

Bulletin



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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
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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. Difficulties in juggling work and summer holiday childcare for parents of disabled children

As the summer holidays come to an end, a new survey has revealed the difficulties parents of disabled children face in juggling work and summer holiday childcare. Parents are compromising, adapting their working hours, and paying over the odds for expensive childcare.

The [Working Families](#) survey of parents of disabled children reveals the high costs and difficulties in finding suitable childcare which have a serious knock-on effect on parents' work.

Ninety per cent of parents responding said that they had to change their hours, take unpaid leave, request flexible working or make other changes to meet the need for care for their disabled child - four per cent of parents reported that they had left their job due to childcare needs over the summer.

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

2. Cameron lobbied to give social workers new safeguarding power

David Cameron will be lobbied to give social workers a "power of access" to vulnerable adults whom they suspect are being abused but who are being coerced into silence by a third party.

Ex-care services minister Paul Burstow will lead a delegation of MPs and sector leaders to meet Cameron with a list of demands to strengthen the safeguarding adults aspects of the Care Bill. These include:

- A power of access for social workers to conduct a confidential interview with a vulnerable adult whom they suspect are being abused but where the person is being coerced into silence by a third-party;
- A new offence of abusing an adult vulnerable to abuse, where the adult has mental capacity to take relevant decisions, filling the perceived gap left by the offence of wilful neglect or ill-treatment of a person who lacks capacity under the Mental Capacity Act 2005;
- A new offence of corporate neglect to make the leadership of care providers liable for serious failings of care.

The government has so far rejected calls to give social workers a power of access; a consultation last year showed strong support for it from health and social care professionals but opposition from most members of the public who responded.

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

3. FCSS Service submission to Joint Committee on the Draft Deregulation Bill: Call for Written Evidence

Hft's [Family Carer Support Service](#) has prepared a submission to the Joint Committee on the Draft Deregulation Bill: Call for Written Evidence. Clause 35 in the Draft Deregulation Bill will affect access to information about welfare benefit appeal tribunals, and particularly important at the moment, statistics on how well the Work Capability Assessment is doing.

You can read the submission from the FCSS on our website [here](#).

The Joint Committee's call for evidence and the draft Deregulation Bill can be found [here](#) and the report that Clause 35 refers to can be found [here](#).

4. Adult safeguarding: updated statement of government policy

The government's updated policy statement on safeguarding adults who are vulnerable to abuse and neglect is available to read [here](#).

5. Hft Family Carer Support Manager Starting salary £30,981 with potential to rise to £32,586 | Bristol-based

The recent merger of Hft and Self Unlimited has created a new force in the learning disabilities sector – a truly nationwide organisation that's working creatively in local communities. By coming together, we're ready to expand our reach and help people get more from life through our ideas and innovative ways of working.

Could your experience help us support even more family carers? Sometimes family members who support relatives with learning disabilities need supporting too. It matters to us that families have the information they need, have opportunities to find solutions to setbacks and can keep using their experience to improve support for their relatives and themselves. That is why we pioneered a dedicated national Family Carer Support Service (FCSS) in 1994 and have developed our ways of working ever since.

We are looking for an experienced manager to lead the FCSS team and build on the successes already achieved - it's a challenging and rewarding role.

For more information or to apply online please go to www.hft.org.uk or, for an informal discussion, contact Robina Mallett on 0117 906 1751, email robina.mallett@hft.org.uk.

A job description, person specification, and details of how to apply can be found [here](#).

Closing date: 20th September 2013.

Interviews: held in Bristol, 7th October 2013.

6. National minimum wage rise may be bad news for some carers

Next month the national minimum wage (NMW) for those aged 21 and over will be increased from £6.19 to £6.31 per hour. Whilst this is good news for most low paid workers, it may cause problems for some parents on low earnings if they are claiming both carer's allowance and working tax credit. In order to get carers allowance your earnings after allowable deductions must be no more than £100 per week. Under the current NMW someone working 16 hours work earns £99.04 per week. Since this is below £100 they can receive carer's allowance.

However from 1st October the NMW will rise to £6.31 per week. This means a carer working 16 hours a week will have earnings of £100.96 per week. Because their earnings will be 96p over the threshold they are at risk of losing all of their carer's allowance.

The obvious solution for a parent in this position may appear to be to cut their hours. However depending on your circumstances, cutting your hours to below 16 per week could mean you no longer qualify for working tax credit. This is particularly likely if that carer is a lone parent.

If you think this will affect you, seek further advice urgently about whether there are any deductions that can be made from your earnings to help you retain carer's allowance. It's important to be aware that when calculating your earnings for carer's allowance, the Department of Work and Pensions will make certain deductions from your gross earnings. This can include not only tax and national insurance, which you are unlikely to pay on such low earnings, but also:

- alternative care costs - for example paying someone to look after your child whilst you are at work. There is a cap on the maximum amount that can be deducted in this way. There is no need for the caring to be done by a registered childcare provider. It can be counted so long as you pay someone other than a close relative; or
- 50 per cent of any pension contributions that you make into a work or personal pension. So for example, if you are paying £2 per week into a pension scheme you can deduct £1 from your earnings. If your actual earnings are £100.97 per week you would be treated as having earnings of £99.97, allowing your carer's allowance to continue.

For advice, you can call [Contact A Family's](https://www.contactafamily.org) freephone helpline on 0808 808 3555.

7. DWP: PIP Guidance

The Department for Work and Pensions has produced a PIP quick guide for support organisations, which can be read [here](#).

Guidance for partner organisations about Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is also available on the DWP website [here](#).

8. Mental Capacity Act information

Information on implementing the Mental Capacity Act from the NHS Midlands and East is now available on the IHaL database [here](#).

The information is aimed at staff and looks at different aspects of the Mental Capacity Act, but may be of interest to family carers.

9. CQC news: Review of learning disability services and listening events

The CQC has published the results of its review of learning disability services which looked at 150 NHS, private care and social care services.

CQC inspectors carried out 150 unannounced inspections that looked at two national standards. These standards related to care and welfare, and safeguarding (protecting people's health and wellbeing, and enabling them to live free from harm).

The inspections took place at 71 NHS Trusts, 47 private services and 32 care homes.

The inspection reports are available to download in full and easy read formats on the CQC website [here](#).

The CQC is also holding a series of listening events. If you have experience of receiving care from one of the first 18 NHS trusts that the CQC is inspecting under their new model, they are inviting you to come along to a listening event to tell them about your experiences.

The first four listening events are listed below

- Croydon Health Services NHS Trust, 17th September
- Airedale NHS Foundation Trust, 19th September
- Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, 24th September
- The Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust, 26th September

To attend, the CQC ask that you register by completing the [online form](#). Alternatively you can email: cqclistingevents@livegroup.co.uk or telephone: 03000 616161.

If you can't make an event but still want to share your experiences, you can do so online [here](#) or email enquiries@cqc.org.uk.

To find out more, please visit the CQC [website](#).

10. Autism: The management and support of children and young people on the autism spectrum

This clinical guideline offers evidence-based advice on the care and management of children and young people with autism, and has been developed by NICE collaboration with the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE).

For full details, and to download the guideline, please visit the NICE [website](#).

11. Getting On? Growing older with autism.

The National Autistic Society (NAS) has recently launched a new campaign with accompanying reports: ***Getting on? Growing older with autism***. The reports set out some of the key issues facing older people with autism and what government and other bodies need to do to make sure they have the services and support they need.

Full details, including copies of the report can be found on the NAS [website](#).

12. When flying becomes a reality

The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities (FPLD) has recently published a blog article by Jill Davies about planning holidays that include flying for people with physical impairments. The article shares a number of useful tips for plane travel, and information about equipment and support, which airlines and airports can offer disabled passengers.

Click [here](#) to read the article on the FPLD website.

13. The town that proves accessibility IS for all (even with no budget)

Anne Bradshaw, a Development Worker with the HSE, was tasked to improve accessibility in Cashel in County Tipperary. Anne had no budget, but thanks to people power and finding out about funds available, she and the rest of the Cashel Gold Star volunteers have greatly improved accessibility in Cashel.

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

You can also read more about the Cashel Gold Star initiative on their website [here](#).

London

14. Mencap Project Coordinators Newham and Tower Hamlets £27,270 per annum (pro rata) + benefits

Bags of Ability supports parents and early years professionals to work together to take an active role in the early literacy-development of their children. Research has shown parental involvement is paramount to a child's early learning and supporting families in this role can significantly enhance early-years development.

Bags of Ability does this through delivery of a six week training courses to show parents and carers how to use story-related play, multi-sensory storytelling techniques and multi-sensory books. Parents attend sessions with their child and are supported to develop skills that engage their child in book play, increase their child's interaction with books, and foster a positive association so that their child comes to see 'reading time' as a fun and positive activity.

The training courses will be delivered in early years, community settings such as libraries and drop-in centres and in schools across Newham, Tower Hamlet and Waltham Forest.

Mencap are looking for two Project Coordinators to deliver these sessions across the three boroughs of East London, working to equip parents and professionals with the skills they need to use story-related play techniques (objects, music, and creative movement) and reading time to improve their child's early literacy skills.

Please contact Lara Burnett for more information: lara.burnett@mencap.org.uk.

Further details and how to apply can also be found on the website [here](#).

Closing date: Sunday 15th September 2013.

South East

15. Surrey Police: easy read documents

Surrey Police have developed a number of easy read documents in partnership with [The Clear Communication People](#).

These include "[How to keep safe when out and about](#)", "[How to stay safe when you are travelling](#)", and "[Mate crime – staying stay from people who pretend to be your friend.](#)"

All the documents can be found on their accessible website [here](#).

16. Community Advice Day - Havant **Monday 16th September 10.00am – 2.00pm** **Havant Public Service Plaza, PO9 2AX**

A Community Advice Day has been organised by Havant Borough Council to help and support those families facing difficulties in today's economic climate. There will be free advice for anyone affected by debt, unemployment, the bedroom tax or benefit cap, as well as a free prize draw and children's activities.

Click [here](#) to read the event flyer. You can also get further information about the event by emailing laura.bevis@havant.gov.uk.

There will also be free transport to the event from 5 locations across the Havant Borough including Wecock Farm, Waterlooville, Leigh Park, Hayling Island and Emsworth. To book a transport place, please call 023 9241 5560 or email transport@cfheh.org.uk.

South West

17. Free training: Introduction to Dignity in Care

The West of England Centre for Inclusive Living ([WECIL](#)) are holding a number of free Dignity in Care training sessions across the South West through September and October. These sessions are for anyone employing a personal assistant or carer, personal assistants, support workers, health & social care practitioners in the South West.

Dates for September and October in Bristol and South Gloucestershire available [here](#).
Dates for September and October in North Somerset available [here](#).

You can also find more information on the WECIL website [here](#).

For further details, please contact Sarah Bryson: telephone: 0117 9617703 or email: sarah.bryson@wecil.co.uk

West Midlands

18. Changing cultures, working creatively and in collaboration **Friday 18th October** **Conference Aston (Business School), Birmingham**

This BILD Conference is about finding the best ways to challenge and change the cultures that limit the possibilities for people with learning disabilities, and how creative approaches can be used to break down barriers and work across the boundaries that can frustrate so many of us.

For full details, please visit the BILD [website](#).

North West

19. Fun café for people with a learning disability

Wednesday 25th September 10.30am to 2.30pm

Salt Ayre Sports Centre, Lancaster LA1 5JS

This special event is for people with a learning disability and their carers. Events include a free raffle, prize draws, football sessions, health advice and information, dance, multi sports, cycling for all, reading groups and much more.

Click [here](#) to read the event flyer for more information.

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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.