
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES

Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability

Oranmore Business Park, Oranmore, Galway, Ireland.
Phone: +353 91 792316 • Fax: +353 91 792317
Email: info@fedvol.ie • Website: www.fedvol.ie

Welcome to National Federation Newsletter Issue 39 – Summer 2013



National Federation calls for halt to cuts in Disability Funding in Budget 2014

The National Federation has consistently expressed its serious concerns about successive cuts in disability funding over the past number of years. Aggregate cuts over the period 2008-2013 alone amount to 15% and this, combined with the moratorium on recruitment and the absence of investment in physical facilities, has placed a huge strain on service providers in terms of their ability to maintain essential frontline services and in meeting new and changing needs such as those arising in the case of children graduating from schools.

An additional source of frustration during 2013 has been the stance taken in some of its regions by the HSE to the 1.2% cut announced in Budget 2013. The HSE has, in many cases, implemented cuts in funding in excess of the government decision and the National Federation has invested significant energy and time in tracking this situation throughout the country and advocating with Government to ensure that its decision is implemented in accordance with the Budget announcement.

In the context of 2014 we will be calling on Government to bring to a halt the reductions in funding for disability services. We will be highlighting the significant challenges which are presenting in the demographic profile of people with disabilities in terms of present and future service requirements.

Similar to 2013 we will be adopting a whole of Federation approach in implementing a comprehensive pre-budget campaign the details of which will be finalised shortly by our Communication sub-group. It is our intention to work in a comprehensive and focused way in the implementation of our campaign strategy in the weeks and months ahead up to budget day.

National Council for Special Education Consultative Forum

Following the recent establishment of the **NCSE Consultative Forum 2013-2016** we are pleased to announce that Christy Lynch, who was nominated by the National Federation to apply to be a member, has received confirmation that his nomination has been agreed by the Council of NCSE for appointment to its Consultative Forum.

Immersion Event – Killarney, 21st – 26th April 2013



Support to people with disabilities in Ireland is entering a new era with the implementation of the new policy direction towards individualised supports as envisaged through policies such as: *Value for Money and Policy Review of Disability Services in Ireland, Time to Move on from Congregated Settings Report, New Directions*



Report and Progressing Disability Services to Children and Young People. Together these policies herald an unprecedented era of reform and significant change in how support services are provided. The National Federation responded to these challenges by organising a highly successful conference in Killarney in April entitled the ***Immersion Project From Planning to Action - Towards having a Good Life.***

The project involved an intensive five-day orientation to individualised ways of working and will be followed by a year-long supported change programme. The core aim of Immersion was to support deep-seated reform in how people with intellectual disabilities are supported in order that they might live lives of their choosing and occupy socially valued roles in their communities.



The programme addressed **three** critical questions:

- **Why** is change needed?
- **How** can quality individualised supports be developed?
- **What** specific steps must be taken?

The seminar was led by international experts, **John O'Brien, Michael Kendrick, Hope Leet Dittmeier, Pat Fratangelo, Janet Klees, David Pitonyak and Patti Scott.** Important contributions were made by self advocates and their support staff from **Western Care, CoAction, Muiriosa and Seasamh,** sharing their experiences of developing individualised supports. The honesty and openness displayed by them in demonstrating their clear determination to live a life of their choosing proved very popular with all the delegates.



Over 300 people attended the Immersion Event in Killarney made up of representatives from over 25 organisations. The programme's unique style placed the focus on creating an **internal dialogue in organisations between the key stakeholders** as a key change strategy. The event was seen by many to be very informative with perspectives heard from self-advocates, family members, Irish organisations, Government bodies and International experts setting the scene for change.

Key Messages from Immersion Workshops

The Personal Journey to Citizen

Hope Leet Dittmeier and David Pitonyak

- The importance of the 'Discovery' of the person
- Focusing on peoples abilities
- Understanding challenging behaviour
- How serious a problem Loneliness is for people



"Eureka moment for me. 30 years working with people with I.D – David Pitonyak made sense of it all for me"

Supporting Relationships



Janet Klees and Pat Fratangelo

- Seeing each person as unique
- Building relationships is key to a life of meaning
- Developing roles to become part of community
- The difference between living in a community and being a part of community

"I loved how real Janet's presentation was and felt it was very applicable to the Irish situation"

Exploring the Different Dimensions of the Transformation Challenge

John O'Brien, Patti Scott and Michael Kendrick

- Supporting people to develop a network of friends
- Brokerage
- Supporting the person to 'create a home' by connecting to natural supports
- Agency transformations from fixed models to personalised support arrangements



Where to from here with Immersion?

Delegates said that Immersion will have a significant impact on the way they support people going forward. They felt re-energized and refocused with a changed outlook on the way they will work.



Feedback indicated a considerable need from organizations for support from the National Federation in making these changes by: *Providing More Training, offering Mentoring & Support, Facilitating connection Between Organisations, Reporting on Change in Organisations and Follow-up Meetings.*

The National Federation has responded to these calls and plans are now underway for a follow-up Immersion Update Meeting on Wednesday 25th September, 2013 to facilitate organizations to share the changes they have initiated. This will be followed by a training and support seminar given by **Hope Leet Dittmeier** in early October. The National Federation are also planning on organising a seminar with **David Pitonyak** in 2014.

National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan

The National Federation has, over the past number of months, in its capacity as a member of the Disability stakeholders group, been inputting into the development of the National Disability Strategy Implementation Plan. The plan was signed off at a meeting held on June 20th, 2013 which was attended by Brian O' Donnell, Chief Executive, and it was agreed that it will be presented for noting by the Government at a meeting taking place on July 23rd, 2013. We will keep you informed of further developments in this regard.

Housing Matters



Under the provisions of the **National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability 2011-2016** national guidelines will be drawn up for housing assessment for people with disabilities. Whilst this is taking place an initial protocol has been issued by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government to guide Local Authorities until the national guidelines are finalised.

The Interim Protocol for the Provision of Housing Supports to People with Disabilities was circulated to each of the Housing Director of Services in all Local Authorities during May and takes effect from 22 May 2013.

The protocol was developed by the Housing Agency which is charged with the implementation of the National Housing Strategy for People with a Disability at national level. It has now been adopted for implementation by housing authorities.

It is intended that full national guidance in relation to the assessment and allocation processes for people with disabilities will be finalised by the Housing Agency by third quarter, 2013, and this guidance will replace the Interim Protocol.

An important point to note is that under the Interim Protocol, people who have a disability and live in any of the following settings should **not be deemed to be adequately housed** by the Local Authority if they wish to apply for housing supports:

- Congregated setting
- Nursing home
- Group home in the community
- Parent's house

If you would like any further information on this topic please contact alison.harnett@fedvol.ie

Human Resources Update:

Haddington Road Agreement

Following an extensive conciliation and mediation process between Government and all Trade Union and representative bodies across the Public Service, facilitated by the Labour Relations Commission, the Haddington Road Agreement was published in late



The
Labour Relations
Commission

May 2013. The Agreement was subsequently ratified by the Parties involved and will apply for a period of 3 years from July 1st 2013 with the pay and productivity provisions set out in the Agreement being implemented with effect from this date. It is envisaged that through the provisions of the Agreement, i.e. a series of pay and productivity measures, €1 billion savings in the cost of the public sector pay and pensions bill will be achieved during the 3 year period.

In June a series of regional briefing sessions were arranged by the HSE in relation to the agreement and a further briefing was arranged by the National Federation for member organisations on July 3rd last. Mr. John Delamere, Head of Corporate Employee Relations, HSE, provided an input at the session and dealt with the wide ranging queries raised by members. Organisations are now in the process of implementing the various provisions of the agreement.

Full details in relation to the agreement and a FAQ's document can be obtained from the following websites: www.lrc.ie / www.hse.ie

Children First Update

Work has been continuing at national level in relation to the implementation of the provisions of Children First in the disability sector with the 'National Disability Steering Group for Implementation of Children First', chaired by Ms. Ann Bourke, National Disability Unit, HSE, meeting regularly. The work of the group has been focused primarily on:



- **Children First in Disability Services – A Guide to Policy Formation and Implementation:** This guidance framework has been developed to ensure a consistent approach to and implementation of Children First, 2011 across all statutory and non-statutory HSE funded disability services and to ensure compliance with same. All organisations whose staff may have contact with children through their work are required to implement this policy framework. Whilst not specifically referred to in Children First 2011, organisations providing services to adults with disabilities must also implement this guidance framework to ensure their compliance with Children First. A copy of this document has been circulated to all National Federation member organisations.
- **Children First Training:** We are liaising with Mr *Boyd Dodds*, HSE National Lead for Children First, in relation to the provision of training to organisations. Work is advanced on a range of training programmes – *Foundation Training, Information Briefings, DLP Training, Mandatory*

Reporter Training, Train-the-Trainers Programme – and as details become available in relation to same they will be circulated to National Federation members.

- **Key Performance Indicators 2013:** Organisations will be expected to report on progress in implementing Children First and a number of key performance indicators have been agreed on which agencies will have to report progress during 2013.

To support the work of the National Disability Steering Group an internal NFVB Children First Implementation Group has been established and the role of this group will be to support National Federation members in complying with the provisions of Children First. If any organisation wishes to nominate a representative to join this group please contact Jillian Sexton – jillian.sexton@fedvol.ie

Non-payment of increments:

A survey of National Federation members was undertaken recently in order to determine the number of agencies who have been unable to fund the payment of staff increments in recent years and the amount of funding involved. Correspondence was subsequently issued to the HSE outlining the issues involved and we are currently awaiting a response in relation to same.



Sleep-overs:

Talks are underway nationally in relation to the issue of ‘sleep-overs’ with IMPACT & SIPTU referring the issue to the Labour Relations Commission. The concerns of the unions regarding sleep-overs have been generally outlined as follows:

- Breach of the working hours provision of the OMTA (48-hours)
- Breaches of compensatory rest provisions of the OMTA (11-hour rest between periods of work)
- Payment for sleep-over

The National Federation has been represented at the national talks by Rose Rafferty, St. Michael’s House, Olive Leonard, Muiriosa Foundation & Adrian Harney, Ability West. A meeting took place in the LRC on May 7th last, chaired by Mr. Brendan Cunningham, Conciliation Officer. Representatives of both IMPACT and SIPTU were present. John Delamere, Corporate Employee Relations Services, lead the management team and representatives of the Dept. of Public Enterprise & Reform, Dept. of Health and National Federation present. It was argued by the management side that the issue of the payment / allowance for sleep-overs and those relating to the Organisation of Working Time Act should be dealt with separately as no cost increasing measures can be considered at this time.

Following the LRC hearing the TU’s were to issue a summary of their prioritized issues to the LRC with a further LRC meeting to be arranged. Further updates on this issue will be forwarded to agencies as the discussions advance. (**Note:** There is a provision within the *Haddington Road Agreement May 2013* that the parties are committed to completing the LRC process in relation to sleep-overs by December 31st 2013.)

Human Resource Fora:

The first half of 2013 has been a busy period for both the Strategic Human Resources Sub-Committee and the Operational Human Resources Group. The Strategic Sub-Committee has been concentrating its efforts on the overarching human resources issues facing the sector and addressing the human resources proposals as outlined in key national policy documents / action plans.

The Operational HR Group is more focused on 'day-to-day' operational human resources issues and given the pace of developments and changes being introduced nationally by government and the HSE there are considerable issues which organisations are grappling with. The Operational Human Resources Group, which is open to all National Federation HR personnel, will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, September 25th at 11.00am in Muiriosa Foundation.

Employee Assistance Programme:

The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provides confidential counselling services and information services to a large number of member organisations of the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies.



As we approach the end of the first 3 year cycle of EAP provision between Vhi Corporate Solutions and the NFVB, Vhi CS are delighted to announce that the fixed per capita rate agreed in June 2010 will continue to be offered for the next 3 years! 30 member organisations are currently availing of the EAP and to date the service has been widely used as is traditionally the case for organisations within the Care Sector. The issues presenting to the EAP over the last 3 years have also been a reflection of the current economic climate as employees face a range of challenges in their working environment and also in their personal lives.

Through the EAP service, a wide range of supports are available to assist both employees and organisations with a broad range of issues. These supports include:

- Telephone Counselling
- Face to face counselling through a nationwide network of counsellors
- Specialist Information Service
- Manager Support
- EAP Website
- Critical Incident Support

As we look to the future, there are a number of additional services that Vhi CS intend to promote to member organisations of the NFVB, these include: Parent Coaching / Career Coaching / Home Instead – Senior Care Offering. Also, for member organisations that are currently availing of the EAP, please keep an eye out for a competition that will be run over the summer to help raise awareness of the service in your organisation!

For further information and costs, please contact: Mr. Joe Doddy (085) 1100427 / (01) 7994120 or Vhi Corporate Solutions on: info@vhics.ie

Inclusive Research Network (IRN)

The IRN is currently undertaking a new research project focusing on 'life stories'. The project involves collecting the life stories of people with disabilities who have made the transition from institutions through to group homes and on to independent living. Members of the network then intend to sift through these stories for examples of good and bad support which helps and hinders people from making such a transition process and how people are consulted.

The IRN has held a number of meetings to organise the current project and have decided questions to be asked. The IRN has decided to run its own project separate from the Living Well in the Community Case Study which is being done at University of Limerick by Nancy Salmon.

Three members of IRN, Brian Donohoe, Patrick Santry and Marie Wolfe, gave interviews to the British Journal of Learning Disability which will be included in a special article to be published shortly.

Current officers of IRN Steering Group

Chair –Patrick Santry

Vice Chair –Arthur Sexton

Secretary - Brian Donohoe

Public Relations Officer- Ger Minogue

Assistant PRO - Joe McGrath

Article written by Brian Donohoe – IRN Secretary



From front clockwise: Patrick Santry, Joe McGrath, Brian Donohoe, Ger Minogue and Arthur Sexton.

Member Organisation News

Development, content validation and reliability testing of a tool to assess respite needs of family carers of people with intellectual disabilities

St John of God Carmona Services carried out a research exercise to draw up a tool to assess respite needs of family carers of children and adults with intellectual disabilities. The research also aimed to establish content validity and test re-test as well as inter-rater reliability of the tool. Content validity was established with the help of nine jurors using Lawshe’s quantitative method. Test re-test and inter-rater reliability were established with a 25 percent sample of family carers accessing respite services from Carmona Services.

The new tool has two separate forms for children and adults. Both forms have 20 items covering four domains namely functional independence, health and safety concerns, family care situation and social support. The Content Validity Index of the child version of the tool is 0.901 while the Content Validity Index of the adult version is 0.890. Test re-test reliability measures calculated using Pearson correlation indicated very high correlation (adult= 0.98, children=0.99) significant at 0.01 level for both versions of the tool. The kappa co-efficient for the measurement of agreement between the two raters indicated outstanding level of correlation for both versions (adult=0.925 Children=0.850) of the tool.

Given that there is sufficient evidence in the literature to suggest that using a formal needs assessment system has definite advantages in administering respite services it is envisaged that the new Respite Needs Assessment tool will aid service efficiency, bring about transparency in allocation of resources and also reduce complaints. Carmona Services has also introduced a new system of needs based allocation of respite resources and has successfully implemented same in its adult services.



Article by Tomy Philip, Social Worker, Carmona Services



Lunch Time Cookery Group

Hi my name is Thomas. I want to tell you all about the lunch time cookery course I completed in Cheeverstown. The course involved learning to make tasty, quick, lunches for myself, my family or friends. It was organised by occupational therapy and catering departments here. It ran for six weeks. There were five other people attending the course with me. We were all hands on.

I work in the kitchen in Cheeverstown from Monday to Friday. I have learned lots of new skills during the group such as peeling, cutting, following recipes, food storage and using the cooker. We made lots of nice things to eat in the group like pasta, soup, scrambled egg and baked potato. My favourite recipe was pizza.



Thomas is busy in the kitchen preparing delicious food.

When the group was over the occupational therapy student came to visit me at home. During the visit, I made pizza for him and my Mum. They really liked it. I am very proud of my achievements in the kitchen. I have also made new friends during the group. I enjoyed helping others along the way. I want to say a big thank you to Colette from catering for helping me during the group.

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Advocacy in Action

This year’s Co Action Advocacy Conference was held on July 10th in the West lodge Hotel in Bantry Co. Cork. The conference was a Self-Advocate led event, planned and organised by the CoAction Action Forum. The Action Forum is an elected representative group of people who use CoActions services.

The title of the conference was “*It’s my life*”. We wanted to speak about what’s important in our lives and share it with others. Several self-advocates from other organisations also presented on the day in various workshops. This contributed to the atmosphere of openness and people sharing their life experiences together at an event we organised and facilitated. ‘*Nothing about us without us*’ is our motto and that was very much the case at this event.



Photo: Mary Seymour

Workshops included;

Living in my own home “If I can do it, you can do it too.”	Money, money, money.
Intensive Interaction Dance Workshop.	Communication Technology “The way ahead.”
Advocacy “You’ve got to listen to me”	Supported Employment “Job well done”
Facilitating choice through communication.	Circles of support “I’ll do it my way”

The aim of the workshops was to raise awareness about what's important to us, to share information and ask staff, families and other self-advocates to get involved and support us in the choices we make in our lives.



Joanne O Riordan from Millstreet was the guest speaker on the day and what an inspiration she was. She spoke about making the most of life and focusing on ability only. Her upcoming documentary is entitled 'No Limbs, No Limits' and that is her motto in life.

Photo: Joanne O Riordan & Patrick Santry (Action Forum Chairperson)

Much has changed in peoples' lives over the past two years since the first Advocacy conference hosted by Co Action. Bernadette Keogh who is one of the Action Forum representatives said; *"I feel like a full person, I have gained confidence to speak out. Before I would have just taken what I was given."*

Alan Burke, another forum representative said; *"We are the bosses of our own lives"*
Carol Gilbert of the Southern Star reported that *"this was one of the most positive and inspiring conferences I have ever attended"* and we, the Action Forum plan to build on that.

The Action Forum



Free One Day Workshop Cancer Screening and Early Detection



The National Cancer Screening Service (NCSS), in conjunction with the National Federation Voluntary Bodies (NFVB), is running a number of free workshops on cancer screening and early detection. The workshops will be targeted at staff working with people with and intellectual disability and will focus on the national population-based cancer screening programmes in Ireland – BreastCheck, CervicalCheck and BowelScreen.

Dates & Venues:

- ❖ Tuesday 15th October – National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, Oranmore, Galway
- ❖ Tuesday 12th November – Brothers of Charity, Lota, Glamire, Cork
- ❖ Wednesday 20th November – National Cancer Screening Service, 200 Parnell St, Dublin.

Aim of the course?

The aim is to equip facilitators with the knowledge and skills needed to be able to support informed choice in relation to cancer screening within their organisation and to provide accurate information about cancer screening services to people with an intellectual disability.

Who should attend?

- ❖ Nurses
- ❖ Residential staff
- ❖ Staff with a role in training and education
- ❖ Staff working with Women's groups and health programmes

For information & booking please email jillian.sexton@fedvol.ie

Open Training College – Innovation in Third Level Education!



The Open Training College continues to innovate in the delivery of sector specific training for the disability and wider nonprofit sectors. The College introduced the Supported Open Learning model in the nineties, spearheaded the use of online platforms for adult learners in the noughties and is now rolling out a multi-phased approach to students and organisations that offer even greater flexibility and affordability when enhancing core skills for staff.

The programmes on offer can be viewed in the recently published 'New OTC Programmes 2013-2014' which is now available online or from the College. It outlines each new discipline of study and highlights the different approaches on offer. Whether you choose to learn completely online or through attending intensive face-to-face seminars, or through a blend of both, the Open Training College offers a multitude of choices for learners and organisations.

New courses available include:


- Positive Behavioural Supports – Challenging Behaviour
- Person Centred Planning
- Supported Employment
- HIQA Standards preparation training
- Teaching Independent Living Skills
- Online Learning Module (Trainers/Managers)

The Open Training College is still receiving applications for the autumn commencement of the following accredited courses:

- BA (Ordinary) in Applied Social Studies (Disability)
- BA (Honours) in Applied Social Studies (Disability)
- Certificate in Applied Management (Nonprofit/Human Services)
- Higher Certificate in Applied Management (Nonprofit/Human Services)
- BA in Applied Management (Nonprofit/Human Services)

For more information about the new programmes or to request an application form please contact Conor Murray at the Open Training College on (01) 2988544 or info.otc@smh.ie or through the website www.opentrainingcollege.com

Conferences / Events – Autumn 2013



Date for your Diary

National Advocacy Conference
Equal Citizenship, Partners in Progress

Monday 9th September 2013
Dublin Castle
9.30am – 4.00pm

Official Opening by Joan Burton, TD. Minister for Social Protection.



School of Nursing and Midwifery
Trinity College Dublin

Navigating Leadership in Difficult Times: Health Care Professionals in Ireland One Day Seminar

Date: Thursday 12th September 2013, 9am-4pm
Venue: School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin

The detailed schedule for the day and directions on how to register are available at http://www.nursing-midwifery.tcd.ie/events-conferences/leadership_seminar_2013.php

For Further Information please contact Ms. Jeni Ryan, Administrative Officer – Events, School of Nursing & Midwifery, Trinity College Dublin, 24 D'Olier Street, Dublin 2: Tel: (01) 896 3860 / Email: ryanjen@tcd.ie Web: nursing-midwifery.tcd.ie/events-conferences/



THE EQUALITY AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS COMHIONANNAIS

The Equality Authority is hosting a half day national conference '**Mainstreaming Equality: Making it Real**' in Dublin Castle on **Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013.**

The conference will showcase and share good practice in equality mainstreaming approaches applied in the further education and training sector and with organisations responsible for delivering active labour market programmes. It will also feature presentations from projects that have been funded to stimulate workplaces to take action on equality by encouraging employers to be planned and systematic in their approaches to workplace equality. Innovative partnership approaches between service providers, employers, trade union and NGOs in challenging discrimination and accommodating diversity will also be highlighted.

Who should attend?

The conference is aimed at practitioners, further education and training personnel, and labour market policy makers and all those who work in educational practice, policy, advocacy or NGOs with an interest in equality and diversity. A detailed conference programme will be issued shortly. In the meantime we would ask that you note this date in your diary.

For more information:

For information and bookings call Caroline Jones on 0505 24126 or email: cjones@equality.ie

Have a lovely summer !

