



## Bulletin

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[www.familycarers.org.uk](http://www.familycarers.org.uk)

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'Happy New Year' to all our members.

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](mailto:info@familycarers.org.uk).

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## National

### **1. Social care staff urged to blow the whistle on abuse**

Social care staff and employers are being urged to blow the whistle on abuse and poor practice [through a helpline formerly open to NHS staff only](#).

The helpline is targeted at those who have concerns about the services they work in but are unsure how to raise them or fear the repercussions of reporting them internally.

The free number - 08000 724725 - can be accessed from 8am to 6pm on weekdays, with an out-of-hours answering service, and the helpline service is now provided by Mencap.

"This initiative will give NHS staff and social care workers the confidence to report abuse or raise concerns about patient and service user safety without fear of victimisation or personal reprisal," said Mencap chief executive Mark Goldring.

The barriers to whistle-blowing were highlighted by the [Winterbourne View](#) scandal. Former nurse Terry Bryan reported concerns about poor practice at the learning disability hospital to his managers, and to the Care Quality Commission, but neither acted on his representations.

## **2. Carers 'disproportionately hit' by government cuts**

Carers will be disproportionately hit by government benefit cuts over the coming years, research published today shows.

Tax and benefit changes from 2010-15 will result in a real terms drop of 6% in net income for households where a person claims carer's allowance, compared with a 4% fall for other households, found an analysis by the Institute for Fiscal Studies, commissioned by the [Family and Parenting Institute](#).

[Click here](#) to read this article from Communitycare.co.uk

## **3. Research to help combat stigma- please help!**

We are currently doing an online survey in regards attitudes towards people with learning disabilities. The study aims to try and assess the best way to tackle stigma in the general public.

Please could you take the time to complete the survey, or, maybe more importantly, send the survey to those who have less contact with people with learning disabilities:

You are invited to take part in an online survey that involves watching a brief film about people with learning disabilities. Feedback from people who have already taken part suggests they found the film very interesting and thought provoking. By taking part in this important piece of research you will help us understand more about the general public's attitudes towards those with learning disabilities. Please let us know what you think!!!!

- Taking part means you will be entered in a prize draw to win £100 in Amazon vouchers (or a company of your choice).

Click on this link now to start the survey: <https://opinio.ucl.ac.uk/s?s=14089>

This survey is run under the watchful eye of University College London and has the university's full ethical approval. Your details will be automatically separated from your survey responses on receipt and your responses are entirely anonymous.

Thank you very much for your help in advance, and please forward this message to anyone else who would be willing to help.

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Centre for Health Service Research in Intellectual Disabilities, University College London.

#### **4. WELD blog**

Distinctions between capacity and competence in people with learning disabilities in the Mental Capacity Act.

[Click here](#) to read the article on the WELD blog (Working with evidence about learning disabilities).

### **West Midlands**

#### **5. Free accredited short courses**

For people with a learning disability who are unemployed and not using day services, and live in the Black Country - part of the West Midlands.

Flyer <http://www.choiceforum.org/docs/learn.pdf>

Contact us for a course application form:  
Book early - Only 10 places on each course!  
[mail@building-bridges-training.org](mailto:mail@building-bridges-training.org)  
0121 559 9197

National Family Carer Network  
07747 460727  
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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.*