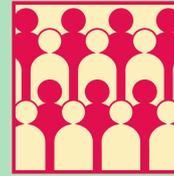


Bulletin



National
Family Carer
Network

www.familycarers.org.uk

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11th April 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. Raft of benefit changes brought in April 2013

Hi everyone,

As you will no doubt already be aware, there has been a raft of changes which have been brought in since April 2013 which may affect you as a carer, either in terms of changes for yourself or for the person you care for. We will distribute a briefing with the newsletter next week.

2. Over £1 million funding announced to support learning and development of personal assistants and their employers

Skills for Care is making over £1m of funding available through the Workforce Development Fund (WDF) to support the learning and development of personal assistants (PAs) and their employers (individual employers). This funding has been made available by the Department of Health to be disbursed by Skills for Care. The aim is to use the funding to drive the development of Personal Assistants and their employers by offering grants that are paid up front and includes associated costs, such as replacement/additional PA costs and travel.

“We know that around 15% of the adult social care workforce are now personal assistants so targeting the funding in this way will help to improve recruitment, retention and the quality of the care and support delivered,” says Skills for Care CEO Sharon Allen. “It is critical that the people who employ PAs can access funding for learning and development as other employers do and so this fund acknowledges that we need to support, not only the costs of the learning itself, but also the associated costs. Individual employers have told us about the positive benefits of developing the skills and knowledge of their PAs and themselves, so I would urge anyone who is eligible, to apply.”

People aged 18 or over who employ personal assistants in England can apply for grant funding until 30th September 2013 to pay for all types of learning and development that meets their needs, including qualifications. Individual employers can also use this funding to pay for courses that have been created by learning providers specifically to meet their unique needs.

As with all WDF funding, there are a number of basic criteria that apply:

- The fund can only be accessed by people aged 18 or over who employ and pay for Personal Assistants in England.
- Employers accessing the funding must complete an application form and submit evidence to prove they are an employer.
- All applications must be supported by proof of associated costs.
- The learning and development must be started before 30th September 2013.

The closing date for applications is 30th September 2013 and more details can be found at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/individualemployerskillsfunding.

3. Guardian article: Three disabled claimants launch legal action against new mobility tests

Three disabled claimants have launched a legal action to challenge the government's more stringent tests for mobility allowances that came into force on Monday.

The decision to seek a judicial review of the regulations emerged as the work and pensions secretary, Iain Duncan Smith, complained that there had been a surge in fresh claims ahead of the tougher rules. Up until Monday claimants who could not walk 50 metres were entitled to disability living allowance (DLA). The new social security (personal independence payment) regulations 2013 (PIP) reduce the distance to only 20 metres. As a direct result, an estimated 51,000 fewer people could be eligible for payments.

Other changes to mobility benefits could eventually lead to as many as 428,000 claimants losing their entitlements, according to the government's own estimate.

The legal challenge is being run by the law firms Leigh Day and Public Law Solicitors who argue that the official consultation process did not mention the new limit would be reduced to only 20 metres.

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

4. Clinical Reference Groups: Patient and Carer member Recruitment launched

The NHS Commissioning Board (NHS CB) has opened the application process for patient and carer members of its 74 CRGs for 2013/14.

CRGs are responsible for providing the NHS CB with clinical advice regarding specialised services, and for the delivery of key 'products', such as service specifications and commissioning policies, which enable the NHS CB to commission services from specialist service providers through the contracting arrangements overseen by its Area Teams.

Click [here](#) for more information and how to apply.

5. Walsingham Trustees with Learning Disabilities wanted

[Walsingham](#), a national charity that supports people with learning disabilities, is currently recruiting for Trustees with learning disabilities to join their Trustee Board. These positions are voluntary, but training, travel and hotel costs are covered.

Please click [here](#) for an easy read flyer for more information.

If you or someone you know might be interested in becoming a trustee, please contact Ravanti Halai on 020 8343 5606 or ravanti.halai@walsingham.com.

London

6. Free parent and carer seminars on transition

[Ambitious about Autism](#) is hosting a series of five free seminars for parents and carers of young adults with a learning disability. Taking place in central London, the seminars will be hosted by recognised experts in the fields of disability law, education and further education.

These events will build on the success of seminars run at [TreeHouse School](#), supporting parents and carers to navigate the often complex process of transitioning from education to adult life.

The seminars are as follows:

- Transition from school, social care and carers rights – 15th April 2013
- The Mental Capacity Act and Transition – 9th May 2013
- Further Education, the Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) and vocational opportunities – 21st May 2013
- Health service and social care funding, health and disability issues - 19 June 2013
- Housing and benefits in transition – 10th July 2013

All seminars will take place at:

St Albans Centre, Leigh Place, Baldwins Gardens, Holborn, London EC1N 7AB

www.stalbanscentre.org.

Booking is essential. To secure your free place on a seminar, or to find out more, please visit the website [here](#).

Alternatively, please telephone 020 8815 5424 and ask for Ruth or Olivia.

7. Camden Carers Service

Camden Carers Service (CCS) is a new partnership offering information, advice and support to unpaid carers across Camden.

The CCS partnership is between Camden Carers Centre, Centre 404 and Crossroads Care Central and North London. Their main aims are identifying new carers and supporting all adult carers. CCS will guide carers towards the most appropriate service, based on who they are and what help they need. It will be the main access point for carer-related services across the borough, provided by the partnership and other local organisations and agencies.

If you would like to know more about what Camden Carers Service can do for you, please visit their website: www.camdens.org.uk.

CCS can also be contacted by telephone on: 020 7428 8955 or by email: info@camdens.org.uk.

South East

8. 'Simple Approaches to Behaviours that Challenge' - one-day course, Southampton

Tuesday 2nd July 9.30am-3.30pm.

Venue: Eastpoint Centre, Bursledon Road, Southampton, SO19 8BR

[Hampshire Autistic Society](#) is running a one-day course for parents, carers and professionals who support people on the autistic spectrum.

This is an opportunity for you to explore a shared definition of what is meant by the term 'Challenging Behaviour'; what the individual may seek to gain from challenging behaviour and how to teach a more acceptable way of meeting needs; and much more.

For more information [click here](#) or contact Teresa Sayer-Smith or Alannah Murphy on 023 9252 8407/023 9252 8680 or email teresa.sayer-smith@has.org.uk

Yorkshire & Humber

9. Free parents carers information and lunch session around Personal Independence Allowance and Bedroom Tax

Thursday 18th April 12.00pm -2.00pm. Lunch included from 12.00pm.

Venue: Jubilee Hall Community Centre, 5 Road Ends, Townley Road, Wakefield, WF2 8NS

Kidzaware are holding a free parents carers information and lunch session, to provide information around the personal independence allowance which has replaced the DLA .

The event will also look at the bedroom tax as this is affecting families of disabled children and adults across Yorkshire and Humber.

To finish the session, there will be ahoy bingo and guess the celebrity to provide networking opportunities for everyone.

Kidzaware are planning to hold these types of sessions to deal with different topics each month.

To attend, just come along or telephone Sabrina on 01924 385977 for further details.

East Midlands

10. SeeAbility training courses

[SeeAbility](#) are running a range of training courses for staff and professionals who support people with a learning disability about eye care and visual impairment.

The next courses include:

Skills for Life - supporting visually impaired people on 8th May in Derby.

Functional vision assessment - how people with a learning disability use their vision on 14th May in Bromley.

For full course and venue details, or to see all the year's courses and book a place, please visit the website [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.