

Bulletin



www.familycarers.org.uk

Tel: 07747 460727

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Welcome to this week's Bulletin from the National Family Carer Network. You are receiving this because you are members of our organisation. If you no longer wish to subscribe, please contact info@familycarers.org.uk.

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National Family Carer Network
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NFCN is an umbrella organisation that aims to promote the voice and rights of family carers supporting a person with a LD. Its membership comprises both organisations and individuals but we cannot be responsible at any time for the views expressed by our members unless explicitly promoted by us.

National

1. Carers Rights Day: Friday 29th November 2013

This year, Carers Rights Day is taking place on Friday 29th November and the theme is **'rights, advice, support'**, focusing on ensuring that carers understand their rights and get access to good quality advice that can support them to care.

Carers Rights Day aims to make carers aware of different kinds of practical support that could support them to care, so this year, our organiser's handbook has more information on how different kinds of technology can benefit carers by; monitoring things to provide the peace of mind that lets a carer get a good night's sleep or to juggle work and care, or enabling carers to connect with other carers and access support and information online.

For full details, and to find out more about how carers' rights and entitlements will be changing, please visit the Carers UK website [here](#).

2. Making health and social care information accessible

NHS England has begun a programme of work to develop and implement an Information Standard for accessible information. An Information Standard is a framework of requirements and recommendations which health and social care organisations must follow, like a formal guidance document.

This guidance will tell organisations how they should ensure that disabled patients/service users and, where appropriate, carers, receive information in languages and formats that they can understand, and that they receive appropriate support to help them to communicate, which may include advocacy.

A short Easy Read introduction to this work, aimed at patients and patient groups, is available here:

[Accessible Information Introduction](#)

To find out more, and also how you can share your views about the plans for making health and social care information accessible, please visit the NHS England website [here](#).

3. CQC State of Care 2012/2013

Between April 2012 and March 2013, the [CQC](#) carried out 35,000 inspections of health and social care services in England. The recently published State of Care report brings together their findings about the quality of these services.

To read the report, click [here](#).

4. People with learning disabilities debate issues in Parliament

A group of people with learning disabilities debated issues including hate crime and the 'bedroom tax' at a recent 'Ask the Question' session held in Westminster.

Thirty people with learning disabilities and autism attended the session in Portcullis House, which was the first 'Ask Your Question' designed just for people with learning disabilities. It was organised by service provider Dimensions as part of Parliament Week.

The event was chaired by Pete Le Grys, director of Photo Symbols and accessibility expert. The panel comprised MP Dame Anne Begg, autism awareness campaigner Kevin Healey, social affairs journalist Saba Salman and human rights lawyer Christopher Stanley.

Graphic facilitators worked through the session to demonstrate through images and words what the debate covered, making the event truly accessible.

For more information about the event, please visit the Dimensions website [here](#).

5. Carers' Rights and Financial Support: radio programme

BBC Radio 4's Money Box programme this week featured a range of questions and advice on carers' rights, entitlements, and financial support.

The presenter, Paul Lewis, was joined by Jean French, Head of Advice and Information, at Carers UK, Marian Gell, Welfare Benefits Advisor at Contact a Family, and Lucy McLynn, Employment Partner, at Bates Wells and Braithwaite.

The programme is available to listen to on the BBC iPlayer [here](#).

6. Disability History Month 22nd November - 22nd December

Inclusion North is celebrating [UK Disability History Month](#) by having a live broadcast across the internet on Wednesday 4th December at 5.30pm.

The class of 2013/14 Tomorrow's Leaders will be hosting the broadcast and are inviting people to watch and give their views via the chat panel and text.

Tomorrow's Leaders are a group of people with learning disabilities that are on a nationally recognised training course run by Inclusion North to develop their skills. These skills enable them to influence practice and policy, making things better for people with learning disabilities lives across Yorkshire, the Humber and the North East.

Click [here](#) for a Disability History Month flyer. You can also read more about the live broadcast [here](#).

To watch the broadcast on 4th December, please click [here](#) to visit Inclusion North's website.

7. Secondary school admissions: Parents and carers have your say

The [Office of the Children's Commissioner \(OCC\)](#) has been told that some secondary schools in England are attempting to socially select their intake by reducing the admission of children from key groups, such as those with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

The OCC has commissioned the [National Foundation for Education Research \(NFER\)](#) to gather the views of parents and carers from key groups who have recently gone through the admissions process for secondary school in England. They would like NFER to examine whether parents and carers feel that certain schools either encouraged or discouraged them from applying for a place for their child.

If you have a child aged 11-14, and have been encouraged or discouraged to apply for a secondary school place at a particular school (or schools) in the last three years, NFER would like to hear from you.

If you would be interested in confidentially taking part in a telephone conversation, please click [here](#) to find out more.

8. Families at Breaking Point: Mencap appeal

Mencap's latest report shows that 8 out of 10 family carers have reached, or are close to reaching, breaking point due to lack of short breaks.

This week they launched their Breaking Point appeal to raise awareness of the issue and to help continue putting pressure on councils to keep these services running.

Breaking point is not the result of caring for someone with a learning disability; it is the result of constant care without a break. More than 7 out of 10 carers provide more than 15 hours of unpaid care each day. The alternative is state-funded care, which would cost the government £119 billion each year.

4 out of 10 family carers have experienced cuts to their short breaks - also known as respite - and the same number feel their short breaks services have got worse in the past 3 years. Short breaks services are delivered by local councils and give carers and people with a learning disability a break to recharge. Short breaks services across the country are being cut and this campaign aims to ensure that no family carer is left to reach breaking point, every family that needs a short break receives one, and no more short breaks services cut.

To view the full article, please visit the Mencap [website](#).

West Midlands

9. Free Health Event: Preparing for Adulthood

Monday 9th December 2013

Carrs Lane Church Centre, Carrs Lane, Birmingham, B4 7SX

Find out about the needs of young people with complex and life-threatening health conditions and how to engage better with health services in the SEND Reform programme. This event is aimed at people working in non PfA pathfinder sites. It has a particular focus on health and will be of interest to those working in child and adult health care, but is also aimed at key agencies working with children and adults, including education, social care, voluntary sector, housing and employment.

People that attend could include disabled young people, families and key decision makers from the agencies involved in transition locally (Education, Connexions, Children and Adult Social Care, Children and Adult Health, Parent Carer forum representatives).

Please click [here](#) for the flyer. For further information about the event and to book a place, please contact Kerry on Kerry@helensandersonassociates.co.uk or 0161 442 8271.

North West

10. Disco nights for people with disabilities

Every Wednesday 7pm – 9pm

Macclesfield United Reformed Church, Park Green, Macclesfield, SK11 7NA

This regular disco night takes place every Wednesday from 7pm and is open to people of all ages. There will also be festive events throughout December, including a Christmas Party on Wednesday 18th.

The admission price is £2 per service user (free for carers and staff). There is a large free car park and the church has disabled toilet facilities and wide access spaces. There is a cafe onsite selling hot & cold drinks/snacks on the night. They also have a number of helpers and support workers who will be there on the night to help and support you in any way they can.

If you would like more details, please contact the event organiser, Matthew Hill, on 07787 966621 or disability.disco@gmail.com.

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If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please submit articles in plain English of no more than 230 words to info@familycarers.org.uk. We reserve the right to edit the articles to fit the newsletter whilst retaining the overall information. Due to the number of articles we receive we cannot guarantee inclusion of contributions.