

Bulletin



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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. DLF's Simple Electronic Aid Library

The [Disabled Living Foundation](#) (DLF), the national charity providing impartial information on daily living equipment, has set up a Library of simple electronic aids funded by a grant from the Department of Health. The library has been piloted in selected areas and is now going national across England. End users, carers, or health care professionals can borrow the equipment in the library for two weeks.

DLF has found that those who could potentially benefit from using electronic aids can be deterred from buying the aids as they are uncertain whether the device will work for them, or they may lack confidence in their ability to operate it. People sometimes buy equipment from magazines with the best intentions; however it often ends up not being used much as it never quite did what the user, or well meaning relative, expected. As a result a lot of money is wasted on equipment that was never quite right for the individual user or individual situation. Having a chance to test these devices in their home environment will allow users to decide whether or not the device is worth obtaining. They will have time to try different settings, see whether ranges are compatible with the practical layout of their home environments, and evaluate whether the technology will benefit their day-to-day life. If they do encounter any difficulties operating the equipment during the loan period DLF's occupational therapists will provide telephone support.

DLF's simple electronic aid library stocks equipment which can be borrowed for 2 weeks free of charge. These items broadly cover three main categories:

- memory prompts and reminders including prompts that can be played in a sequence
- devices such as pagers to notify a carer within the same house that someone may require assistance
- small electronic devices designed for users with reduced hearing or low vision or those who are blind (including magnifiers, item locators, colour detectors, talking clocks and item identifiers).

The library's range of equipment can be viewed online www.dlf.org.uk/library, or you can email library@dlf.org.uk or phone 020 7289 6111 (option 5) to have a catalogue sent out. Items can be requested online or over the phone. DLF send the equipment out by recorded delivery, and the person borrowing for the two weeks must also return it to DLF via recorded delivery, which usually costs £3-£5. This is the only cost to the user although a deposit for the value of the item is held until it is returned.

When posting the item DLF include an impartial list of suppliers that the user can purchase the item from, if they so wish, after the end of the loan. Alternatively, the user may decide it is not suitable and therefore reach their decision without having to pay for the equipment.

DLF currently has about 50+ different products in stock, and will be expanding their content in the coming weeks based on customer feedback/requests.

2. Access to banking for people with a learning disability: report

[Dosh](#), a not-for-profit organisation that supports people with a learning disability to be more independent and have more control over their money, has recently published a report: *Access to banking for people with a learning disability*. The report highlights a number of current problems which make banking difficult for people with a learning disability.

Issues range from providing proof of identity, to accessing money, and getting the right support from banks.

You can find out more on the Dosh [website](#).

Click [here](#) for the easy read summary and [here](#) for the easy read full report.

3. Free 'employing a PA' events

[Disability Rights UK](#) are working together with the [Low Income Tax Reform Group](#) to run a series of half day events exploring the tax implications of employing a personal assistant to meet health or social needs.

These free events are aimed at disabled people employing PA's, health and/ or social care professionals and independent living support services. You will be able to get the latest information on employer obligations, employed/self-employed, real time information, and helpful information and advice.

Places will be given on a first come first served basis.

To register your interest, please contact Karen Earl: Karen.earl@disabilityrightsuk.org or call 07411 067367.

For further information about the events, please contact Sue Bott: Sue.bott@disabilityrightsuk.org or call 020 7566 0127.

Click [here](#) for all the dates and venues and [here](#) for the flyer, which includes the agenda.

4. Blog post: How Asperger's reignited a passion for art

The Ouch blog from BBC news has recently featured an interview with artist Raj Singh Tattal whose life and art changed once he was diagnosed with Asperger's.

You can read the interview on the Ouch blog [here](#).

5. ‘Bedroom tax five’ will fight on after ‘baffling’ appeal court defeat

The [Disability News Service](#) has published an article on the recent court of appeal ruling that the new housing benefit regulations are lawful.

Five disabled people, who face losing their homes because of the much-criticised “bedroom tax”, lost their high court case against the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) last summer, but subsequently won permission to appeal.

The court ruled that the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) regulations – referred to by the government as the spare room subsidy removal (SRSR) policy – do discriminate against some disabled people, but that this discrimination is justified, and therefore lawful.

The housing benefit regulations introduced last April mean that tenants in social housing are punished financially if they are assessed as “under-occupying” their homes, with about two-thirds of those affected disabled people.

You can read the full article on the Disability News Service [website](#).

6. ‘A Real Home a Real Life’: short film

[Inclusive Films](#) have produced a short film ‘A Real Home a Real Life’ featuring eight people with learning disabilities. It shows the kinds of support they receive and the varied ways they have gained a real home of their own and are living their own lives.

You can watch the film [here](#).

It is also available as a DVD, free of charge. If you would like a copy, please contact Peter Taylor by [email](#) or telephone 0121 455 0485.

7. Petition reminder: Stop the False Economy of Cutting Benefits for Disabled and Vulnerable Adults. Ring Fence Long Term Funding for Their Support

A group of Surrey-based parents are petitioning David Cameron, Nick Clegg, and Ed Miliband to work together to stop cutting benefits for disabled and vulnerable adults in society.

The group has started the petition because of concerns that their disabled (adult) children’s funding comes entirely from benefits and social services.

To find out more about the campaign and to sign the petition, please visit the Change.Org website [here](#).

London

8. Conference: 'Taking forward the findings of the Confidential Inquiry into premature deaths of people with learning disabilities: what is happening?'

Friday 28th March 9.30am – 4.30pm
Park Plaza Victoria Hotel, London

In March 2013, the Confidential Inquiry into premature deaths of people with learning disabilities reported its findings to the Department of Health.

One year on, a number of initiatives are in place to reduce premature deaths in people with learning disabilities. This conference will share examples of actions that are happening nationally, regionally and locally to improve things for people with learning disabilities.

Costs: £50.00. The event is free to attend for people with a learning disability, their advocates and family carers.

If you think you qualify for a free place, need support with booking, or easy read information, please email Zawar Patel using the following email address:
zawar.patel@dh.gsi.gov.uk.

Please visit the website <https://cipold.eventbrite.co.uk> for full details and agenda.

9. How to achieve a successful transition to adulthood: Parent/Carer Seminar

Thursday 27th March 9.30am to 2.00pm
Resource for London, 356 Holloway Road, London, N7 6PA

[Ambitious About Autism](#) are running a parent and carer seminar to look at the support available to help with the transition to adulthood.

As well as talking about options such as further education, supported employment opportunities, independent living, supported housing and respite care, it will also cover:

- Assessments you can request for transition
- The assessment process
- The type of support you and your family may be entitled to
- What to do if you are not given adequate support
- Advice on personal budgets and direct payments
- The Mental Capacity Act

Cost £10 and includes a light lunch and refreshments.
For full details and to book a place, please see the website [here](#).

West Midlands

10. Oral Health and people with learning disabilities event **Tuesday 25th March 2014** **Birmingham**

This BILD CPD Learning and Development Day is aimed at frontline staff, families and anyone interested in the oral health care of people with learning disabilities.

Costs £50+VAT and includes lunch and refreshments. Click [here](#) to visit BILD's website with more details.

North West

11. Supporting good health and wellbeing for people with learning disabilities **Friday 4th April** **Anfield Conference Centre, Anfield, Liverpool, L4 0TH**

This conference, held in partnership with [Hft](#), will discuss how technology can be used to address the challenges of prevention, detection and early intervention for health concerns in people with learning disabilities.

Many people with learning disabilities have additional health concerns that arise, not only as they grow old but throughout their lives, and they cannot always communicate their symptoms or recognise changes in their health. The event will look at the ways technology can be used to help people with learning disabilities, and those who support them, to monitor their own health and wellbeing. Building on the work of Hft, using personalised technology for independence and safety, the conference will also explore how personalised technology (PT) for health and wellbeing can be used with all groups, taking learning disability as an example to learn from.

HRH The Princess Royal will be a guest speaker at the event in her role as Patron for Hft.

For more information, please click [here](#) for the flyer and booking form. You can also find more details, and book your place, via the [website](#).

Costs: £99+VAT. Please note, bookings close on 26th March at 5.30pm.

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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.