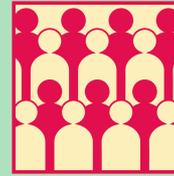


Bulletin



National
Family Carer
Network

www.familycarers.org.uk

Tel: 07747 460727

20th June 2013

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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. DWP to launch Personal Independence Payment mobility consultation

The [DWP](#) is giving notice of a further consultation on the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), as part of the on-going process of engagement through the introduction of the new benefit. The new PIP assessment has been designed to target support on those who need it most – those individuals who face the greatest barriers to participating in society.

However, the department has received significant feedback from disabled people and their organisations that they want a further opportunity to comment on the finalised assessment criteria rules around the mobility component. That is why it is now giving notice of a further consultation to be launched late June. DWP has already announced they will be carrying out an independent review in 2014 and will consider its findings before reassessing the majority of existing DLA claimants.

Claims for PIP will continue to be processed under the current benefit rules until the outcomes of the consultation are decided. Individuals should continue to claim PIP as normal.

The consultation will be launched before the end of June 2013.

2. ‘Serious concerns’ over Atos PIP contract promises

Atos Healthcare has broken a series of firm pledges that helped it win a £184 million disability assessment contract, [Disability News Service](#) can reveal.

It comes as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) rolls out the assessments – for the new personal independence payment (PIP) – across the country. The failure by Atos to fulfil the promises it made in the tender document that won the company the contract means there will be far fewer assessment centres across the south of England and London.

Whereas the tender document states that Atos has “contractually agreed” with 22 sub-contractors for them to provide a network of 750 assessment sites across that area, this has fallen to just eight sub-contractors since the contract was signed.

But the changes will mean that many disabled people with significant mobility and care needs will face longer journeys – possibly up to 90 minutes by public transport – to reach their assessments, rather than the maximum of 60 minutes promised by Atos when it bid successfully for the contract. Disabled campaigners say the revelations raise serious concerns about the tendering process, and how far Atos has been able to keep the promises it made in its tender document.

To read the full document on the Disability news website, click [here](#).

3. CQC: One in nine reluctant to speak out about poor care

Research carried out by England's health and social care regulator the Care Quality Commission has shown that one in nine people would be reluctant to speak out about poor care.

Of 1005 people surveyed by CQC, 11% said they would be unlikely to raise a concern or complain about poor care. The main reasons suggested for why people wouldn't speak up were - not wanting to be thought of as a trouble maker (26%); that it wouldn't make a difference (25%) and that members of staff were so stretched that complaining wouldn't help (15%). A smaller number (11%) said fear their care would get worse if they spoke up.

The survey also showed that care services are not responding well to people who do speak up. More than half (55%) of those who had voiced a concern about poor care felt that their feedback wasn't welcomed and a similar number felt they hadn't received a satisfactory response (57%). Just over a third (34%) said they didn't feel they had been treated with respect while their concern was being looked into.

When asked what would persuade them to speak out, three quarters said that knowing what standard of care they have a legal right to expect would help (76%) as would being encouraged by people who are providing the care to speak up (75%). A large number (70%) also said they would be encouraged to speak up if the service routinely let people know what action they had taken in response to feedback.

The research has also shown that where people feel confident to speak out about poor care, they're also more likely to provide positive feedback when care is good (44% of those who have raised a concern or made a complaint about a service say that they have provided positive feedback on their care or treatment compared to 27% of those who have not voiced a concern or made a complaint.)

For further details, and to download the report "Fear of raising concerns about care", please click [here](#) to visit the CQC website. The CQC also want to hear your views and you can share your experiences of care services [here](#).

4. A Guide to Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)

Disabled Students' Allowance is extra money for higher education students. As a higher education student living in England, you can apply for a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) if you have a:

- disability
- long-term health condition
- mental health condition
- specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia

The [support you get](#) depends on your individual needs and not on income. For full details and how to apply, please visit the gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview>

5. Disabled People in the UK share their stories of leaving institutions

Three charities committed to upholding the rights of people with disabilities have launched a unique piece of research recently in Matlock, Derbyshire. This research highlights the needs of people with learning disabilities who are moving from large residential institutions into their own homes in the community.

The report 'Leaving Institutions - Voices for Change' makes a series of recommendations from people with learning disabilities.

Devised and researched by Disabled People's user-led organisation [CHANGE](#), the report brings home to policy makers and practitioners everywhere the importance of ensuring that the voices of people with learning disabilities are central and are heard.

This report, written by Shaun Webster, a project coordinator for CHANGE and who himself has a learning disability, brought together the experiences of a number of adults, most of whom have learning disabilities, who had themselves been through the process of moving from institutional care into community-based services.

To download a copy of the report, Leaving Institutions, Voices for CHANGE visit <http://www.changepeople.info/free-resources/>

6. Member of the Learning Disability Community Awarded MBE

The National Family Carer Network wish to congratulate Richard West for being awarded an Order of the British Empire (MBE) for his pioneering work to support people with learning disabilities.

Richard comes from a Black Minority Ethnic (BME) community and is deaf with a learning disability. His award, an MBE for services to the Arts and Disabled People, will be celebrated at a champagne reception, organised by his Circle of Friends, to celebrate this well-deserved honour.

He has supported the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities by adopting a key role within their learning disability reference group and helped to develop standards for EasyRead information. As part of Inspired Services, Richard, has worked with the UK government to develop policy for improved services, helped set up the National Forum of People with Learning Disabilities, been involved in the disabled arts programme for the Olympics 2012 and also chaired the Department of Health's National Advisory Group on Learning Disability and Ethnicity. In addition, Richard was, for many years, a member of the Department for Transport's Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC).

7. Department of Health Adult Autism Review 2013 - How to get involved

In 2010, the Adult Autism Strategy for England, *Fulfilling and rewarding lives* was launched. The Autism Strategy has five areas for action aimed at improving the lives of adults with autism:

- increasing awareness and understanding of autism;
- developing clear, consistent pathways for the diagnosis of autism;
- improving access for adults with autism to services and support;
- helping adults with autism into work; and
- enabling local partners to develop relevant services.

The Department of Health (DH) is now leading a review of the strategy to identify progress and areas of good practice, and to consider next steps about its implementation. The Department of Work and Pensions supported by the Hidden Impairments National Group (HING) is working in partnership with DH. It is supporting the review by gathering your views on local autism services, your experiences and comments on what has worked well in your area.

Autism Plus www.autismplus.org which is leading the survey on behalf of HING has over 25 years experience of supporting individuals with autism/learning disabilities and mental health diagnosis. They support people who live independently to make their own choices.

They are asking for views from individuals, parents and carers, and not just people with autism but those who have a hidden impairment that is associated with the Autistic Spectrum as a whole.

To access the on-line survey, go to:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/AutismStrategyReview> between 20th June and 9th August 2013.

If you would also like to contact the Department of Health about the review, e-mail autism@dh.gsi.gov.uk

London

8. Calling all Family Carers of people with learning disabilities from BME Communities - free BME family carer workshop Thursday 11th July 11.00 – 2.00pm Centre 404, 404 Camden Road, London, N7 0SJ

[Turning Point](#), supported by the National Family Carer Network, is holding a free BME Family Carer Workshop on 11th July. Turning Point really want to hear your views about personal services, direct payments and what the future of support should look like.

They want to know what you think about individual support, are you keen to go down this path or have you tried and it hasn't worked?

Click here to download the [flyer](#), [agenda](#), [booking form](#), and [venue map](#).

Lunch and refreshments will be provided, and travel expenses with receipts will be reimbursed.

This event is free, however booking is essential as places are limited.

To book a place, please complete the booking form above and return by email to Rachel Gibson at the National Family Carer Network: info@familycarers.org.uk.

If you have any queries, or would like more information, please ring Rachel on 07747 460727.

South West

9. Cornwall Council launches new facilities to support disabled people to access beaches in Bude

New facilities to support disabled people to access beaches and surrounding areas in Bude have been provided through an innovative partnership between Cornwall Council and local families of disabled children. The new facilities were officially opened at a special ceremony on Wednesday 29th May.

The facilities include a new ramp and railing at Widemouth Bay to provide wheelchair access onto the beach, two Accessible beach huts, new sand chairs to support access to the sand and the sea, a Changing Places facility at Summerleaze beach and a wheelchair tandem bike which can be hired from the local cycle hire shop. Four accessible bikes have also been purchased for use on the [Camel Trail](#).

The facilities, all of which are available to the public, have been designed in partnership with local families who have disabled children.

[Changing Places](#) are fully accessible toilets which contain a range of additional features and more space to meet the needs of people with disabilities. There are now 11 Changing Places facilities across Cornwall - making the Council one of the best authorities in the country for providing special changing facilities for people with disabilities in public buildings.

To read the full article, please visit the Cornwall Council website [here](#)

West Midlands

10. Coventry Mencap - Free Know Your Rights event

Thursday 11th July 2013 10.00 am to 1.00 pm

Coventry Transport Museum Millennium Place, Coventry, CV1 1JD

Are you a parent/carer of someone with a learning disability? Are you concerned about cuts to services? If yes, then come along to Coventry Mencap's Know Your Rights event for free advice from a legal expert.

The speaker from Irwin Mitchell will be Steven Cardinal, and Royal Mencap's Tony Johnson will also be speaking. Also in attendance will be representatives of the advice and information service: Mencap Direct.

To book your place, call Mencap on 0207 696 5577, email campaigns@mencap.org.uk or click here for a booking form <http://www.mencap.org.uk/know-your-rights-booking-form>. You can also find out more about the Know Your Rights events [here](#).

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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.