



## **CHOICES AND RIGHTS – UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2014**

### **Choices and Rights News**

Welcome to the latest edition of our **UPDATE** email bulletin. We apologise for the delay since the last edition, but we have been working on a new emailing system that means we can now send this (and other information) to all subscribers with one click of the mouse, rather than hundreds. Hopefully, this will make it easier and quicker for you to receive information from us, as well as saving us time.

This issue has a number of interesting features including details about a new book by a former actor in Grange Hill, how anyone can find out if you are receiving a mobility benefit and your chance to get expert training on employment issues when employing a PA. However, we start with a much more personal article, written by a young disabled man called Dylan, who has recently completed work experience in our office at Choices and Rights.

### **Why I wanted to do my work experience at Choices and Rights**

I wanted to do my work experience here because it met my needs and was accessible for me and also I thought it would be interesting to find out what kind of work you do. I had only a little information about the organisation so I was hoping to find out a bit more. I have learnt about the history of the organisation like how the idea came about.

### **What my plans are for the future**

I have one more year left at school and then I am hoping to go to the sixth form and hopefully study ICT and Math and then I want to go to university and study web-design because I find computer programming very interesting I already know the programming languages HTML, PHP, C++ and JavaScript and I have built websites in the past.

### **What's my dream job?**

My dream job is computer programming in particular web-design because I like building things to do with internet enabled devices. I think this kind of job will be beneficial because I can do the job sat down and it is something that I will enjoy. I would enjoy going to work every day if I had a job like that.

Thanks to Dylan for his article and he was a real pleasure to have in the office on his work experience.

### **Rights and Responsibilities – Disabled people and their PA's working together**

Do you want to be a more confident employer? Do you want to have a better working relationship with your PA's?

Being a PA can be an extremely difficult job, the nature of the job means that employees are often micro-managed (which most people find difficult), or not managed at all, which leads to a shift in the balance of power and can leave the employer feeling resentful and disempowered. Being a PA is a unique role; as is being a disabled employer (or their representative) and both parties need to recognise the difficulties caused by each other's respective roles. Failure to do so can eventually lead to a complete breakdown of the working relationship.

This training concentrates on boundaries, and the respective roles of PA's and their employers. These free one day courses are being offered to personal budget users/personal health budget users and their employees. The next course is on:

**14<sup>th</sup> October 2014 @ the Beverley Leisure Centre**

The courses are being facilitated by Choices and Rights in conjunction with Encompass Consultancy.

All courses will run between 10am and 3pm, lunch and refreshments will be provided. All venues are accessible and other access needs will be met.

To book a place for yourself and your PA(s) call Choices and Rights Disability Coalition on 01482 878778 or email

[office@choicesandrights.org.uk](mailto:office@choicesandrights.org.uk)

## **Give Your Views on Outpatients Services**

Healthwatch is seeking your views and experiences on the Outpatients departments at local hospitals: Hull Royal Infirmary, Castle Hill Hospital, the Eye Hospital and the Women and Children's Hospital, over the last 12 months.

The recent CQC report on Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust identified Outpatients services as an issue and Healthwatch is keen to further explore people's experiences and views to gain a wider picture of the service patients are receiving. They want to be able to identify what has worked well as well as the issues patients have experienced to be able to produce recommendations to improve patient experience.

Their report will go to commissioners and providers of services, who have a legal duty to respond to Healthwatch recommendations and tell them how they will improve things.

You can give your views via this short online survey. The more views they gather, the more they will be able to highlight where any action may be needed.

Take the survey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RXSMDYG>.

## **Closure of the Independent Living Fund**

A new Judicial Review of the government's decision to close the Independent Living Fund (ILF) has been launched by a group of disabled people.

According to Disabled People Against the Cuts, it is being brought "on the same basis as the first that once again the Minister had not discharged the public sector equality duty because he did not have adequate information to be able to properly understand what the impact of closure would be on the particular people affected"

<http://dpac.uk.net/2014/06/breaking-news-2nd-court-case-to-challenge-ilf-closure-launched/>

On Saturday 28 June a group of disabled people protested about the closure of the ILF outside Westminster Abbey:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-28074848>

The future of the Independent Living Fund was debated in Parliament for half an hour on Wednesday 18 June. During this debate, Mike Penning, Minister for Disabled People, said “Can I guarantee that no one in receipt of ILF money today will be adversely affected by the changes that we are going to make? No, I cannot, and no Minister of any colour or persuasion could.” The full text of this debate can be found at:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmhansrd/cm140618/halltext/140618h0001.htm#14061867000002>

This independent article by Lorraine Gradwell asks:-Why is the closure of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) important? What does it have to do with you, or me? And just what does independent living really mean?

<http://disabilityhorizons.com/2014/05/closure-independent-living-fund-important/>

(Thanks to Breakthrough UK for this article)

### **Government website allows people to find out about other people's benefits!**

Benefits and Work says that the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's (DVLA) website at gov.uk – which gets 1.5 million hits a month - is still enabling users to find out what mobility related benefits other people are getting. All visitors need to do to get information, such as whether people get the higher rate of the mobility component of disability living allowance (DLA) or either rate of the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is to type in a vehicle's make and registration number. Benefits and Work originally highlighted this issue in July, after which the DVLA told the Information Commissioner's Office that they had put a stop to this. However, Benefits and Work say this is not true.

The full story is on the Benefits and Work website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-information-from-dvla>

### **Date for your diary**

I'M IN Disability Gymnastics is holding a Taster Day on Sunday 2 November 2014 (between 1pm - 4pm ) at the:

Aspire Gymnastics Club

St John's Business Park

Southcoates Lane, HULL, HU9 3RL

(Entrance between 8 and 10 St John's Grove)

Please contact Janet on 01482 871349 or [janet@nolan5.karoo.co.uk](mailto:janet@nolan5.karoo.co.uk) for more information. Disabled people of all impairments are welcome and activities will be split into groups for ages from 11- 17 years and Adults 18+

### **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**

We have 2 "saints" this time. First of all to Channel 4 for continuing to commission The Last Leg as it will be back for a new series in the New Year (see: <http://www.channel4.com/programmes/the-last-leg>) surely the best ever comedy programme to include disabled people that has ever been produced.

Also, for the people of a certain age who remember BBC TV's Grange Hill, actor and comedian Francesca Martinez has written her first book called "What the \*\*\*\* is Normal?" (See: <http://www.amazon.co.uk/What-Normal-Francesca-Martinez/dp/product->

[description/0753555360/ref=dp\\_proddesc\\_0?ie=UTF8&n=266239&qid=1395770137&s=books&sr=8-1](description/0753555360/ref=dp_proddesc_0?ie=UTF8&n=266239&qid=1395770137&s=books&sr=8-1))

for more details. This is an interesting read, regarding her experiences as an actress, a disabled person and attitudes to disability in general. It's also funny!

## **Sinner**

We have one clear winner for sinner this time and it comes in the shape of David Lee from Rutland Way, Scampton in Lincolnshire. Mr Lee is a very public spirited man who racked up almost £14,000 of parking debts after ignoring more than 140 tickets. Many of his tickets were obtained as he not only parked in disabled bays, but thoughtfully decided to park his Ford Mondeo across two bays at once! His total bill is higher than that racked up by footballer Mario Balotelli, when he played for Manchester City who was hit with nearly £10,000 in parking fines.

His vehicle, a Ford Mondeo, was often ticketed for being parked across disabled bays. He also has yet to pay a penny of his fines and it would be ironic if a number of blue badge drivers decided to use his drive as a parking space!

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](mailto:mark@choicesandrights.org.uk) Choices and Rights Disability Coalition, Jude Lodge (Tiverton House), Tiverton Road, Hull. HU7 4DQ

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