

The newsletter of Community Living
www.cl-initiatives.co.uk

Campaigning for the rights of people with learning disabilities

PIP – a 'stupid cut' that will mean more people will need help from their local authority

Rosemary Trustam explains

The most devastating change to benefits affecting people with disabilities will be the replacement of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) with the Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

Government figures estimated that changing from DLA to PIP will save 20 per cent. However, the change in criteria for this disability benefit is likely to increase costs on the local authority and undermine hard-won independence from care support among the learning disability population – so costing more than any savings made. The Campaign for A Fair Society calls these 'stupid cuts'.

'Stupid Cuts'

The impact of the changes show those losing benefits are likely to pay less in care charges (though they may need

more care support), whilst those gaining will just then pay higher care charges. The only cash gainers are likely to be the better off who already pay full care costs to the local authority.

Other losers are those people with disabilities on low DLA who currently manage without local authority help because of the DLA income and pass-ported benefits. Without these, the level of income loss is likely to push them into substantial or critical need and hence in need of local authority help to manage. The stupidity will not only be no public money saved – just shifting it between groups whilst increasing care costs beyond any savings – but also in the damage to people currently coping who will then need care support. But are there any ways to save money which better support people?

'Smart cuts'

An example of a 'smart cut' is when two compatible people from different services who regularly attend the same event share a taxi and alternate support. As well as saving money this also improves people's lives and could mean they don't always need support.

Another example is the use of assistive technology to manage risk such as a falls monitor for someone who has epileptic fits, or night alarms linked to a call centre to reduce the need for sleep-overs and increase independence. People can be trained to call for help using pre-dialled phone numbers.

Send your examples

Why not support the Campaign by sending your examples of stupid or smart cuts for the Campaign to share on their website at: info@campaignforafairsociety.com

An enduring sense of loss

What it's like for parents with learning disabilities to lose their children into care

"A group of eleven research group members had had a combined total of fourteen children removed through child care proceedings in the previous fifteen years. None of the group had children still living with them apart from one mother with her teenage daughter.

Several of the group members, after having their first children removed, then met new partners and had further children, some of whom were also later removed. It was evident that this had a devastating emotional impact on all the parents and the enduring sense of loss continued to dominate their lives.

The affection the parents continued to have for their children

was very evident; for example one father would buy regular gifts for his children even though he had very limited income and had no contact with them...."

Read the rest of this article by Liz Tilly of Building Bridges on the *Community Living* web site:

www.cl-initiatives.co.uk

New helpline for victims of Winterbourne View

Community Living sponsor Respond has been awarded funding by the Department of Health to provide emotional support to people with learning disabilities who were abused at Winterbourne View. Minister of Care and Support Norman Lamb said:

"Following the horrific events shown in the BBC Panorama programme in 2011, I have met with families whose loved ones were patients at Winterbourne View hospital. I know the deep distress suffered by both the people with learning disabilities who were patients at the hospital and their families. I am pleased that my Department has been able to provide help to Respond to enable them to provide specialist support to those people and families. I know of the valuable work of Respond in supporting people with learning disabilities and family carers who have suffered abuse or trauma".

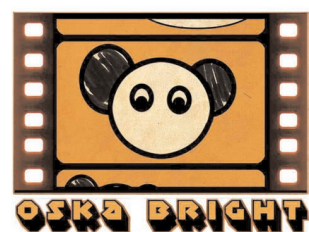
Former patients, family members and friends can ring the new Winterbourne View Helpline: on 0808 808 0700. The helpline is free and will be open every Thursday from 10 am – 4pm.

Once upon a time there were three blokes...

This blog is by Jo Clare, CEO of Three Cs

Once upon a time there were three blokes. One was blind, one had autism, all three had learning disabilities. The odds on 'living happily ever after' might have been better if the labels stopped there. All three had mental health and challenging behaviour labels. And all three had a reputation, shaped by words like 'forensic' and 'dangerous', the stickiest labels of all. All three were in-patients in NHS funded assessment and treatment units – like the infamous Castlebeck's Winterbourne View – and/or equivalent secure residential units.

Find out what happened to them at <http://t.co/48noSZUa57>



OSKA BRIGHT FILM FESTIVAL

GET YOUR ENTRIES IN BY TUESDAY 30 APRIL

The 6th international festival of short films made by people with learning disabilities invites submissions for the 2013 festival.

The festival is looking for films and digital media that are under 10 minutes long. They can be in any genre, from live action or animation to documentary or dance-film. Films can be made by groups or individuals in the UK or abroad and they must have learning disabled people in control.

The deadline for entries is Tuesday 30 April 2013 and the Festival takes place over three days in November 2013, in Brighton.

The website www.oskabright.co.uk has full information on how to enter and an accessible on-line guide to film-making. Or you can call on 01273 234 734 or email oskabright@carousel.org.uk for an information pack.

IN THIS ISSUE OF COMMUNITY LIVING:

- Dateable Ray – love him, love his Marmite sarnies
- Get the vote out on 2 May
- Time to get to grips with Universal Credit
- Can Assistive Technology replace night wake staff?
- Involving families can transform lives
- When is 'ordinary residence' ordinary?

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