

Bulletin



www.familycarers.org.uk

Tel: 07747 460727

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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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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. Disabled people win living fund case against government

Five disabled people have succeeded in a legal challenge to the government's decision to abolish the Independent Living Fund.

The £320m ILF currently provides support enabling nearly 19,000 severely disabled people in the UK to live independent lives in the community.

The High Court ruled in April that the closure decision was lawful, but this was overturned by the Court of Appeal. The government said it was considering whether to contest the judgement.

During the Court of Appeal hearing, the five argued the High Court had misinterpreted the law and there had been a lack of proper consultation by ministers over the changes. They said that, without ILF funding and support, they would be forced into residential care or lose their ability to participate in work and everyday activities on the same basis as able-bodied people

Court of Appeal judges Lord Justice Elias, Lord Justice Kitchin and Lord Justice McCombe allowed the challenge to the High Court's earlier ruling, quashing the original decision in favour of the government.

Lord Justice McCombe said the evidence upon which the decision had been based had not given "an adequate flavour of the responses received indicating that independent living might well be put seriously in peril for a large number of people".

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

2. Social work students being given unsupervised responsibility for risk and safeguarding assessments on placement

Some social work students are being given unsupervised responsibility for cases requiring formal assessment of risk and safeguarding while on their practice placements.

A quarter of the 385 students and newly qualified social workers (NQSWs) responding to Community Care's joint survey with Unison, most of whom are based in England, said they had been given unsupervised responsibility for one or more such cases during their first practice placement – and 44% said this had happened during their final placement.

Yet the College of Social Work's practice learning guidance clearly states that students "will not hold case responsibility for formal assessment processes that include risk/safeguarding/child protection".

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

3. BBC Programme - Autism: Challenging Behaviour

On Tuesday 5th November, BBC4 screened a documentary exploring the controversy around ABA (Applied Behaviour Analysis), an intensive intervention used to treat autism, by meeting people who are both pro- and anti-ABA.

The programme is available to watch or download on the BBC iplayer [here](#) until 12th November.

BBC4 has also recently broadcast *Disowned and Disabled*, two documentaries exploring how the care of disowned and disabled children changed in the decades after the Second World War, and disabled people's battle for equality.

These are also available to watch or download until 12th November on the BBC iplayer [here](#).

4. Post Winterbourne - questions to ask locally

Bella Travis and Gemma Grant work on Mencap and the Challenging Behaviour Foundation's [Out of sight campaign](#). They have written a blog post about progress since Winterbourne View and what you can do to help make sure change happens in your local area.

Local areas have until June 2014 to move people currently in units like Winterbourne View back to their local communities. By June this year they had to establish a register of all the people with a learning disability in an in-patient unit, review each person, and develop a plan for everyone who was 'inappropriately' placed to move back to their local community as soon as possible.

There is a lot that local areas need to be doing now. They need to develop the right housing, the right support services, and the right expertise amongst health and social care professionals in the community.

Mencap and CBF are asking for your help to find out what is happening locally, for the people whom this is all about. They want to know:

- how many people are there in units?
- when they will be moved out?
- if someone is not going to be moved out, why not? (Anonymously, of course).

They have put together some [key questions for you to ask, and tips on who to ask](#).

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

5. Mandatory reconsiderations have begun

From 28th October 2013, it has become much more difficult to challenge a decision on many benefits, including Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA). For all decisions dated 28th October or later, a Mandatory Reconsideration must take place before an appeal can be lodged.

The system particularly disadvantages ESA claimants, who will not be eligible to receive ESA at the assessment phase rate until the mandatory reconsideration has been completed and they have lodged an appeal. In the meantime, they will have to either try to claim Jobseeker's Allowance or have no income replacement benefit at all.

To read the full article, please visit the Benefits and Work website [here](#). The website also has a FAQs page for Mandatory Reconsiderations [here](#).

6. Personalisation: What's Next? Writing a new partnership agreement for 2014 and beyond

Personalisation is a way of thinking about health and care services that puts people at the centre of understanding their needs, choosing their support and having control over their lives. [Think Local Act Personal](#) (TLAP) is writing a new partnership agreement for 2014. It is important that they hear from a wide range of views including carers to ensure they make the biggest possible difference to people's lives. TLAP have started a [series of blogs](#) from different perspectives.

You can comment on the blogs or on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/tlap1> and use the hashtag #TLAP13.

7. Improving the Health and Wellbeing of People with Learning Disabilities: An Evidence-Based Commissioning Guide for Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) - revised

This good practice guidance for Clinical Commissioning Groups on commissioning general and specialist health services for people with learning disabilities was initially published in October 2012. This has recently been revised and is available to read via the Improving Health and Lives website [here](#).

8. Positive Behaviour Support Facebook group

Positive Behaviour Support has been gaining increasing recognition post Winterbourne View, but there are still a lack of clarity regarding what it is. A Facebook group has been created to discuss this and share relevant information. The group is open to all and there are currently over 400 members with membership from all over the world and members include professionals, carers, family members, and others who are interested.

To join the Facebook group, please click [here](#).

9. Attitudes to Homecare in England

Guardian Professional, together with the Department of Health, have recently conducted a piece of research in order to understand current attitudes towards Homecare in England. More than 1,440 people took part in the survey, including homecare providers, care workers, people who receive homecare and their friends and relatives.

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

You can also read more about the study on the Guardian website [here](#).

10. Make Your Move - a video guide to independent living

[Inspired Services](#) have recently uploaded *Make Your Move - a video guide to independent living* onto Youtube.

It shows real people who are in control of their own lives, and living in their own homes . Whilst made a few years ago, this video is as relevant now as it ever was, although some of the jargon may have changed.

To watch the film, please click [here](#). You can also see other films from Inspired Services [here](#).

North West

11. New hydrotherapy facility in Lancashire

Hydro @ the Barn is a hydrotherapy, aquatic therapy and exercise centre set in a converted barn within the heart of East Lancashire, surrounded by 16 acres of open countryside.

The pool is fully accessible, there are hoists both in the changing areas and poolside, and the water is warm & has an ultraviolet sanitisation system which means that it uses very little chlorine. The aim is to provide a unique multisensory aquatic experience which is ideal for people with disabilities and health conditions.

Hydro @ the Barn has been developed with the needs of people with profound and multiple disabilities and learning disabilities very much in mind. It offers customers the opportunity to experience the healing powers of water and to enjoy its unique surroundings.

Open Monday to Friday 9.00am – 9.00pm and Saturday 10.00am – 4.00pm

Pool Hire - £35 per hour for up to 8 people.

£15 per hour for individual use.

For more information, please visit the [website](#).

12. Free Learning Disability Awareness Training

The LEAF Project, a partnership project between [Mencap Liverpool](#) and [Alternative Futures Group](#), is offering free learning disability awareness training to community groups and charity organisations in the North West.

The LEAF Project wants to support organisations to be more accessible for volunteers with a learning disability and improve their inclusive practices when supporting those volunteers. The training consists of a presentation and four optional additional modules designed to make the training personal to your organisation and your needs and interests.

For more details, and how to book, please click [here](#).

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