

Bulletin



www.familycarers.org.uk

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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.

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National Family Carer Network
Tel: 07747 460727 • www.familycarers.org.uk

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. National Family Carer Network: Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 10th December 1.00pm to 2.00pm

Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities, Colechurch House, 1 London Bridge Walk, London, SE1 2SX

The National Family Carer Network's AGM will be held on at the Tuesday 10th December at the [FPLD](#) offices in London. The AGM is open to members of the public, so if you would like to attend, please feel free to join us.

Please contact Rachel Gibson at NFCN to confirm your attendance on 07747 460727 or info@familycarers.org.uk.

2. New housing benefit regulations won't help all disabled children unable to share a bedroom

The government has finally introduced new regulations in England, Wales and Scotland making clear that housing benefit awards must include an individual bedroom for disabled children under 16 years who can't share with a brother or sister.

However, these new rules will only apply to children on disability living allowance (DLA) at certain rates - rather than to all disabled children who are unable to share a bedroom.

The new regulations apply not only to those renting from a council or housing association who are affected by the bedroom tax, but also to those renting privately.

While new regulations are long overdue, Contact a Family is concerned that the new rules will only apply to disabled children who get disability living allowance (DLA) at certain rates, rather than to all disabled children unable to share a room.

If you have any questions on bedroom tax, DLA, or personal independence payment (PIP), you can ring Contact a Family's freephone [helpline](#) and speak to one of their experts: 0808 808 3555.

You can also post a query on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/contactafamily>.

To read the full article, please visit the Contact a Family website [here](#).

3. Update from the Independent Living Fund

On 6th November 2013, the Court of Appeal quashed the government's decision to close the Independent Living Fund (ILF). The government have therefore stopped the transfer review programme and all closure activity. They are in the process of writing to all users to explain this to them.

The ILF is aware that this new position may cause uncertainty amongst users and stakeholders and, to minimise any disruption in service, they have implemented a new support and review programme from 18th November 2013. It is still important that they visit users to discuss their present care and support needs. The new support and review visits will ensure that the ILF continues to fulfil its requirements to visit users to monitor eligibility, check that the support they receive is still appropriate and fulfil its governance and fiduciary responsibilities. These visits will not include any discussion around alignment or transfer.

The revised [‘your responsibilities’ guide](#) will be sent to users to help them to prepare for their visit, for your information. This has been updated for the support and review programme (SRP). There is also an [Easy Read guide to SRP](#) and some [commonly asked questions](#) produced for users.

Ministers will now be invited to make a new decision on the future of the ILF, based on further advice and continue to work closely with DWP.

4. Making Reasonable Adjustments to Dementia Services for People with Learning Disabilities

Making Reasonable Adjustments to Dementia Services for People with Learning Disabilities is the sixth in a series of Improving Health and Lives (IHaL) reports which focus on reasonable adjustments to mainstream services so that they meet the needs of people with learning disabilities.

This report can be used by, for example, people with learning disabilities, carers, commissioners, providers, public health, advocacy services, etc to improve services.

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

5. SCIE eLearning: Adult safeguarding resource

The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) has recently published an Adult Safeguarding e-learning course, which is a resource available for everyone.

If you are a personal assistant, a care worker, social worker or manager, you will learn more about dealing with the often complex issues surrounding suspected abuse. Family carers will find out what professionals do when abuse is suspected, and what you can do to ensure that you and the people around you, are protected from harm.

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

6. Over 50,000 disabled people could lose jobs as vital support is cut

Over 50,000 disabled people could stand to lose their jobs if changes to their vital disability support go ahead, leading charities have warned. The Disability Benefits Consortium (DBC), a national coalition of over 50 charities including Leonard Cheshire Disability and RNIB, have analysed the potential impact of planned changes to mobility support for disabled people.

According to the Government's projections nearly half a million disabled people are set to lose either part or all of their payments under planned welfare reforms.

A Freedom of Information request revealed one in five people receiving this support (Disability Living Allowance – DLA) are currently in work. In a survey of over 1000 disabled people, over half of those using DLA in work said it could be impossible to stay in work without it. This could mean that over 50,000 disabled people currently receiving support (DLA) would be put at risk of losing their jobs.

If these job losses happen as a result of cuts to mobility support, lost National Insurance and income tax contributions would cost around £278m. Disabled people leaving work would also require out of work benefits. Payments for disabled people leaving work could cost over £186m. The Government's total cut in mobility support for disabled people in work could save £145m on paper. However, based on the DBC's estimates this could cost £464m before other costs are taken into account.

The full article can be read on the Disability Benefits Consortium [here](#) and the report can be read [here](#).

7. GPs to challenge social care professionals on whether needs of their patients are met

GPs will challenge social care professionals on how well their patients' needs are being met as part of family doctors' new role overseeing health and social care for people with complex needs. That was the message from NHS England, following the announcement of changes to the GP contract in 2014-15 that will see them take responsibility for developing and reviewing personalised plans covering health and social care for patients with complex needs.

NHS England, which is leading the implementation, said this would not reduce councils' responsibility for "meeting, assessing and reviewing the social care needs of people in their area". However, a spokesperson added: "We expect GPs to take a more proactive role in ensuring local authorities responsibilities are carried out for their individual patients. At a practical level this means undertaking a more systematic approach to ensuring their patients' needs are met and connecting with appropriate social care professionals to ensure this is the case."

To read the full Community Care article, please visit the website [here](#).

8. Calling All Artists!

Mencap's 2014 Christmas card competition is now open. Anyone with a learning disability can enter.

How to take part

1. Make a Christmas card using art materials of your choice
2. Email a photo or scan of your card to christmas.cards@mencap.org.uk with your name, number and address. You can also post it - just write your name, number and address on the back and send it to:
Mencap's Christmas card competition,
Mencap,
123 Golden Lane,
London, EC1Y 0RT

Two winners will be chosen and their cards will be sold to raise money for Mencap in the run up to Christmas next year.

All entries must be received by Friday 10th January 2014.

Click [here](#) to read the rules of entry. You can also find out more on the Mencap [website](#).

London

9. Maximising the impact of the Health Equalities Framework (HEF): A Public Health Approach Monday 9th December 2013 London South Bank University

This free one day conference brings together the Health Equalities Framework (HEF) project team and a number of highly regarded professionals who will share developments related to the HEF within the context of improving public health and wellbeing and keeping people safe.

The day is for anyone interested in reducing health inequalities for people who have learning disabilities. It will be of interest to health and social care professionals and students, carers, commissioners, academics, managers and leaders.

The focus will be on the development and application of outcomes-focused measurement frameworks to evidence improved person-centred health outcomes for people who have learning disabilities

For the full programme, and to register for a place, please click [here](#).

South East

10. Free Disability Awareness Event in Havant

Sunday 1st December 2013 11.00am – 3.00pm

Horizon Leisure Centre, Civic Centre Road, Havant, PO9 2AN

This free event is a chance to meet police officers, try on police uniforms and learn about disability hate crime. There will be representatives from Hampshire Fire and Rescue, Autism Support and Advice, Rainbow Centre, Enable Ability and many more!

For more details, please contact St Faiths Safer Neighbourhoods team on 101 or email stfaiths.snt@hampshire.pnn.police.uk.

You can also find out more on the flyer [here](#).

11. Christmas Nightclub Events - Southampton and Bournemouth

Tuesday 3rd December from 7:00pm

2930 The Triangle, Bournemouth, BH2 5SE

Monday 9th December from 7.30pm

130-132 Above Bar Street, Southampton, SO14 7DU

The [Stable Family Home Trust](#) is celebrating the festive season with two Christmas nightclub events at both their Bournemouth and Southampton venues.

On Tuesday 3rd December doors open at 7:00pm at 2930 The Triangle in Bournemouth with tickets costing £4:00 on the door (support workers free).

Click [here](#) for the flyer.

On Monday 9th December 2013 the venue is Revival, 130-132 Above Bar Street, in Southampton. The doors open at 7:30pm and tickets cost £3:00 on the door (support workers free).

Click [here](#) for the flyer

If you need any further information about either of these events, please contact the Stable Family Home Trust on 01425 478043 or reception@sfht.org.uk.

East England

12. First Aid Course for people with learning disabilities

Monday 9th December 2013 10.00am to 3.00pm

Fellowship Rooms, Methodist Church Halls, Ware Road, Hertford, SG13 7DZ

We Do Care and the Red Cross are running a First Aid Course specifically for people with learning disabilities. The course will cover keeping safe in the home, dealing with minor accidents, and what to do in an emergency situation.

Costs £5 per person. Support staff free.

To book a place, please ring: Carolyn on 07763 120438 or Jacqui on 07922 804039. Alternatively, you can contact the office on 01992 422268.

Click [here](#) for more event details on the We Do Care website.

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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.