



CHOICES AND RIGHTS – UPDATE DECEMBER 2013

CHOICES AND RIGHTS NEWS

Welcome to the latest edition of our **UPDATE** email bulletin. We'd like to start by wishing everyone the best for Christmas and the New Year and hope that 2014 will see a big improvement on the way disabled people are being currently treated by the Government with welfare cuts, etc. However, it's not all doom and gloom and this is hopefully reflected in our update.

TWO NEW SERVICES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

We are really pleased to announce that we now have two new services up and running for disabled people at Choices and Rights. We have a Disability Discrimination Advice Service where you can get information and support on discrimination you may face and this is being managed by Duncan Edge and Zem Rodaway.

We also have a new Employment and Education project to help disabled people look at developing their skills for moving towards work, education or voluntary work and this is being managed by Rachel Whiteley.

Attached to this email is further information about both services, so please help us circulate these as widely as possible to disabled people in the local area. We are particularly keen to hear from anyone who can assist in identifying disabled people who may benefit from attending our Employment and Education programme and Rachel would love to hear from you on Hull (01482) 878778.

WEB SITE

Over the last few months, we have been improving our web site and Ken Pugh has been updating information on a more regular basis and adding new sections. We would really like to know what you find useful on the site, so if you have a few minutes to spare, please go to

www.choicesandrights.org.uk and if you have any comments to make, please email: mark@choicesandrights.org.uk and we will do our best to take them into account.

DISABLED PEOPLE WIN COURT OF APPEAL DECISION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT

Five disabled campaigners have successfully that government breached equality duty by failing to properly assess impact of abolishing the Independent Living Fund (ILF).

The ILF helps 18,500 severely disabled people in Britain to hire a carer or personal assistant to provide round-the-clock care and enable them to work and live independent lives. The government proposed that the ILF, currently costing around £300m be scrapped in 2015, and its resources transferred to local authorities.

However, the Court of Appeal ruled that the government had breached its equality duty in failing to properly assess what one of the judges called the "very grave impact" of the closure on disabled people. The court ruled that the decision by the then minister for disabilities, Esther McVey, to [scrap the ILF](#), announced on 18 December 2012, was based on an unreasonably optimistic assessment by Department for Work and Pensions officials of the likely impact of abolition on recipients.

This is biggest success so far against the Government's proposals that are having a huge effect on our lives and we hope that it leads to more legal challenges and that it makes the Government think more carefully about how such changes can have such a drastic impact on our lives, our independence and our ability to live as equals in society.

SAINTS AND SINNERS

This part of the newsletter has been attracting some attention and we are receiving regular comments, but we would welcome more. So if you have had a good or bad experience to share, please get in touch. Maybe a shop went out of their way to assist you or didn't provide any help at all. We don't have to use your name, so let us know of your experiences.

SAINTS

Our saint's nomination this month goes to the Guinness advert on TV, showing a group of wheelchair users all playing basketball. The advert

then reveals that only one of the group is actually a wheelchair user, but his mates have all borrowed chairs, so they do sport together. Great advert and shows a very positive image of disability.

SINNERS

There is a very clear winner in this category this month as it has to be the “fake” sign language interpreter at the Nelson Mandela memorial service in South Africa. It has now been revealed that he has done this before and it makes you wonder how good security checks are when this man was stood next to the President of the United States, etc!

REGIONAL EVENT FOR DISABLED PEOPLE’S ORGANISATIONS

As this Bulletin goes out, we have been informed that on the 14th March 2014, there will be an event in Leeds for disabled people’s user led organisations, funded by the Office for Disability Issues. We will circulate more details as they arrive, but suggest you keep the date clear as it promises to be an excellent opportunity for us to get together and share experiences and ideas.

EXPERT PATIENTS VOLUNTEER TUTOR

Could you become a volunteer tutor for the Expert Patients Programme?

The Expert Patients Programme (EPP), run by City Health Care Partnership CIC is a six-week course which helps people with long term health conditions manage their condition better and improve the quality of their life. The course is delivered by volunteer tutors who themselves have experience of long term health conditions, so fully understand many of the issues faced by the participants.

By covering subjects such as dealing with pain and tiredness, relaxation techniques, healthy eating and planning for the future, the sessions enable those attending to develop new skills to manage their condition better and feel more confident and in control of their lives.

In order to meet demand in 2014, they need to recruit additional volunteer tutors. Anyone who has experience of long term health conditions can become involved. Tutors will be fully trained and assessed before they start delivering sessions themselves, although the

role is voluntary, any out of pocket expenses and travelling costs will be reimbursed. Applicants would need to be available for Tutor Training on 4th, 5th, 11th, 12th March 2014, 9 am – 4 pm.

The tutors themselves really benefit from delivering the programme; many say that helping other people is self-rewarding and that by sharing skills and experiences with others means you focus on what you can do, rather than what you can't.

Current tutors have said, "It's fun, challenging and I learn something new from every session I run and I feel more motivated since I became a volunteer tutor, It's one of the most positive things I have ever done"

Anyone who would like to be involved in becoming a Tutor can contact the Volunteer Coordinator, The Carers' Information & Support Service, (CISS), City Health Care Partnership CIC, 30 King Edward Street, Hull, HU1 3SS, 01482 336298, email: epp@chcphull.nhs.uk for an application pack, all successful candidates would be subject to a DBS check.

Closing date: **28th February 2014**

Happy Christmas and New Year to everyone from Choices and Rights

This bulletin is published by Choices and Rights Disability Coalition. If there are any issues or articles you would like included please contact Mark Baggley on (01482) 878778 or email mark@choicesandrights.org.uk Please also Mark if you wish to unsubscribe to this bulletin.

Choices and Rights Disability Coalition, Jude Lodge (Tiverton House), Tiverton Road, Hull. HU7 4DQ

TEL 01482 878778

Email office@choicesandrights.org.uk

Web www.choicesandrights.org.uk

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