence often only emerged after the WCA had taken place.

But the committee’s chair, the Labour MP Dame Anne Begg (who uses a wheelchair for mobility) said many disabled people had described how they had not been allowed to hand over such

evidence during their assessments.

And when Coleman confirmed that the company was not financially penalised by the government for incorrect assessments, Dame Anne said: "That adds to the suspicion that you are a private company, you're driven by the profit motive, and the incentive is to get the assessments done but not necessarily to get the assessments right."

Coleman said this was "very disheartening" and "wrong" and that ATOS was "very, very closely monitored" by the DWP. The ATOS executives also denied several times during the session that their company was paid any bonuses for finding people "fit for work".

The committee later heard evidence from Professor Malcolm Harrington, the government's independent reviewer of the Work Capability Assessment. He said he believed that work he was carrying out to improve the WCA would address some of the "mistrust" and "anger" with the current system by the end of this year, his second year in the role.

He said it was vital to improve how ESA claimants were treated and to convince them that "somebody is caring about them" and that the process was aimed at giving them "the right benefit or support" and was "not trying to catch people out".

Visit: www.dwp.gov.uk

www.disabilitynewsservice.com

Protest targets assessment contractor ATOS

Disability Now reports that the London headquarters of ATOS Healthcare, the company that carries out controversial benefit assessments, was the latest target for action by disability campaigning group 'Disabled People Against Cuts' (DPAC).

The group claims that benefit claimants

are subjected to unfair and discriminatory assessments carried out under contract by the company which have resulted in record numbers of rejected claims for Employment Support Allowance (ESA).

ATOS has just signed a £300million deal with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to reassess ESA claimants until 2015.

Kicking off a week of action against government welfare reform and ATOS, the protest was attended by members of DPAC, the Euston branch of the Public and Commercial Services Union, and several groups of disability activists.

DPAC founder Linda Burnip who organised the protest said: "A lot of people don't know the crucial part ATOS plays in the assessments. Today is about educating people, getting the news out and making sure that ATOS know that we're not giving up the fight against them."

She added: "I know hundreds of people who have lost everything. If you lose Incapacity Benefit (IB), you lose Disability Living Allowance (DLA). If you lose DLA you lose all the other benefits you are entitled to. It is a massive knock-on effect."

Other people at the protest voiced concern about the vicious circle the Government is creating for disabled people, by denying them benefits which help pay for crucial support networks and services, therefore forcing many into unemployment and poverty.

Visit: www.dpac.uk.net

Source: www.disabilitynow.org.uk

Winterbourne View Panorama 'abuse' hospital to close

A residential hospital for vulnerable adults near Bristol where alleged abuse was secretly filmed by the BBC Panorama programme is to close.

Castlebeck, which runs Winterbourne View, said the hospital would close on Friday 24 June 2011, when the last patients would be transferred to alternative services.

Patients at the unit were filmed by an undercover reporter posing as a care worker. The footage showed residents being pinned down, slapped and taunted.

A spokesman for Castlebeck said the company had been working closely with families and carers, the NHS and social services “to ensure patients are safely transferred with minimum disruption to their lives”.

After the programme was broadcast, Castlebeck apologised and launched an internal investigation. A number of people have been questioned by police and released on bail following the programme and the government said it would carry out its own review of what happened.

A serious case review into the alleged abuse at the residential hospital has been set for July.

Jack Lopresti, the local Conservative MP, met Lee Reed, the chief executive of Castlebeck. Mr Lopresti said: “Mr Reed gave me his assurances that the closure of the hospital will be conducted in as sensitive a way as possible. I stand by my call for the hospital’s closure and I am pleased that Castlebeck have come to the same conclusion. Given the horrific events which have taken place at Winterbourne View I believe its future running is untenable.”

Visit: www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-13848877

Social care reforms ‘must deliver for disabled people’

The government will need to “deliver real results” for disabled people when it

introduces new social care legislation next year, according to Claire Glasman, from WinVisible, the national disabled women’s charity.

The Law Commission’s long-awaited report on the reform of adult social care law in England and Wales published recently, recommended a “single, clear, modern statute and code of practice that would pave the way for a coherent social care system”, with “individual well-being” the basis for all social care decisions.

Law commissioner Frances Patterson QC told a joint meeting of several all party parliamentary groups, including those on disability and social care, that she hoped the report would lead to a “much more sustainable system of social care”.

Paul Burstow MP, the care services minister, welcomed the report’s emphasis on the principle of “well-being”, simplified duties around assessment and the importance of portability.

He said the report had provided a “fantastic platform on which we can build” but that it was too early to provide details on the “important question” of how the government would define disabled people’s basic minimum entitlements to services.

Mike Smith, chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission’s disability committee and chair of the National Centre for Independent Living, praised principles underpinning the report, particularly “the assumption that the person is the best judge of their own well-being” and that decision-makers “should follow the views of the individuals”.

But he warned that many disabled people were not receiving the services they needed or having their basic human rights met, which would be “challenging for the government” when drawing up its legislation.

He told campaigners to “keep your fingers on the pulse” to “make sure they deliver real results for all the people who we are here to support”.

Claire Glasman, from WinVisible, the national disabled women’s charity, said she feared the government’s new legislation would be “a sleight of hand to take away traditional entitlements we have had since the beginning of the welfare state”.

And she asked what safeguards there would be to ensure the government’s emphasis on personalisation was “not used to deprive people of support”.

Burstow said the government’s reforms were “not about discarding existing entitlements” but about “clarifying and making clearer existing entitlements, making access to the system simple and more straightforward”.

He said local authorities had been gradually tightening eligibility for care services for “a number of years” and – without reform – every council in the country would eventually restrict care only to those with “critical” needs.

The government is due to publish a white paper later this year, which will draw on the recommendations of both the Law Commission report and the Dilnot Report on the funding of long-term care. It is set to introduce an adult social care bill next May, which should come into force in April 2015.

Visit: www.equalityhumanrights.com
www.lawcom.gov.uk
www.ncil.org.uk
www.winvisible.org
www.dilnotcommission.dh.gov.uk

www.disabilitynewsservice.com

Welfare reform: £50 fine for errors on forms

Welfare claimants will face £50 fines for making “errors” in filling in benefits forms.

The “civil penalty” will be imposed on people who are not attempting to defraud the State but who are “negligent” in providing details of their claims. Fraud and error in the benefits system are estimated to cost £3.1 billion, with another £2.1 billion for tax credits.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) said the new fines regime will ensure that benefits records are more accurate.

“The Department wants to reduce the financial loss from customer error and achieve greater customer compliance,” a DWP document said.

“It is a customer’s responsibility to make sure that the information held by the department is correct and up to date at all times and what they tell us is truthful. Where a customer has failed to do this the Department will impose a civil penalty.”

The DWP expects that by 2014 – 15, it will be raising £30.5 million from civil penalties, equal to imposing 610,000 fines.

The Welfare Reform Bill will also create a new sanctions regime for cases of intentional fraud. The most serious cases of benefits fraud will be punished with a three year loss of benefit

Visit: www.dwp.gov.uk

Equality commission to face ‘major surgery’

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is expected to face a demand for “major surgery” when the Home Office publishes a consultation paper on its future.

The commission, chaired by Trevor Phillips, survived October’s “bonfire of the quangos” but ministers are expected to say they want its activities to be restricted

to its core functions and the management of its finances to be sharply improved. The EHRC is expected to be stripped of responsibilities such as promoting social cohesion. The consultation is due to last only three months, with swift action to follow. The EHRC took over from the Commission for Racial Equality, the Equal Opportunities Commission and the Disability Rights Commission in 2007 to promote and enforce equality and anti-discrimination laws in England, Scotland and Wales.

Phillips recently told MPs that the commission had been considering “radical reform” over the past 12 months. The 630-strong staff has already been cut to 417 and is likely to be cut to between 200 and 250 over the next 18 months.

The commission saw a string of high-profile resignations from its board last year, including its finance director. Its 2008/09 accounts were qualified by the National Audit Office last July who said it had breached rules on pay rises for permanent staff and managed money badly.

Visit: www.equalityhumanrights.com
www.lawcom.gov.uk
www.ncil.org.uk

Update Newsletter April 2010 / www.guardian.co.uk

2012 disability ticketing set out

Tickets and practical help for disabled people applying to go to London 2012 have been announced by organisers.

The London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) said accessible tickets would be available for every venue, sports session and price category. They include wheelchair and companion spaces, seats nearer exits, or close to the action or information screens.

Disability groups welcomed the move but said ticket prices remained a problem. Disabled people will apply for tickets online or using the paper application forms, as with all other applications.

They will be able to ask for accessibility requirements, such as:

- a seat down fewest steps for those who find stairs difficult,
- a seat on the end of a row if they need extra room, a seat with a direct view of information screens if they are deaf or hearing-impaired, and a seat near the front if they are visually impaired.

Those needing a wheelchair or mobility-scooter space, including a companion space, will be able to request one online. If they use their application form to apply for tickets for accompanying family and friends, they will be seated as close by as possible.

Visit: www.london2012.com

Update Newsletter April 2010 / www.bbc.co.uk/news

New chair equivocal on equality mission

Disabled people are “unlikely” to enjoy full equality by the year 2025, according to the new Chair of the Government’s advisory body of disabled people, Equality 2025.

Speaking soon after her appointment as Chair of the body originally set up in 2006 to give disabled people a voice in government circles, Dr Rachel Perkins said: “2025 for equal citizenship does seem a tall order doesn’t it.”

A clinical psychologist and a user of mental health services, Dr Perkins was voted Champion of the Year by the mental health charity Mind in 2010. She worked in mental health services for 30 years and is involved in areas including the

development of personal health budgets, the external scrutiny group of the review of Work Capability Assessment, mental, intellectual and cognitive descriptors, the Equality and Human Rights Commission disability-related harassment advisory group and the Stakeholder Coalition on Disability and Employment.

“Since the 1990s I’ve looked at and written about the lives of people with mental health conditions within a social model framework. An important turning point for me was going to America in the 1990s and meeting activists in the mental health user / survivor community like Judi Chamberlin and Andy Imparato who were working as part of a broader disability movement. It struck me as being incredibly powerful and I began to see the parallels between user / survivor ideals about recovery and mental health and the independent living movement.”

Dr Perkins’s three year term as Chair of Equality 2025 began on 1 April. She says that even though full equality might not be a reality until years after 2025, the body does have a significant role to play in ensuring disability equality remains on the political agenda.

In 2010, the Labour Government cut the number of members in the body from a maximum of 25 to eight and turned it from a body which consulted disabled people and fed their views back to ministers into an advisory body.

Equality 2025’s work plan for the coming year is yet to be published and Dr Perkins was unable to go into detail about the issues it would be focussing on.

Visit: www.mind.org.uk

<http://odi.dwp.gov.uk>

Source: www.disabilitynow.org.uk

Most annual reports ‘just tick boxes’ and are dull, says survey

Many charity annual reports are box-ticking exercises and most are “not visually stimulating”, according to a survey by the accounting firm Deloitte.

‘Gaining Public Confidence’, based on an overview of 50 reports selected from those of the 1,000 largest charities, says they often lack any connection to the accompanying statement of financial activities and do not disclose the major risks they faced.

The publication says that more than two-thirds of reports are visually “very dull”, with little use of pictures and graphs to illustrate their message.

This is an improvement, it says, on the findings of a similar survey carried out the previous year, when four-fifths of reports were called dull.

According to the survey, almost two-thirds of charities that produce dull annual reports also fail to produce an attractive annual review document to compensate.

Deloitte says a high-quality annual report enables potential donors to see which charities are achieving their aims and which are not.

“These annual reports are an improvement on the previous year” said Reza Motazed, head of charities and not-for-profit at Deloitte. “But there’s still plenty of scope to do better. In particular, charities need to spend more time on risk management and reserves policy. With reserves, it’s not enough to say ‘we’ve got 30 per cent of our annual expenditure in reserves so we’re okay’; and with risk management it’s not enough to include three lines saying that trustees have looked at the risk register.”

Source: www.thirdsector.co.uk/news

Funding

Giving White Paper

The ambition of the Giving White Paper, published recently by the Cabinet Office, is to stimulate a step change in giving (of time and money).

The Government has announced a number of specific proposals and investments including a £30m Local Infrastructure Fund (details below), a £10m Social Action Fund, a year-long campaign to promote payroll giving, and Challenge Prizes that reward schemes encouraging volunteering using mobile phone technology. The full paper can be accessed at the website of the Cabinet Office.

Visit: www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk
www.deloitte.com

Voluntary Action Sheffield – Enewsletter June 2011

New £30m fund for local infrastructure

The Local Infrastructure Fund will improve support for frontline civil society organisations in England.

The funding has been designed to help infrastructure organisations to modernise their support services, ensuring they are strong and relevant. The fund from the Office for Civil Society is being administered by BIG (The Big Lottery Fund). Further detail is expected on 15 July.

If you would like to be notified by email of any updates, and sign up for more information at launch, email the (The Big Lottery Fund).

Visit: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk
Email: supportingcivilsociety@biglotteryfund.org.uk

Please mark the email subject line **‘Local Infrastructure Fund’**.

Voluntary Action Sheffield – Enewsletter June 2011

Calendar of events

Dementia Awareness Week

Organised by the Alzheimer's Society, Dementia Awareness Week will take place from 3 – 9 July in England and Wales. The awareness week is called ‘Remember the person’, and aims to person encourage people to be a friend to someone with dementia. For more information, please visit the website of the Alzheimer’s Society.

Venue: England and Wales

Date: 3 – 9 July 2011

Visit: www.alzheimers.org.uk

National Childcare Week

Daycare Trust is a national childcare charity which is currently marking its 25th year. In July, they are organising National Childcare Week, now in its 14th year.

The aims of the Week are to promote the importance of investing in childcare, out-of-school activities and early years provision for children, to strengthen and contribute to children’s play and learning, providing a good foundation for their future. For more information, please visit the website of the Daycare Trust.

Venue: Nationwide

Date: 11 – 18 July 2011

Visit: www.daycaretrust.org.uk

CPAG Rights Conference

The Child Poverty Action Group’s annual rights conference will be looking at the cuts being made to benefits and tax credits,

along with the fundamental changes to the welfare system which will follow in line with the introduction of Universal Credit.

This conference is an opportunity for all those working in the welfare rights field, plus other interested advisers and policy workers, to join together and learn about the latest developments in welfare and discuss the impact of these changes. For more information, please visit the website of the CPAG.

Venue: London

Date: 15 September 2011

Visit: www.cpag.org.uk

Call: **020 7812 5228**.

Training

Disability Awareness in Action – Resource Kits

Disability Awareness in Action (DAA) was set up in 1992 as a co-operative project of the international disability organisations, responding to disabled people's need for appropriate information.

The DAA aim to provide information and evidence to support disabled people in their own actions to secure their rights – at all levels: local, national, regional and international.

The DAA has created seven Resource Kits. They are designed to enable those working for the rights of disabled people to organise themselves more efficiently and make their campaigning more effective.

These are:

- Media Information – How the Media works and how to make it work for you.
- Consultation And Influence – How to influence the movers, shakers and policy-makers.
- Campaigns – Strategies and tactics for effective campaigning.

- Organisation Building – How to create and develop a campaigning organisation.
- Fund-raising – How funding works, how to find it and how to spend it.
- Disabled Women: An International Resource Kit – Strategy and action for those who are particularly disadvantaged.
- Civil Rights Law and Disabled People – A guide to civil rights, human rights and legislation.

These resources can be downloaded for free from the website of Disability Awareness in Action (DAA).

Visit: www.daa.org.uk

Publications

'See what I mean'

Published by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD), 'See what I mean' are guidelines to help staff understand what people with severe and profound learning disabilities are communicating, particularly in the context of decision making.

- The guidelines include procedures for:
- gathering information and considering the likely preferences of a person with a learning disability
 - arranging a formal discussion with a person with a learning disability to discover their wishes, checking interpretations.

The guide is suitable for use by people who live and work alongside people with severe and profound learning disabilities. For further details, please visit the website of BILD.

Visit: www.bild.org.uk

Call: **01562 723 010**

Disability magazine

'Ability Needs' magazine is a quarterly publication with news on Britain's main disability groups and information on the products available in the mobility marketplace.

'Ability Needs' is also available nationally in major supermarket chains and selected newsagents and is now also available to purchase and download online from www.digitalnewsagent.com, or you can choose to receive Ability Needs via a yearly subscription.

Additional copies are distributed at all the major disability exhibitions such as Naidex, The Mobility Roadshow and Kidz up North. For further details, please visit the website of 'Ability Needs'.

Visit: www.abilityneeds.co.uk
www.digitalnewsagent.com

How can local authorities with less money support outcomes for older people?

Research by the Centre for Policy on Ageing shows that older people want and value low-level support – 'that bit of help' – but the benefits of investing in this are realised over many years, making it harder to prove impact and protect funding in the face of severe pressure on spending.

These solutions provide examples of imaginative, affordable and effective ways of supporting older people's health, well-being, social engagement and independence. It highlights projects with some local authority involvement – whether as lead commissioner, subsidiary partner, or through small grants or seed-funding.

The projects demonstrate the importance of the following:

- involving people who use support and services in shaping them;
- investing in collective solutions, small grants or seed-funding for self-help groups, and developing local markets to provide the support people want and value;
- greater emphasis on the assistance that older people need and choose, and their experiences rather than on conventional social care and / or services;
- developing place-based approaches that reflect the whole of people's lives, and delivering value for money, for example by including transport, leisure, and fire and rescue services to co-ordinate support.

For further information, please visit the website of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Visit: www.jrf.org.uk

Useful websites

Benefit Enquiry Line

Part of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL) offers advice and information for disabled people and carers on the full range of benefits available and how to claim them.

The BEL also offers help filling in the application form for certain benefits. This line does not hold customer records so it's unable to deal with claims that have already been made or any late or missing payments. For further information, please visit the Direct Gov website.

Visit:
www.direct.gov.uk/disability-money
Call: **0800 88 22 00**

Disability Benefits Helpline

Funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), the Disability Benefits Helpline is for advice and information on Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA).

Phone this number to make a claim or to report any changes in your circumstances that may affect your benefit.

Call: **08457 123 456**

Carer's Allowance Unit

The Carer's Allowance Unit provides information on Carer's Allowance, which is the main state benefit for carers. This includes advice on eligibility and how to make a claim.

Call: **0845 608 4321**

Help with health costs

This advice line provides help for NHS patients about entitlement to free prescriptions and the evidence you'll need when asking pharmacies and chemists for free prescriptions.

Visit **www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk**

Call: **0845 850 0030**

Technology for life

Founded in 1975, the Aidis Trust aims to help disabled people communicate more easily and effectively through technology.

Their website has been developed to help disabled people make best use of information and communication technology by giving information, help and support on all aspects of disability computing.

Aidis' services and website have developed in response to and in

conjunction with their disabled service users. For more information, please visit the website of the Aidis Trust.

Visit: **www.aidis.org**

Other matters

Contact us

All Scope DIAL UK staff can be contacted via the main Scope DIAL UK phone number: **01302 310 123** or email **dialuk@scope.org.uk**

Please note:

We've made every effort in this mailing to use language in keeping with the Social Model of Disability. However, some terms used in this leaflet might not reflect this.

Although these are not our preferred terms, some of the materials used are quoted directly from source and used in their original format.