
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF VOLUNTARY BODIES

Providing Services to People with Intellectual Disability

Research Subcommittee Action Agenda for the topic Relationships and Quality of Service 2010:

Research Strategy consultations in 2008 identified 11 Priority areas for Research. At a meeting of the Research Subcommittee in September 2009 it was proposed to pursue one topic for 2009. The suggested topic was Relationships & Quality of Service.

Relationships and Quality of Service

This combines two priority topics identified in research strategy consultations and also builds on an emerging theme from the topic of living options in 2009 which identified relationships as central to the success of where a person lives.

To pursue this priority it was proposed at the Research Subcommittee meeting in December that 2010 should be devoted to developing our knowledge base on this topic. An Action Plan has been developed to pursue this goal.

Action Agenda 2010:

- Develop and expand our knowledge base on this topic through the provision of up-to-date reading material and resources on the topic. These will be made available to our member organisations through the National Federation Website.
- Convene a residential weekend in the summer to critically examine this literature and draw some conclusions from what the evidence tells us.
- Engage with inclusive research network researchers around their perceptions of their relationships with staff.
- Develop a comprehensive literature review on the topic of relationships, friendships and supports in intellectual disability.
- Organise a series of seminars and workshops on these topics.

- The first of these will take place in March in Galway and will examine the role of staff in the lives of the people with intellectual disability. This seminar will examine the topic from three perspectives, the person with an intellectual disability, the family member and the staff member.
- Examine the law in relation to sexuality and intellectual disability nationally and internationally and draw comparisons between Ireland, UK, Scotland, Canada and Australia. This assignment will be carried out by LLB students from NUI Galway as a clinical placement under supervision from Dr. Larry Donnelly and Dr. Mary Keyes, School of Law, NUI Galway.
- Develop a handbook for staff working with people with intellectual disability. This will look at how the law prevents or supports staff in their role of supporters of people with intellectual disability. Day to day scenarios in the life of a person with an intellectual disability will be considered. How the law interacts with these scenarios to support or hinder the person will be the basis of the staff handbook.
- Advance an awareness raising programme using film and drama to highlight the issues of concern in relationships for people with intellectual disability. We propose to develop a video which examines a person's life and talks about the relationships in their lives.
- Have a series of presentations from recognised 'experts' or researchers in this area present to the Research Subcommittee following each quarterly meeting.
- Link with other national and international projects who have this as a central theme.
- Link with the Irish Sex Education Network ISEN (now called Connect people Network) on this theme.

