

# Bulletin



National  
Family Carer  
Network

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

Tel: 07747 460727

5<sup>th</sup> December 2013

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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](mailto: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. Learning Disability Today - NFCN update

On Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November, The National Family Carer Network joined the FPLD, Hft and a number of other organisations, in the Families Zone at this year's Learning Disability Today conference. The aim of the Families Zone was to share knowledge and support for family members of people with learning disabilities, and was very well attended.

## 2. Carers Rights Day - resources

Last Friday was Carers Rights Day which focused on the theme of **'rights, advice, support'**, and Carers UK produced a useful Carers Rights Guide, which outlines carers' essential rights, and signposts what financial and practical help is available. Carers can get a free copy of the guide by telephoning the Carers UK advice line on 0808 808 7777. You can also download it for free via the website [here](#), along with a Quick Guide to Benefits.

A number of other carers' resources can also be found on the website [here](#).

## 3. CQC: A fresh start for the regulation and inspection of adult social care

The CQC has recently published its new strategy "A Fresh Start" which identifies five key areas of work and next steps for the organisation:

These key priorities are:

1. Develop changes to how the CQC monitors, inspects and regulates adult social care services.
2. Develop a ratings system for adult social care services.
3. Develop an approach to monitoring the finances of some adult social care providers.
4. Support CQC staff to deliver.
5. Build confidence in the CQC.

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

## 4. Green Light Toolkit 2013

The National Development Team for Inclusion has recently launched its Green Light Toolkit: a guide to auditing and improving mental health services so that they are effective in supporting people with autism and people with learning disabilities.

For more details and to download the toolkit, please visit the NDTi [website](#).

## **5. Family of teenager with disabilities denied extra support by Calderdale Council**

Calderdale Council failed to produce a care plan for a girl with severe disabilities – potentially leaving her family without adequate support, the [Local Government Ombudsman](#) has found

The teenager, who has severe physical and learning disabilities, requires constant supervision and is dependent on her parents. But because the council failed to assess the girl's needs, and those of her parents, properly, the lack of support has placed a considerable strain on the family and her parents' health has suffered as a result.

In September 2012, the family complained to the LGO that, despite their daughter's worsening condition the council refused their request to increase their direct payments to fund additional hours of care. That request for extra help was turned down because Calderdale Council had never completed a core assessment and so could not produce a care plan identifying the girl's needs on which to base a sound decision.

The council has now agreed to appoint an independent social worker to assess the child's needs and those of her parents and produce a care plan that complies with statutory guidance.

It has also agreed to review its decision not to pay the child's father to provide care for his daughter and also agreed to pay the family £5,000 in recognition of their distress and the time it has taken to bring the complaint.

The council will also make an additional payment to the family at a level to be agreed with the Ombudsman, if after an assessment the council identifies services that the family were entitled to, but have not received.

The council has also agreed to review its practices so that its assessment of disabled children fulfils its statutory duties and meet the requirements of government guidance.

To read the full article, please visit the Local Government Ombudsmen website [here](#).

## **6. Learning disabilities good practice project report**

This project was completed under an action from Transforming Care: A national response to Winterbourne View Hospital Report, written by Jo Hough (National Valuing Families Forum), who led the project with Kerry Martin (National Forum of People with Learning Disabilities).

The report gives people who commission, design and deliver services a better understanding of how to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities. More than 80 examples were received, and 6 services were selected because they demonstrated important indicators of good practice.

They are described in detail in the report, which can be read [here](#).

## 7. Guardian article: Headteachers left confused over SEN funding rules

Louise Brock was keen for her daughter Ruby, who has Down's syndrome, to go to a mainstream school. But finding somewhere that could offer her the support she needed was difficult.

"I had to take her out of one school because she wasn't writing her name, her speech wasn't developing and they [staff] were ringing me every day, asking me to go into school because they couldn't handle her behaviour. I felt as if they were making it as difficult for me as possible so that I'd take her out of the school, which is what I did eventually."

Eight-year-old Ruby is now thriving at Bromstone primary school in Broadstairs, Kent, where the headteacher, Nigel Utton, is committed to inclusion. The school currently supports 16 children with statements of educational need (given to children who have been assessed by their local authority as requiring high levels of support), including several with autism, and visual and hearing impairments.

But, as Utton has discovered, being inclusive comes at a cost. Under new funding rules for special educational needs, introduced in April, schools are expected to fund the first £6,000 of the resources needed for children with statements from their overall SEN budget, when previously there would have been additional funds available from the local authority.

For schools that have higher than average numbers of children with statements, it is proving to be financially crippling. Around 4.8% of children at Bromstone have statements – almost three times the national average.

To read the full news article on the Guardian website, please click [here](#).

## 8. “When I grow up I want to be...” - positive stories of people with learning disabilities in work

[Preparing for Adulthood](#) has produced a brochure which tells positive stories of people with learning disabilities in work, and shares resources and ideas to help you celebrate your child's potential. The brochure also aims to ensure that support professionals working with your child think in the same positive way as you do. You can read the brochure [here](#) and you can also find more Preparing for Adulthood resources on their website [here](#).

## 9. easy on the i - new seasonal symbols added

The easy on the i website provides free access to a regularly updated database of accessible images, symbols, artwork and photographs. They have recently added new images to reflect the holiday season, including plenty of Christmas and winter imagery, symbols for Hanukkah, and many others.

To access the images, click [here](#) to visit the website where you can register for free.

## 10. Blog article: Dying without due care and attention

The government is compelled to do something about Mid Staffs and other ugly failures of care, but legislation is not the answer.

The new offence of wilful neglect under which careless or callous managers, doctors and nurses now face five years in jail will not save lives, improve care or instil compassion. Nor is it likely to result in a single prosecution.

The recommendation in the Francis report on Mid Staffs to legislate against neglect was intended to fill the gap in the law between abuse of the kind caught on camera at Winterbourne View and the passive abuse that left patients to lie in soiled bedding or without a drink of water.

With eyewitness accounts or secret filming, the former is relatively easy to prosecute, but the latter is much trickier. There is no defence for the physical abuse of a patient or care home resident, but standing up a case of failure of care in an understaffed ward will be fraught with problems.

The other question raised by the government's action is why we need a new law at all. What is the difference between wilful neglect and criminal negligence? Are we seeking to punish the action, or failure to act, or the intent? Is it the neglect we most object to or the wilfulness?

There are three questions you need to ask about any new law: is it necessary, is it workable and will it do more good than harm?

The government has already acknowledged that it expects only a very small number of prosecutions for wilful neglect, which suggests that the answer to the first two questions is no. The third question depends on how much you believe in the deterrent power of legislation in offences of this kind.

At least the new law satisfies the need for proportionality. For the crime of doing nothing, we have a law that will also do nothing.

To read the full blog article by Julian Patterson, please visit the NHS Networks website [here](#).

## 11. Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education - "Special" education revisited

Nottingham University, Graphic Inclusion, and CSIE have collaboratively produced an animated story of how schooling for disabled children, or those identified as having special educational needs, has evolved over time. It provides an overview of 100 years in 15 minutes, and shows how separate schools came into being at a time when disabled people were thought to have no place in mainstream society. It also presents recent concerns about the education system in England and shows how different ways of understanding disability are reflected in the law and in the way education is being shaped.

To watch the animation, please click [here](#).

## 12. Improving provision for offenders with learning disabilities and difficulties

In partnership with the British Institute of Learning Disabilities, the National Autistic Society and Dyslexia Action, [3SC](#) has grant funding from the Secretary of State for Justice until March 2014. Their project will produce the following outcomes:

- A single web-based resource identifying a variety of approaches to improving outcomes for offenders with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD);
- More community based services and VCS organisations working in partnership with prisons and probation at local level in support of offenders with LDD;
- Prison and probation staff feel empowered to deliver a service which meets the needs of offenders with learning disabilities and difficulties;
- Improved sharing of knowledge and best practice between prisons, probation trusts and VCS organisations that support better outcomes for offenders

Whilst there is no quantification of the number of people with LDD in the criminal justice system, there are consistent reports of a significant proportion of offenders with low levels of literacy, numeracy and people with English as a second language. Their literature review highlights the amount of complex written information received by each prisoner and the significant barrier this poses for an individual with low literacy skills and particularly those with LDD. A common theme in the HMIP Expectations is that prisoners are not only given the right information, but that it is accessible and understood.

To find out more about the project, please visit the 3SC website [here](#).

## 13. Autism Friendly Films in December

Autism Friendly Screenings are mainstream films shown in a sensory friendly environment. Lights are on low, sound is turned down, trailers are omitted and people can bring their own food, make noise, and move around the cinema as they feel comfortable.

The films will be shown at participating [ODEON](#), [Vue](#), [Cineworld](#) and [Showcase](#) cinemas across the country, and each cinema chain hosts one Autism Friendly Screening each month.

Upcoming screenings for December are as follows:

Showcase cinemas will show *Free Birds* on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December at 10.00am.

ODEON cinemas will show *Frozen* on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December at 11.30am

Vue will show *Rise of the Guardians* on Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> December at 10.00am.

For full details, how to book, and to find your nearest participating cinema, please visit the Dimensions [website](#).

## South East

### 14. Yellow Submarine Activity Leader Vacancy

**£18,500 - £20,500 plus benefits (full time post, 12 month contract)**

**Based from Oxford**

[Yellow Submarine](#) is a charity which organises residential holidays, day activities, and employment and training opportunities for young people and adults with a learning disability. They are recruiting a new team member to join them in an entry level management role. This role will include being responsible for the welfare of groups of vulnerable young people and adults, managing sessional staff and volunteers, significant time away from home and driving a 12 seater minibus. Candidates should have a UK driving license and will be required to complete a DBS check.

For full details and an application pack, please visit the website [here](#). The deadline for applications is 12<sup>th</sup> January 2014.

## North West

### 15. Choice Support Families Event

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2014**

**Central Manchester venue**

[Choice Support](#) is holding a free event for families across the North of England on 20<sup>th</sup> February. The day will feature a series of national speakers, plus 8 'clinics'. Participants will be able to choose 2 clinics from the list of 8 below on booking (these are 1 to 1 sessions):

Clinic 1: Advocacy

Clinic 2: Recruiting and managing personal assistants

Clinic 3: Payroll and Managing a budget.

Clinic 4: Legal questions

Clinic 5: Housing

Clinic 6: Benefits

Clinic 7: Personal budgets

Clinic 8: Health

Click [here](#) to find out more about the day and the information clinic options.

Booking is essential via Janet Cobb. Please email [janet@jan-net.co.uk](mailto:janet@jan-net.co.uk) or telephone 07980 754448 to book a place.

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