

DIAL Network News

June 2012

Serving the disability advice network

Contents

Welcome
News - about network development
News - from external sources
News - from around the network
Fundraising
Legal update
Scope policy and campaigns
Training
Publications and resources
Events next month
Get in touch

Welcome to the June edition of Network News.

This month we held the advisory group meeting on Monday 25 June. I would like to thank everyone who attended and for your feedback. We had some useful discussions on the day which included:

- the membership offer
- terms of reference for the group
- measuring quality
- future campaign opportunities
- the ENC / Scope BME research recommendations
- development of Scope's information offer so it benefits the network.

I will share the full notes with everyone following a review by the advisory group.

Following feedback received from the April and June meetings, it was agreed to encourage new membership of the network. At the end of this initial consultation period, the whole membership will be reviewed against new membership criteria.

This will be developed by the advisory group. We will be including a section profiling groups joining the network in next month's newsletter.

We look forward to continuing to work with you and to improve our support to all the individual DIAL groups and the network as a whole.

The next meeting will take place in central London on Wednesday 25 July.

In the meantime if you have any feedback or comments I would be very happy to email or speak to you directly.



Suzi Mackenzie

News about network development

DIAL Network web presence

We are keen to develop the existing DIAL Network information and support provision channels. The purpose behind this is to ensure that we are communicating with you in ways that are as useful and accessible as possible to you as DIAL Network members.

Further to the announcement in the last Network News and the follow up emails we have replaced [/www.dialuk.info/index.asp](http://www.dialuk.info/index.asp) with a single landing page. This page redirects visitors to the DIAL pages on our website.

This is so we can ensure that all information about, and for, the network is as up to date as possible and refers more people to your group. Our website receives 70,000 unique views per month, whereas DIAL UK website receives closer to 10,000.

We're fully committed to supporting the independence of the DIAL Network. We know we both play different roles and can enhance what each other does. So we will be reviewing the DIAL Network's web presence as well as the content we use on the webpages. We'll be working together with you on this.

We have received some suggestions for improvements already. The Advisory group came up with some great ideas about different ways of using the internet to get information out to the network. Do get in contact if you have any thoughts, or would like information from the original DIAL UK site.

Please contact Suzi Mackenzie. Scope Regional Response workers in your area

will also be happy to feedback any comments you have.

Free access to GRANTnet

A reminder that GRANTnet can be accessed at:

www.scope.org.uk/help-and-information/dial-groups/information-dial-members

News from external sources

Social care

Councils will have ‘no money for main services’ by 2020

Source: Telegraph

Councils will no longer be able to pay for any libraries, parks, leisure centres or fixing potholes in roads by the end of this decade because of a catastrophic funding crisis, they warned today. Financial estimates carried out for the leaders of every major local authority in England and Wales show that funding for services used by millions of people will be shrunk by up to 90 per cent by 2020. Heavy cuts in public spending combined with a soaring bill for care for the elderly and legal commitments such as rubbish collection will almost wipe out the budget for all but the most essential services, it concludes. People will have to be given the choice between soaring council taxes or “drastic” cuts in local amenities unless there is a radical overhaul in how local government is organised, it warns. The dire warning comes in a report for the Local Government Association which speaks for more than 300 councils in England and Wales.

Read the full article at:

www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/9354336/Councils-will-have-no-money-for-main-services-by-2020.htm

Disabled and elderly see their day centres and key services disappear as budget cuts bite

Source: Independent, Guardian

A lifeline for vulnerable people is in crisis, according to research looking at the extent of day centre closures. A survey of frontline social care staff uncovered a

picture of widespread closures of local authority day centres, and a drastic "hollowing out" of those left behind. It reflected the erosion of an important service for the elderly and disabled, who otherwise can be isolated at home, said Dr Catherine Needham, who led the research, which was commissioned by Unison from the University of Birmingham's health services management centre.

Read the full article at:

www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/jun/17/day-care-centres-close?newsfeed=true

Welfare reform

Disability cuts: 'Thousands of us will become prisoners in our own homes'

Source: Guardian blog

Benefit reforms will force many disabled people to give up their cars, jobs and freedom - and have a damaging impact on the UK motor industry

"You may wonder what the car industry and wider economic growth have to do with welfare reform"

Indeed. But as the latest closely argued report from the We Are Spartacus campaign points out, the government's relentless quest to downsize the welfare budget will have potentially serious ramifications for motor manufacturers, from Luton to Longbridge.

Cuts to disability living allowance will take, over the next four years alone, a sizeable chunk out of the domestic car market, it argues: around 90,000 fewer cars sold, over 3,500 car industry jobs axed, £79m in lost taxes to the exchequer and a loss of £342m in GDP each year.

The cause of this pain to the UK's fragile motor industry is the planned switch from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payments (PIP) in April 2013. Changes in eligibility criteria mean that under PIP around 280,000 disabled people - and almost a third of working age disabled people - will no longer qualify for the enhanced mobility component of DLA that currently enables them to lease a car under the Motability charity scheme.

Motability is a powerful player in the UK car industry. In 2009, its leasing scheme accounted for one in 10 of all new cars bought in the UK, sourced through nearly 5,000 dealerships. Some 17% of new vehicles were manufactured in the UK. There's a thriving second hand market for Motability cars, and PIP is likely to see this diminish too.

But Motability doesn't just underpin thousands of jobs in the wider motor industry. It enables disabled people to be economically active too. According to a 2010, Motability-commissioned report by Oxford Economics, 39% of Motability customers said the scheme allowed them to improve or maintain their employment.

Overall, the Oxford report found:

"The Motability [car] scheme is estimated to enable 12,500 customers and informal carers to get a job, 56,100 to keep a job and in total this is worth £1.2 billion in gross wages per year".

Work, we constantly hear from ministers is not merely a buffer from poverty but a virtue in itself. Reform of the benefits system is meant to promote work. And yet, according to the We Are Spartacus report:

"If they lose their car, many disabled people may have to stop working, start to claim out of work benefits and cease their contribution to the Treasury through income tax and national insurance."

It adds:

"...reducing the number of disabled people eligible for Motability is a short-sighted policy in the sense that it is directly contradictory to the general government policy of producing a high-skill workforce in order to compete in the global economy, and is also directly contrary to the DWP's own policy of getting people into work. If the DWP is serious about equipping disabled people to undertake paid work, it should protect eligibility for the mobility component of disability benefits."

We Are Spartacus estimates that it would cost up to £640m to ensure that no-one currently in receipt of higher rate mobility component loses it under PIP. That kind of figure will make the Department for Work and Pensions' accountants shudder. But the cost to the wider economy of pushing ahead with the change is at least £666m, the report reckons.

The economic case, then, would appear on balance, to be persuasive. But it's not just about the money and jobs. The social impact on the mobility and wellbeing of disabled people threatens to be both profound and potentially dire. As with all the government's welfare changes, this one is already breeding the now customary miasma of fear and despair.

The charity Disabled Motoring UK, in its submission to the PIP consultation, points out that the proposed assessment criteria, and the implications for disabled people who would lose mobility component, was causing "a great deal of anxiety." It concluded:

"People who lose their Motability vehicle are frightened that they will become housebound, particularly in areas with no accessible transport."

The We Are Spartacus report cites a disabled person who in a response to the draft PIP criteria sets out even more vividly what the reform will mean at an individual level:

"This looks like the situation that many like me, who can walk a few yards with a walking stick, but not far enough to get to Town, or the nearest bus stop, will lose their Motability cars. So, thousands of us will become prisoners in our own homes"

Find out the latest from We are Spartacus at:

wearespartacus.org.uk/

Facing the reality of cuts in austerity Britain

Source: Guardian

Kate Belgrave visits people in north-west England who are having to cope with the cuts in public services

Richard Atkinson

Richard Atkinson has multiple sclerosis. He was diagnosed seven years ago when he was in his late 40s. He walks with an aid. When he went into hospital for a hernia operation, his wife Frances suspected he wouldn't respond well to the surgery, so she tried to access an occupational therapy (OT) assessment to get stair rails. They did an assessment over the telephone, but then said it would be three weeks before someone could come round.

Frances Laing says that when her husband returned from hospital barely able to move, she could not get him up the stairs. "He couldn't get to bed. He couldn't get to the toilet. The only thing we had got was a bucket. That was the weekend from hell."

Richard Atkinson was offered a reablement package by his council – "someone coming in twice a day to help Richard get washed so that I could go out to school and pick up our six-year-old, but there was a catch-22," Frances Atkinson says. "The careworkers wouldn't help Richard up the stairs because the OT assessment hadn't been done." It all feels as though "your house is burning down and nobody can see it", she says.

Lisa Henshaw

I start to understand that cuts might be leading people to take risks with themselves when I go to Lisa Henshaw's house (not her real name) and find her front door unlocked. Henshaw, 48, has rheumatoid arthritis (diagnosed at the age of two). She has limited use of her hands and mostly must use her electric wheelchair to move. This morning, she woke up feverish. I find her lying on her bed next to a red plastic container that her carer left out in case she needed to be sick.

Henshaw is alone because her carer has run out of carer hours. Direct payments from her local council fund about five carer hours a day (starting with a couple of hours in the morning to help her bathe and dress). The front door was unlocked because she was waiting for medicine to be delivered. I wait and sign for the drugs and make Henshaw her mid-morning hot drink. Then I leave her to her problems. She has plenty. "I never had to worry like this before," she says.

The Dalleys

It's the relentlessness of the attacks and the uncertainty, says Jen Dalley. She and her husband have three young daughters with learning disabilities. The youngest is in a wheelchair and can't walk, speak or feed herself. All three girls attend special schools. The family relies on benefits and the council for care service. The council is proposing to start charging for school transport, which would cost the Dalleys £1,200 a year: money the family simply doesn't have.

The Dalleys say they've been called scroungers by people on the street and even by their family. "I always say to them, you come and live in my house for a week and then we'll see," says Dalley.

Access the original article at:

www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/jun/05/public-sector-cuts-north-west

Benefit cuts raise risk of claimant suicides, say jobcentre bosses: Staff warned of dangers if changes are mishandled Memo says vulnerable 'may take time to adjust'

Source: Guardian

Senior jobcentre executives have warned staff of the risk of benefit claimants trying to kill themselves as changes to sickness benefits are being pushed through.

The warning in an internal email sent to staff by three senior managers of the government-run jobcentres warns staff that mishandling of benefit changes for vulnerable claimants could have "profound results". It highlights the case of one suicide attempt this year. Disability campaigners privately warned ministers last year that flaws in the work capability assessment would lead to some mentally ill people taking their own lives. But they said they were accused by ministers of scaremongering.

Read the full article at:

www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/jun/20/jobcentre-supervisors-suicide-risk-benefit-claimants

Universal Credit

Why strands of Universal Credit don't knit together

Source: Guardian

Disabled people cut off cold, Londoners moved to the Midlands, and addicts made destitute for turning down treatments that only work when freely entered into. With so many lurid headlines around social security, it seems almost callous to bring up the engineering. But it is only a matter of months until the universal credit is supposed to start kicking in, and if this grand contraption does not fire on all cylinders, then anyone could find themselves out of pocket – whether or not ministers had intended to swing the axe their way.

Read the full article at:

www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/jun/05/universal-credit-welfare-reform

Hard to credit: IT hitches scupper David Cameron's flagship Universal Credit benefit plans

Source: The Mirror

The Universal Credit – which will wrap all major benefits into one single monthly payment – was due to go live next year

David Cameron's flagship welfare reforms have been delayed because of problems with an IT system.

The Universal Credit – which will wrap all major benefits into one single monthly

payment – was due to go live next year.

But ministers said last week it will only be rolled out in one district in April 2013 and will not be ready on a national level until mid-2014.

The delay to the £2billion project was revealed in a Department for Work and Pensions newsletter, saying: “By mid-2014 all new benefit claims... will be treated as claims to Universal Credit.”

The Universal Credit is already on the Treasury’s list of at-risk programmes.

The reforms require two major IT projects and the Mirror has learnt there are serious concerns that HM Revenue and Customs’ Real-Time Information system, which will determine who is eligible for payments, won’t be ready for the 2013 pilot.

Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary Liam Byrne MP said: “The warning lights are flashing red.”

The DWP insists Universal Credit is on time for implementation from October 2013, and added there was a “careless choice of words” in the newsletter.

Read the full article at:

www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/-david-camerons-flagship-universal-882456

Employment

More jobseekers told to do unpaid work or face possible loss of benefits

Source: Guardian

Mandatory work activity requires jobseekers to work unpaid for up to 30 hours a week or risk losing their benefits

The government will tell up to 70,000 jobseekers that they must work unpaid for four weeks or lose their benefits three months under an expansion of the mandatory work activity programme.

Employment minister Chris Grayling said the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) would also tighten up rules to stop jobseekers from "gaming the system" – evading mandatory placements by temporarily signing off the dole – after it found up to half of those assigned mandatory work had done just that.

Introduced in May last year, mandatory work activity requires claimants to carry

out up to 30 hours unpaid work a week for up to four weeks for community benefit in an attempt to get jobseekers back into the habit of work.

Grayling said he would be spending £5m on expanding the scheme to increase placement numbers by 9,000 and he would tighten up rules later this year to stop jobseekers from signing off before placements and then returning to the claims office weeks later to avoid doing mandatory placements. "People need to be aware that, for those who are fit enough to work, it is simply not an option to sit on benefits and do nothing.

Tony Wilson, director of policy at the [Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion](#) said that leaving benefit wasn't the same as getting a job.

"The government said last year that around 10,000 people a year would be referred to mandatory workfare. But today's figures show that more people are now being referred to this than to their flagship work experience programme.

"If some of those people were already working while claiming benefit, then that's fraud ... and needs to be dealt with properly.

"However, the evidence suggests that fraud is not prevalent in jobseeker's allowance – indeed the government's own estimates are that there are more cases of mistakes by officials than of fraud by claimants.

"If people are leaving benefit for paid work, then that's a clear success. But if people are signing off, or having their benefit stopped, and not going into work, then we need to make sure that they don't end up even further away from the support that they need to get a job.

"The government's own research suggests that the evidence on workfare is mixed at best, with little sign that it increases the chances of finding paid work. So we need to really understand what's going on with these numbers before we rush to spend more money on it."

Read the full article at:

www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/jun/12/jobseekers-work-unpaid-lose-benefits

Long-term unemployed could have benefits cut

Source: BBC and all papers

Unemployment benefits could be cut for people who fail to get work over long periods of time, under Conservative plans to change the welfare system. People receiving payments could also be expected to learn to read, write and count, to

make them more employable. Prime Minister David Cameron said the system had gone "truly awry" and a "culture of entitlement" had to be addressed to boost the economy. But Labour accused him of using the "wrong approach" to joblessness. In a speech in Kent, Mr Cameron said he wanted to debate ideas for welfare reform before the Conservatives produced their manifesto for the next general election. It had been widely reported that he would propose varying the rates at which benefits are paid according to the cost of living in different regions. This was dropped from the final text of his speech, but Downing Street insisted it was still among ideas to be discussed. Proposals outlined by Mr Cameron included:

- out-of-work benefits linked to wages rather than inflation, if wages are lower
- a cap on the amount people can earn and still live in a council house
- reduce the current £20,000 housing benefit limit
- stopping the out-of-work being better off by having children
- consider paying some benefits "in kind" rather than in cash
- expecting parents on income support to prepare for work while children have free nursery care
- getting the physically able to do full-time community work after a period out of work
- sickness benefit claimants should take steps to improve their health.

To read more click [here](#). There are also editorials and commentary in the [Mail](#), the [Guardian](#) and the [Telegraph](#).

Finance

Chief executive Jonathan Jenkins says the right is an opportunity for social ventures to grow by increasing their revenue

Source: ThirdSector

The [Social Investment Business](#) is to launch a new £11.5m support scheme designed to help voluntary organisations take over the running of public services in their communities.

The Community Rights Programme will run for three years and was announced yesterday, the same day that the Community Right to Challenge came into force.

The right enables organisations including voluntary groups, parish councils and local authorities to bid to take over the running of services in their communities, with the aim of making them more reflective of local needs. It was created by the [Localism Act 2011](#).

The SIB will run the scheme with the chief executives body [Acevo](#) and the local umbrella body [Locality](#).

Among the services available under the programme will be an advice line. There will also be grant funding designed to help groups at both the pre-feasibility and feasibility stages of a takeover bid.

Jonathan Jenkins, chief executive of the SIB, said: "The Right to Challenge presents a fantastic new opportunity for social ventures to grow through increased revenue, and therefore build their capacity to secure further investment – all with the goal of being able to reach more beneficiaries."

Advocacy funding for people with learning disabilities cut

Source: BILD

Advocacy service funding for people with learning disabilities has been cut by 15% over the past four years, according to research by Improving Health and Lives. Their report, [Advocacy by and for adults with learning disabilities in England](#), surveyed 88 advocacy groups and 78 council commissioners of advocacy services. This found that from 2009-10 to 2012-13 funding for learning disability specific advocacy services fell by 15.1 per cent as commissioners cut their total spend for self-advocacy organisations and also moved specialist contracts to generic advocacy organisations.

View the report at:

[www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/publications/1072/Advocacy by and for adults with learning disabilities in England](http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/publications/1072/Advocacy_by_and_for_adults_with_learning_disabilities_in_England)

Carers

Almost half of unpaid carers risking their health, survey shows

Source: Guardian

Nearly half of unpaid carers in the UK are jeopardising their health due to a lack of support, according to a survey. Carried out by Carers Week, a group of eight charities including Age UK, Carers UK and Macmillan Cancer Support, the survey found that 40% of carers had put off receiving medical treatment because of the pressures of their role. In addition, 87% of the 3,400 carers surveyed said caring had been detrimental to their mental health, while 83% said they had suffered physical health problems. Another 36% said they had sustained injuries such as

back pain and insomnia while caring for sick or disabled friends or family.

Read the full article at:

www.guardian.co.uk/society/2012/jun/18/half-unpaid-carers-risking-health

Hate crime

Hate crimes against disabled people soar to a record

Source: Independent

The number of disability hate crimes reported to police has reached record high, sparking concerns that the Coalition's "anti-scrounger" rhetoric is fuelling hostility to the most vulnerable members of society. A total of 1,942 disability hate crimes were recorded by police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland last year.

Read the full article at:

www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/hate-crimes-against-disabled-people-soar-to-a-record-level-7858841.html

Police 'overlook vulnerable antisocial crime victims'

Source: Guardian

Thousands of vulnerable victims of persistent antisocial behaviour, including many who are disabled, are still "slipping through the net", the chief inspector of constabulary warns today. Five years after Fiona Pilkington killed herself and her disabled daughter after they were repeatedly targeted by local youths, a review by Sir Denis O'Connor says that only five of the 43 police forces in England and Wales consistently question callers to establish if they have been targeted before, and no force checks on how vulnerable they are.

Read the full article at:

www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2012/jun/21/police-antisocial-crime-victims-fiona-pilkington?newsfeed=true

Charity Commission

Commission updates guidance on public benefit

Source: ThirdSector

Scope is a registered charity, number 208231. © Scope June 2012

Charities will need to demonstrate that they provide public benefit through their stated purposes rather than their activities, according to revised guidelines from the [Charity Commission](#).

The commission, which today launched a three-month consultation on the amended public benefit guidance, now says that it is only necessary for an organisation to have charitable purposes to be identified as a charity.

The guidance has been revised to clarify what the public benefit requirement means and what trustees need to know to ensure they are meeting the requirement. The information is available on the commission's website.

The revision has been made in the light of a judgement by the Upper Tribunal, which ruled last year that key sections of the commission's guidance on public benefit by fee-charging charities, such as independent schools, was wrong.

As part of the consultation, the Charity Commission says it is keen to get feedback from trustees, who can submit views and comments on a [live blog](#), as well as through formal responses.

Tom Murdoch, an associate at Stone Kind Solicitors' charity and education team, said the revised guidance meant the commission's previous stance, that it could gauge a charity's public benefit through its activities, had been abandoned.

He said: "I think this is a welcome clarification that charity trustees have the duty to decide what level of public benefit the charity can offer in its individual circumstances."

Murdoch said that he welcomed the commission's revised guidance, but was concerned that there would still be uncertainty in the minds of some charity trustees as to the specific level of public benefit their organisation would need to offer.

Dame Suzi Leather, chair of the Charity Commission, said in a statement that public benefit was a "defining characteristic" of charitable organisations. She said the commission had gone to great lengths to ensure guidance accurately reflected the law.

"We have worked hard to write guidance that accurately reflects the law but is accessible for a charity trustee who just wants to know what to think about when making decisions that might affect their charity's public benefit," she said.

Visit the consultation blog and find out more at:

www.charitycommission.gov.uk/RSS/News/pr_pbconsultation.aspx

News from around the Network

KPAC accessible caravan

Our 2012 two bedroom holiday home provides all the comforts of home on a quiet pitch of the park yet still only a short walk away from the entertainment complex. The caravan has central heating throughout, a gas fire in the living area and double glazing, making it perfect for all seasons.

The caravan is wheelchair accessible with wide sliding interior doors, grab rails and accessible bathroom. There are 4 single beds although the beds in the larger bedroom can easily be pushed together. There is ample space for a travel cot if needed. There is a pull-out bed in the living area. The main bedroom also has a trapeze lift handle.

The large living area has ample seating as well as a dining table and stools. There is a 32" screen TV with Freeview channels and a built in DVD player.

The bathroom is a spacious wet room with shower, fixed shower stool, grab rails and low level wash basin.

The caravan is fully equipped for your self-catering needs with low level counters, a full size cooker, kettle, toaster and microwave and for your convenience a hairdryer, iron and table top ironing board.

The caravan is let on a strictly no smoking basis and we regret that pets are not allowed. The caravan is brand new and in excellent condition and professional cleaned thoroughly between lettings.

It is sited on a Haven holiday park and has the following facilities:

2 heated swimming pools, entertainment lounge, restaurant and bar, games room, fish and chip shop, children's playground, Free Wi-Fi, Launderette, Shop, Trampolines, Bowling, Golf, Tennis, Kids club, Water activities

For more info please call 0151 481 0047 or visit the KPAC website

www.kpac.org.uk/KPAC_accessible_caravan_hire.html

Fundraising

Health and Social Care Volunteering Fund (HSCVF):

Launch of local grant and capacity building scheme 2012

The HSCVF has been developed to make a positive contribution to the Department of Health's (DH) objectives. The fund also reflects the DH's commitment to increase investment in volunteering.

The HSCVF local grant and capacity building scheme is unique for the health and social care voluntary sector. The support is designed to build the capacity and capabilities of voluntary organisations as well as providing them with grant monies to develop volunteered service delivery through a discrete project.

Competition for the funding and support is likely to be high. It is anticipated that between 40 and 45 organisations will receive a package of capacity building support and project funding up to a maximum of £50,000 for multi-annual projects.

Local volunteer involving voluntary / community organisations, charities, constituted not-for profit organisations with social aims e.g. Community Interest Companies, co-operatives, mutuals, Industrial and Provident Societies will be able to make an application and will be asked to apply under one of the following themes:

Theme 1: Individual Choice and Control: Care and Support

Theme 2: Delivering Better Health and Care Outcomes

Theme 3: Improving Public Health

Theme 4: Improving Health and Social Care

Theme 5: Building Capable Communities

Grants for project delivery will be awarded for projects that demonstrate their potential to develop new, improved and/or streamlined systems in health and social care volunteering rather than projects that aim to simply supply core services. Ongoing funding for existing services will not be supported.

Registration and Application process

Organisations interested in applying to the HSCVF must first register online at www.volunteeringfund.com

The registration period will be between noon on **2 July and 3 September**. Eligible organisations will then be able to submit an application through the online application portal which will also open at noon on **2 July 2012** and will close at noon on **14 September 2012**.

View more information at: www.volunteeringfund.com/node/18

In for a penny: crowdsourced funding saves community projects

Source: Guardian Professional

The ex-mining community of Glyncoch in south Wales has taken more than its fair share of knocks over the years. So you could forgive the people of the area, where unemployment runs at around 60%, for pessimism when a lack of funding threatened to derail plans for a new £792,000 community centre.

"People's perception was: 'you say we're going to get things but we never do – nothing ever comes to Glyncoch'," says local mayor Doug Williams.

Now those perceptions are changing after an innovative crowdsourced funding project helped the community raise the final £30,000 needed to make the centre a reality.

Using the online platform spacehive.com, celebrities including Stephen Fry and Griff Rhys Jones gave their backing to the scheme and everyone from individual online donors to retail giants Tesco and Asda gave gifts to top up the grant funding already pledged.

"Once Spacehive got involved, it was a brilliant effort. It gee'd the community up and they increased their participation when they saw money coming in on the internet. Everyone was chasing that target and the whole atmosphere on the estate changed when they realised it was going to become a reality. Now the building has started going up and there's a real buzz."

Crowdfunding has already proved a hit in the arts, where film-makers and musicians bid for financial backing from the public on websites such as US-based kickstarter.com. But Spacehive's backers believe the model could also help fund public and community projects in these challenging economic times.

Read the full article at: www.guardian.co.uk/local-government-network/2012/jun/08/crowdsourcing-community-funding-projects?CMP

Fundraising: let's get real about networking

Source: Guardian Professional

If you are serious about raising as much money as possible and developing your career, then it's essential you get real about networking.

The first rule of confident fundraising is knowing that donating to a cause that someone cares about is absolutely in the giver's interests as well as your charity's. There are people out there who would like to meet you too, but you won't find them if you only talk to three people.

Once you know what you want, focus your attention on what you can give, not what you can get. In a group of people, when your focus shifts to giving not getting, you become more confident and much more attractive to others. By letting go of your attachment to a specific result and acting generously, paradoxically you become more likely to achieve your goals.

A really good question to ask someone at a conference is: "who ideally would you like to meet here today?" This will show you to be more generous than most people they have spoken to. And once you know the answer, you may instantly be able to introduce them to someone and lose nothing.

The principle of reciprocation means the other person will very often ask you who you would like to meet. Once they know, there are twice as many people in the room on the lookout for your dream contact.

And how do you get away?

Instead of lamely pretending you need another drink, the ideal is to sincerely thank them and offer to introduce them to someone else. Explain why you need to move on. The best tactic I have found is to say something like: "You know you said you'd really like to meet so and so. Well, if I meet them, would you like me to come back and introduce you?"

If they were truthful in telling you who their dream contact would be, they will be only too happy for you to leave them as you will be serving their interests.

As long as you genuinely mean this, it will be easier for you to move on without feeling bad.

Read more at: www.guardian.co.uk/voluntary-sector-network/2012/jun/27/fundraising-lets-get-real-networking?CMP=

Legal update

Ombudsman criticises care team who failed to respond appropriately to a service user's deterioration while living independently in the community

Source: Community Care Law

The implementation of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 has been associated with heightened awareness of the need to respect the decision making rights of service users. However, unthinking promotion of decision making rights carries real risks. This is the second recent Ombudsman decision in which public bodies were found to have failed to protect a service user from self neglect due to what appears to have been a misunderstanding of the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Who was this case about?

This case concerned a man with a diagnosis of schizophrenia. He was on the Care Programme Approach and so received regular input from a joint Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) including visits from a Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN). For around 10 years, until 2007, he lived a settled life in the community. In that year, though, he began seriously to self-neglect.

In April 2008, the man's relatives were so concerned about his physical condition that they took him to hospital. He was found to be suffering from severe malnutrition, dehydration, a severe fungal infection of his toenails, anaemia and impaired kidney function. Subsequently, he was diagnosed with myeloma, a form of bone marrow cancer from which he ultimately died in June 2010.

The man's relatives complained to both the Local Government and the Health Service Ombudsman. Their principal allegation was that the local council and NHS Trust, who were together responsible for the Community Mental Health Team to which his case was allotted, had failed adequately to care for him in the community. In particular, it was alleged that they failed adequately to respond to his rapidly deteriorating health.

What went wrong?

In late 2007/early 2008, it had become clear that the man's mental health had deteriorated and that this has adversely affected his physical health and the state of his accommodation. The man's CPN was aware of the developing crisis but did not do enough to address it. The CPN was too focussed on giving the man space to address his difficulties "without imposing decisions on him". What the CPN should have done was convene a Care Programme Approach review meeting so that all the professionals involved in his care could assess whether his care and

support arrangements needed to be altered in response to the deterioration in his mental health. In more detail, this is what the Ombudsman said should have happened:

“failing to [arrange a review meeting] was a missed opportunity. Such a meeting involving everyone who was involved in Mr B’s care would have enabled an overall picture of developing risk to have emerged and been dealt with appropriately, perhaps by a referral to the assertive outreach team or, at the least, by a full review of the care package Mr B was receiving and a discussion about Mr B’s capacity to make decisions about his own care. The Health Service Ombudsman’s Nursing Adviser also said that a referral to the assertive outreach team should have been considered.”

The underlying failure seems to have been that those with particular responsibility for the man, such as his CPN, assumed that he had mental capacity to make decisions about his care and treatment. If he did have capacity, then he was fully entitled to let his physical health and his living environment deteriorate to the extent that they did. If, however, he lacked capacity in relation to those matters, those caring for him would have been entitled under s.5 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 to provide care for him, despite him being unable to consent, provided that they reasonably considered themselves to be acting in his best interests. It seems a lack of awareness of mental capacity legislation may have contributed to the inappropriately hands-off approach taken by the CPN in particular which contributed towards the man’s condition quickly deteriorating to “a wholly unacceptable state”. This is what the Ombudsman said on the point:

“We have not seen robust evidence that Mr B’s capacity to make decisions was ever seriously considered or that there was discussion about the balance to be struck between an individual’s autonomy and dignity. Mr B’s rights were clearly central in this matter but we have not seen evidence that the Trust or the Council had regard to or took specific account of human rights law or the provisions of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 in making their decisions.”

The Ombudsmen found that there had been service failure and that compensation of £2,000 should be paid to the man’s family member who brought the complaint and a contribution of £1,500 towards her solicitor’s costs.

www.ardendavies.com

11 Which aspects of the complaint were not upheld?

The conduct of an individual psychiatrist was also the subject of complaint. The psychiatrist saw the man in March 2008 and noted that he was self-neglecting and losing weight. The psychiatrist’s response was to refer the man to his GP with a

request for physical health. The man's family thought that he should instead have immediately admitted him to hospital. The Ombudsman did not find any service failure. In arriving at this conclusion, the Ombudsman took into account his Psychiatric Adviser's advice. It seems that what justified the psychiatrist's approach was that the man was not facing a life-threatening situation. It was therefore appropriate for the GP to take the lead in responding to his physical health needs.

The Ombudsman rejected a complaint that council staff who were members of the man's care team did not help him to claim the welfare benefits to which he was probably entitled. On the contrary, the man was helped to claim benefits as well as a loan from the Independent Living Fund.

The Ombudsman rejected complaints about the conduct of the cleaners who were paid by the CMHT to provide the man with domestic assistance. It was alleged that they ignored the man's clearly deteriorating condition. The evidence disproved this allegation. It showed that the cleaners had passed on to the CMHT their concern about the man's self-neglect. The problem was that "little action by appropriate professionals followed".

A developing theme? Mental capacity awareness and protection from self-neglect

It is interesting to note that this is the second recent Ombudsman decision to draw attention to the link between misunderstanding of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 and protection from self-neglect. In issue 75 we reported the decision of the Local Government Ombudsman in case 09/013/172. That concerned an older woman living at home. She was receiving home care and her carers were aware that she was engaging in bizarre behaviour, such as refusing to throw out rotten food and sitting in a darkened room during the summer with her heating turned up to full.

The Ombudsman in that case said it was "clearly known" to the council responsible for the woman's care that she lacked the mental capacity to make various decisions. This was not communicated to care staff who assumed that the woman's decisions on matters such as excessive heating and keeping rotten food had to be respected.

While the Ombudsman was not altogether clear on what the council should have done, it appears likely that what the Ombudsman had in mind was the need to make care staff aware of s.5 of the Mental Capacity Act 2005. S.5 allows a person to do caring acts for a person, who lacks the mental capacity to consent to those acts, if the carer has taken reasonable steps to ascertain if the person has capacity and reasonably believes that the acts are in the person's best interests. If these carers were aware that the woman's expressed wishes might not have to be

complied with, they would have been more likely to report back to social work staff their concerns about her behaviour on matters such as excessive heating and hoarding rotten food. It may be that a similar lack of awareness was one cause of the failings in the present case. If the CPN was aware that the man's apparent wishes about the state of his accommodation, for example, might not have to be followed, the CPN might have been more ready to communicate the deteriorating situation to other professionals involved in his care.

The Local Government Ombudsman and the NHS Ombudsman published their joint report on a complaint made against 5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Trust and St Helens MBC on 4 July 2011 (ref: HC 1355).

Employment and Support Allowance appeals video

Source: Benefits and Work

Back in March we wrote about the Ministry of Justice's (MoJ) employment and support allowance appeals video on Youtube. The video was pulled after less than a week, on the orders of senior officials.

Independent benefits expert Neil Bateman discovered that the video was taken down after employment minister Chris Grayling emailed the ministry complaining about, amongst other things, the fact that it told claimants:

- that they are twice as likely to win their appeal if they appear in person rather than having a paper hearing;
- that the DWP doesn't normally send a representative to the hearing;
- to send additional evidence to the tribunal, when Grayling wants it sent to the DWP.

Yesterday, three months later, the video reappeared and, to their credit, after their initial panic MoJ officials seem to have left it unaltered. The video is actually reasonably informative and reassuring for people who have no previous experience of appeal tribunals.

Normally, however, MoJ videos get very little attention – one has had just two views and few of the 120 videos on the MoJ channel gets more than a few hundred views.

If Grayling hadn't intervened this video would probably also have remained largely unseen. Now, however, we're asking Benefits and Work newsletter readers to make it the most popular video the MoJ has ever produced. The current record

holder has had 4,269 views and the ESA video currently stands at 1,063.

So, please, make Grayling mad by taking a look at the video and passing the link on to anyone you think might benefit:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=4L8EPHDjeqU

Scope policy and campaigns

Towards a destination still unknown – the impact of the Government’s reforms on disabled people

Just over two years ago the Chancellor George Osborne stood up in the House of Commons and set out the Government’s own, self-styled, ‘Emergency Budget’. In doing so, he put into motion the most radical programme of reform to the welfare benefits system since its creation. Since this time, the Coalition Government has initiated £18 billion worth of cuts to the welfare state; at the same time, it reduced the funding settlements for local authorities across the country – a move that will continue to have profound effects for social care provision and other services.

It was clear from the early days of the Coalition that the Government’s deficit reduction programme would have severe – if unintended – consequences for disabled people. Mindful of this, and fuelled by our joint belief that these effects needed to be mapped, monitored and scrutinised, Scope and the independent think tank Demos set out to map the impact on disabled people and bring their plight to light. In October 2010, we launched the first report: [*Destination Unknown*](#).

For two years, we have been following six disabled families as the Government’s full programme of welfare reform has crystallised – culminating in the Welfare Reform Act 2012. Their stories reveal – with striking clarity – the depth and breadth of the impact cuts to state support and services are having on their lives. Since starting the project we have seen evidence of declining mental health, exacerbated by fear for the future; of physical and emotional strain, as informal carers bear the brunt of losing support from services they once relied upon. Most of all, we have seen it become increasingly difficult for disabled people to participate in everyday family and civic life.

[The fourth and final report was published last week](#) – two years on from the Emergency Budget. Among the stories set out within it is that of Aisha and her family. Aisha is four years old. She was born with Cerebral Palsy, and has

quadriplegia and epilepsy. She lives with her mother, who is her full-time carer; her father, who works; and her brothers and sisters. While the Government have asserted their commitment to families, the new report reveals that since the Emergency Budget the Government's welfare reforms have cost Aisha's families and others like hers over £30 million.

Aisha's mother struggles to look after her – and the other children – by herself. Aisha's father, who works, has had to start taking unpaid leave to help out with caring responsibilities. A few months ago he collapsed from the pressure. Aisha's sister, who is only ten years old, now helps look after the child and take her out. Problems with securing support from local services for Aisha has taken its toll on her mother's mental health and has caused her to go back onto medication for depression and anxiety. As Aisha's father is the sole earner in the family, and starts work at 5am, he is often unable to help out with caring for Aisha during the night – the 'night shift' as they call it (a term I'm sure many families up and down the country probably know all too well). Because of this, Aisha's parents have to sleep in different rooms during the whole week so that one is on duty while the other one can sleep. This, Aisha's mother says, "puts a strain on family and married life" – two things that the Government have always claimed to champion. "Time together is just gone." Aisha's story is not unusual; there are many families all across the country just like hers, experiencing the same things.

By exposing the real life consequences – both intended and not – of the Government's reforms, the *Destination Unknown* series has helped demonstrate how the impact of its reforms run directly counter to its own vision for stronger communities that support families and has highlighted the real and urgent need for a rethink.

The impact so far has been profound. Most concerning of all, however, is the knowledge that worse almost certainly lies ahead. The respected [Institute of Fiscal Studies estimates](#) that as much as 80% of the cuts are still to come. On June 22nd 2010, the Government first embarked upon a new and radically different path. Two years later, and it still remains to be seen as to where this will lead.

Read the full report at:

www.demos.co.uk/publications/destinationunknownsummer2012

New study of carer dads reveals shock findings

An eye-opening new survey of UK dad carers provides a dramatic insight into their experiences of looking after disabled children. It illustrates the shocking truth that fathers aren't getting the support they need and are left feeling marginalised.

According to the survey, dads:

- feel greater financial pressure as carers – the vast majority worry about money and many feel they are seen only as the breadwinner
- do not get support from colleagues or bosses
- 15 percent say their workplace does not even know they have a disabled child
- are unaware of their right to request flexible working – four in ten do not know this is an option
- do not fully understand their child's condition – four in ten do not fully understand their child's disability and a third are not confident in caring for their child
- suffer relationship problems – two-thirds say their relationship is suffering
- want more support – eight in ten feel alone but only about four in ten get help from support groups or professionals.

Improving the situation for dads with disabled children

The survey also asked dads about how the situation could be improved and what could be changed to ensure they have the support they need.

- Appointments outside working hours.
- Meetings, medical appointments, courses and support sessions are often held during the working week and dads in employment find it difficult to get time off. If more of these could be held at evenings and weekends, dads could have more involvement. This also applies to things such as coffee mornings, social clubs or play sessions to allow dads to interact with other families.
- Forums for dads.
- Help and advice on day-to-day issues targeted at dads, perhaps in a forum or one-to-one basis. In particular, dads want suggestions that are based on their situation, not hard and fast rules that might not work for them.

Read more from the Survey completed by Scope and Netbuddy at:

www.scope.org.uk/news/dads-survey

Scope social change research – we'd like to speak to you!

At Scope we're currently carrying out a research project to understand disabled people's views about the types of social changes that would make their lives better.

We want to know about the good and also the difficult experiences disabled people have in their day-to-day lives, and what could help prevent those difficult experiences, or make them more positive.

This research is really important as it will provide compelling evidence about which areas of life disabled people feel most need to change, and why.

How can I take part?

We would like to interview people over the phone at a time or date that suits you during July. The interview will last 45 minutes, and you will receive £20 voucher to thank you for sharing your experiences with us.

To fill the gaps we currently have, we are particularly interested in talking to individuals with physical and sensory impairments, mental health impairments, and men.

If you would like to take part, please contact Sanah Sheikh, research manager at our research partner OPM, on ssheikh@opm.co.uk or 020 7239 7803.

Please do also pass this information on to friends, family or others in your organisation who you think would like to take part.

Training

Rightsnet welfare rights training

Source: Lasa

Half day training

- Housing benefit reform – 26 July
- Personal Independence Payments – 22 August
- Universal Credit – 22 August

Full day courses

- ESA problem areas and migration from Incapacity Benefit – 17 July
- Tax credits essentials – 27 July

For more information or to book a place on any of the training events visit:

DIAL Network training and development

As part of the new DIAL Network membership offer we would like to improve the training and professional development available to DIAL groups. If you have any thoughts about opportunities that would be particularly appealing to your group please do let us know.

As highlighted before, Suzi Mackenzie is keen to get your feedback, so please contact her on suzi.mackenzie@scope.org.uk or on 0207 619 7305

Publications and resources

Fair access to justice? Support for vulnerable defendants in the criminal courts

Source: Prison Reform Trust

Fair Access to Justice? prepared by Jenny Talbot for frontline staff in the criminal justice system and the NHS, explains how people with a learning disability who have to appear in court as a victim or witness are given extra support or 'special measures' to help them understand and cope with the process.

Access the full report here:

www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Publications/vw/1/ItemID/156

Film: 'Sentence trouble' calls for young defendants with communication needs to have an intermediary

Source: TACinterconnections

- The Communication Trust has made this film for youth justice practitioners working with young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).
- Sentence Trouble has been produced to improve the skills and confidence of youth offending teams, lawyers, secure estate staff, magistrates and the police so they are able to recognise SLCN and reflect on their own communication skills.
- It contains the views of experts such as Diz Minnitt from The Association of Youth Offending Team Managers and Haringey magistrate, Linda Logan.

- The film makes a strong case for better communication skills within the youth justice workforce and calls for changes in the law to ensure young defendants with SLCN have the same rights as witnesses to an intermediary, who can support them to communicate with a police officer or judge.

You can view the film here: www.sentencetrouble.info/film

Events next month

1 – 31 July [Sickle Cell Awareness Month](#)

9 – 15 July [National Transplant Week](#)

15 July [Disability Awareness Day](#)

24 July [Samaritans Awareness Day](#)

28 July [World Hepatitis Day](#)

Get in touch

Do you have something to tell the network?

This is your newsletter and we are always happy to hear from you. If you have something you'd like to share before next month's newsletter, please contact us. We'll do our best to add it in.

We also welcome your thoughts on this newsletter – does it meet your needs? Is there anything you'd like to see more or less of? Do you like this format or would you prefer an email with links?

Suzi Mackenzie

Email: suzi.mackenzie@scope.org.uk

Call: 020 8619 7305

www.scope.org.uk

Scope

6 Market Road

London

N7 9PW

Please note we have made every effort in this mailing to use language in keeping with the social model of disability. However, some terms used 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.