

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Mental Health Commission: Quality Framework for Mental Health Services - Consultation on Draft Audit Toolkit

The Mental Health Commission published the Quality Framework for Mental Health Services in Ireland in March 2007. The themes, standards and criteria contained in the quality framework provide clear guidance for service users, their families/chosen advocates, service providers and the public as to what to expect from a mental health service. The quality framework is applicable to all mental health services including services for children and adolescents, adults, older persons, persons with an intellectual disability and a mental illness and forensic mental health services. The quality framework comprises of eight themes, 24 standards and 163 criteria. The framework places the service user at the centre. To assist in measuring attainment of standards and associated criteria, a draft toolkit has been developed to accompany the framework. The Mental Health Commission is seeking views on the draft audit toolkit and would welcome your comments and feedback on the draft document using the consultation form on their website — www.mhcirl.ie - by 15th June 2007. The Commission also intends carrying out further consultation at the information sessions/workshops scheduled to take place over the coming months. Further information is available at www.mhcirl.ie.

HEALTH BILL 2006

The Health Bill 2006, which was published in December 2006, is currently before the Oireachtas. The Bill establishes the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), incorporating the Office of the Chief Inspector of Social Services, on a statutory basis. HIQA will set standards on safety and quality for all services provided by the HSE and service providers on behalf of the HSE, including residential services for people with disabilities and nursing homes. It will also provide an independent review of quality and performance and its analysis will inform policy development within the Department. It will monitor compliance with the standards it sets and advise the Minister and the HSE on the level of compliance.

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PROFESSIONALS ACT 2005

This Act provides for the establishment of a system of statutory registration for certain health & social care professionals. This will help to ensure that members of the public are guided, protected and informed, so that they can be confident that health and social care professionals providing services are properly qualified and competent to practice. The regulatory system will aim to ensure professional conduct and the maintenance of

high standards of professional education and training among health and social care professionals. At the launch of the Health & Social Care Professionals Council by the Department of Health & Children on 26th March, 2007, we welcomed the announcement that Mr. Tony Darmody, Chief Executive, Kerry Parents & Friends Association, will represent the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies on the Council.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS LINKED ON OUR WEBSITE - www.fedvol.ie

- An Exploratory Study of the Impact of Childhood Disability on Individual Family Members, Relationships, Family Life and Dynamics, ISPC, November 2006
- EPSEN Act Implementation Report, National Council for Special Education (NCSE), December 2006
- Improving the Delivery of Quality Public Services - Report 34 - December 2006 — National Economic & Social Forum (NESF)
- Irish Psychiatric Units and Hospitals Census 2006, HRB, December 2006
- Report on Vulnerable Adults and the Law, Law Reform Commission, December 2006
- Sectoral Plans under the Disability Act 2005, published December 2006
- National Development Plan 2007-2013: Transforming Ireland - A Better Quality of Life for All, January 2007
- Draft National Standards for Residential Care

EVENTS / CONFERENCES

Inclusion Ireland's AGM & Annual Conference 2007 will be held in the Clarion Hotel, Cork, 20th & 21st April 2007 where it will launch its 2007-2012 Strategic Plan. A panel of politicians from Cork who are candidates in the General Election will take questions on their policies on people with an intellectual disability and Emily O'Reilly will present on how the office of the Ombudsman can enable inclusion of people with an intellectual disability in society. Presentations will also be made on inclusion in education, the workplace and leisure activities. Further information is available at www.inclusionireland.ie.

COPE Foundation, Cork will host a Conference "The Way Forward" Choices and Challenges in Silver Springs Moran Hotel, Cork on 24 - 25 May 2007 to celebrate its 50th anniversary. Organised by COPE Foundation to celebrate the 50 years of service to persons with an intellectual disability and their families, this conference will cover the areas of education, employment, human rights/equal opportunities, arts/leisure/recreation, and ageing. Further information is available at www.cope-foundation.ie.

National Federation Conference 2007: Innovation in Intellectual Disability Services. The theme for the National Federation's Conference in 2007 is Innovation in Intellectual Disability Services. The Conference will focus on innovative practice in Intellectual Disability services, both nationally and internationally, with a view to promoting innovation generally within our sector. An organising committee has been established and more details regarding this event will issue in due course.

- Settings for Older People, Department of Health & Children, January 2007. The consultation process will be handled by the Interim Health Information & Quality Authority.
- National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016: Building an Inclusive Society, February 2007
- Report of the Taskforce on Active Citizenship, March 2007
- HSE National Service Plan (NSP) for 2007

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Federation

www.fedvol.ie


NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES
Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability

newsletter

Welcome to the 1st National Federation newsletter of 2007. Since we produced our last newsletter we have concentrated on developing our new website as an up-to-date information resource for our members — www.fedvol.ie. Our website has now been up and running since March 2006 and due to the many requests we have received we have decided to produce both an online and a paper copy of our newsletter.

NATIONAL FEDERATION UPDATES

Staff Changes in the National Federation Secretariat

Maria Walls, Director of Research & Membership Services has decided to take a four year career break from the National Federation Secretariat. During this time Maria will be undertaking a Ph.D. study on a comparative analysis of the potential implementation of the (Draft) UN Convention of the Rights of People with Disabilities across New Zealand, United States and Ireland.

Janet Swinburne has also moved on from the National Federation. Janet is completing her doctorate in Philosophy at Trinity College Dublin and is currently working on the development of the Intellectual Disability Supplement to the first Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA).

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the immense contribution of Maria and Janet to the work of the National Federation - their professionalism, dedication, enthusiasm and warmth were much appreciated by both their colleagues in the Secretariat and by the Federation members. We wish them both well in their studies.

Edel Tierney, MA, Reg. Psychol, Ps.S.I., has been appointed as Director of Research & Policy Development with the National Federation. Edel is a native of Galway City and a technology graduate of NUIG where she conducted a Psychology Masters by Research there. Following graduation Edel taught Psychology at NUIG and Waterford Institute of Technology. For the past eight years Edel has been employed as Research Co-ordinator with COPE Foundation Cork and her research interests have included: siblings, leisure and recreation for people with intellectual disabilities, staff training and ethical issues in conducting research with people with intellectual disabilities. She has published widely on these topics and has presented at national and international conferences. Edel has been an active member of the National Federation's Research Sub Committee and was involved in an advisory capacity on the Quality of Life project. Edel will take up her position in the National Federation Secretariat in May.

Current Secretariat Staff:

Brian O'Donnell, Chief Executive

Edel Tierney, Director of Research & Policy Development (from May 2007)

Maria McMahon, Office Manager

Caroline Looney/Mary Barrett, Administrative Officers (job sharing)

Brian Donohoe, Clerical Officer (1 day per week)

Breda Casey, Policy Development Co-Ordinator

Jillian Sexton, Human Resource Training & Development Co-Ordinator

Alison Harnett, Informing Families Project Co-Ordinator

Structures Review Group

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies has established a Review Group to advise on an appropriate structure for the Federation which takes account of the HSE's Transformation Programme and the Government's National Disability Strategy. While this work is ongoing our

Board has approved the establishment of 5 Interim Area Federation Fora. The purpose of these interim fora is to advise members on the current state of progress of the Structural Review Group and to update members on developments nationally. The establishment of the new Interim

Area Fora do not in any way supersede or displace the formal constitutional status of our existing ten Area Federation Committees who retain all the powers vested in them in our Articles of Association, particularly the powers of nomination to the Board of Directors.

We hope you find this newsletter useful and we would welcome your comments or suggestions to secretariat@fedvol.ie. Further news and information updates are available on our website at www.fedvol.ie.

Oranmore Business Park, Oranmore, Galway.

Phone: 091-792316 Fax: 091-792317

E-mail: secretariat@fedvol.ie Web: www.fedvol.ie

'Managing for the Future – Building your Skills as a Front Line Manager in a Person Centred Environment' – Pilot Programme

Following the launch of the programme materials for the programme entitled 'Managing for the Future — Building your Skills as a Front Line Manager in a Person Centred Environment' participants were sought for the pilot of the Programme which commenced in February 2007. There are 21 participants, from 14 organisations, currently engaged in the pilot which is being run in the University of Limerick.

The Programme is due to be completed in October 2007. There are a number of trainers 'shadowing' the training as they will be subsequently seeking to roll-out the training programme within their own organisation. The training is being delivered by The Performance Partnership in conjunction with personnel from the Kemmy Business School, University of Limerick.

'Managing People – Management Development Programme'

The seventh and final 'Managing People - Managing People Programme' being run by the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies is now completed. The training was delivered by the Open Training College. Over 140 personnel from across National Federation of Voluntary Bodies member organisations have completed the 3-day programme which seeks to enhance managers' understanding of competency

frameworks and particularly to develop their competencies in the area of 'Managing People'. Specifically the programme aims to ensure that managers are familiar with the process, materials and resources involved in the management competency frameworks and focus on skills training in the following 'Managing People' competencies: Supporting Personal Development; Creating Team Spirit;

Being the communication channel; Managing Individual Performance; Influencing people & events. An event to mark the conclusion of this series of programmes is being organised at which a presentation of Certificates will be made to those who have completed the programme and successfully secured accreditation from the Open Training College.

SKILL PROJECT – QUOTA ALLOCATION 2007/8

A series of briefing sessions in relation to the training available under the SKILL Project have been running over the period January-March 2007. The quota allocation of training places under the SKILL Project for the intellectual disability sector for 2007-2008 is 435 for Support Service Staff with 15 places being allocated to Support Service Managers. The objectives of the SKILL Project for support staff and support service managers are to:

- Provide an opportunity to return to learning;
- Update and extend knowledge, skills and to improve job efficiency and effectiveness, and consequently improve services to patients / clients;
- Enhance satisfaction and motivation in order to contribute more fully to the attainment of the organisational mission;
- Develop areas of expertise to progress the "skill mix" requirements of the health services having regard to workforce and succession planning issues;
- Assist in reaching full potential;
- Guide personal development and career planning.

For further information, please contact Jillian Sexton at jillian.sexton@fedvol.ie

LONG STAY CHARGES

A Working Group has been established to look at member organisations issues with regard to the implementation of the above charges, under the chair of Mr. Wally Freyne, Director of Services, Daughters of Charity Services. Following a recommendation from the Working Group, a letter has issued to Ms. Mary Harney, T.D., Minister for Health & Children, requesting a meeting with her to discuss the application of the current legislation on the intellectual disability sector and the need for either new legislation or an amendment to the current legislation to make it more applicable and equitable to our sector. The Working Group has also outlined a number of recommendations which are currently being addressed.

Disability Act 2005

The Disability Act 2005 takes legislative effect in respect of 0-5 year olds from 1st June, 2007. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies in a letter dated 15th March, 2007, to Professor Brendan Drumm, Chief Executive, HSE, expressed its serious concerns at the absence of an agreed working document to convert policy into practice. A document prepared by the Federation's Early Intervention Expert Working Group, which was established by our Education Sub Committee, was submitted to the HSE and we await engagement with us in relation to this document by the HSE.

INO/PNA INDUSTRIAL ACTION

A National Steering Committee has been convened by the HSE — Employers Agency with the aim of ensuring a co-ordinated response at a national level to the industrial action being undertaken by the INO/PNA. The National Federation is represented on this National Steering Committee by John Pepper, St. John of God Hospital Services, Gerry Mulholland, Stewarts Hospital and Sean Abbot, COPE Foundation. A number of Regional Committees have also been established which include representation from all relevant stakeholders including the National Federation. A briefing session in relation to the dispute was held in Stewarts Hospital on February 21st 2007 at which John Pepper provided an update on the key issues involved. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies will be seeking to ensure that there is an effective communication structure in place that allows for the timely flow of information.

SYMPOSIUM PAPERS

Papers from our 2006 Symposium "Meeting the CHALLENGE: of Building a Person Centred Mental Health Service for People with Intellectual Disabilities" which was held in The Heritage Hotel, Killenard, Co. Laois on Wednesday 25th & Thursday 26th October 2006 are now available on our website — www.fedvol.ie. Symposium proceedings will be available shortly.

CITIZENS INFORMATION ACT 2007

The Citizens Information Act 2007 was passed into law in February 2007. The primary purpose of the Act is to amend the Comhairle Act 2000. The Act provides for the change of the name of Comhairle to the Citizens Information Board. Most importantly, the Act provides for the introduction of a personal advocacy service for certain people with disabilities who would otherwise have difficulty obtaining access to the services in place to assist them.

National Disability Strategy Stakeholder Monitoring Group

A National Disability Strategy Stakeholders Monitoring Group, chaired by the Department of An Taoiseach, has been established for a three year term. The Group was established following a commitment under the new Social Partnership Agreement Towards 2016 to monitor progress on the overall implementation of the National Disability Strategy, building on the monitoring and review procedures already in place in each of the six sectoral plans. The National Disability Strategy Stakeholders Monitoring Group will have a series of

biannual meetings between the Disability Stakeholders Group, representing the Disability Sector, and the Senior Officials Group on Disability, which comprises officials representing the six Government Departments responsible for implementing the sectoral plans and a number of other departments, including the Departments of Finance and Education & Science. Brian O'Donnell has been nominated as the National Federation's representative on the National Disability Strategy Stakeholders Monitoring Group.

National Federation Website and Web Portal for Member Organisations

Website: Our new website — www.fedvol.ie — went online in March 2006. The website will provide you with key information on the range of activities taking place in intellectual disability services in Ireland and the role played by the National Federation in supporting member organisations to provide high quality services and supports to people with intellectual disability. It also provides detailed information on the range of services provided by our member organisations and current developments in intellectual disability services in Ireland. You will also find up to date news stories, details of funding opportunities, consultations and a host of other valuable information. In our Useful Links section we have developed a databank of information resources for your convenience. We hope you find our website useful and we would welcome your feedback.

Web Portal: We are currently developing a Web Portal — essentially an online information service that will allow our 61 member organisations to communicate and exchange information via the Internet. Access to the portal for each individual will be secured through a username and a password with individual levels of access to information. Members will be able to download agenda, minutes and associated documents for meetings, share best practice through Discussion Boards/Notice Boards, comment and provide feedback to draft documents, register on-line for National Federation conferences etc. We look forward to having this on-line facility in place for our members by mid-2007.

OUR MEMBERS

Change of name for Meath Association

Please note that Meath Association has now changed its name to Clann Mór Ltd. Contact details: Martine Healy, Director of Service, Clann Mór House, Commons Rd, Navan, Co. Meath, Tel. 046 9022079, Email: info@clannmor.ie, Website: www.clannmor.ie

Changes at the National Federation Board

Mary Kealy, Brothers of Charity Services, Clare replaced Bob Sillery on the National Federation Board. The National Federation would like to thank Bob for his very valuable contribution to the work of the Board of Directors over the past number of years.

LEGISLATION

Charities Legislation

The General Scheme for the Charities Regulation Bill was published in March 2006. The General Scheme forms the basis for legislative drafting of the Charities Bill, which will provide a modern statutory framework for charities. It is not now expected that this legislation, which is currently being drafted, will be enacted before the General Election. An update on the Charities Legislation was presented at the National Federation General Assembly Meeting on Wednesday 21st March 2007.

Informing Families Project

The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, with the support of the Health Services National Partnership Forum, has initiated a project to develop and implement national best practice guidelines for informing families that their child has a disability. This is a Department of Health & Children and HSE supported initiative.

The project aims to develop National Best Practice Guidelines for informing families of their child's disability at the first stage of communicating a diagnosis or concern, and to recommend education and training for staff involved in informing families. The guidelines are being developed through research involving hospital, community care and disability services; management and staff; and families of children with disabilities. The research is guided by a steering committee, chaired by Dr. John Hillery, President of the Medical Council of Ireland & Consultant Psychiatrist with intellectual disability services, Stewarts Hospital and St. Raphael's (St. John of God Services), with representation from key groupings such as parents, professionals bodies and unions, the HSE, the Health Services National Partnership Forum, the Department of Health & Children and the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies.

Twenty two focus groups have been completed and 2,200 questionnaires have been circulated to parents and professionals.

These are currently being analysed and collated, and together with a comprehensive review of international best practice, will form draft best practice guidelines, which will then undergo a process of consultation with key stakeholders, followed by a comprehensive dissemination and implementation strategy.

For further information on the Informing Families Project, please contact Alison Harnett, Project Co-Ordinator, Email: alison.harnett@fedvol.ie.

UN CONVENTION

The full text of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including the Optional Protocol is available at <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable>. The Convention was open for signature on March 30, 2007. There are 192 member states in the UN and

20 ratifications are needed for the treaty to become international law. The Tánaiste and Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Mr. Michael McDowell, T.D., announced on 28th March 2007 that the Government has agreed to his proposal that Ireland should sign the UN Convention.