



## CDP Newsletter – December 2005

### Editor's Note

The Council of Disabled People Warwickshire and Coventry would like to welcome you all to the Christmas edition of our Newsletter. As highlighted in our previous edition the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 was introduced expanding the existing rights of disabled people. In this edition we will be looking at how these rights introduced in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 have been viewed by disabled people, as well as updating you on the highs and lows of what has been happening within our organisation.

If members would like to contribute to our newsletter or receive it in different formats, please complete the form at the back of the newsletter and return it to me, or contact me on 02476 712984 or email [info@cdp.org.uk](mailto:info@cdp.org.uk) or go to [www.cdp.org.uk](http://www.cdp.org.uk)

The Council of Disabled People would like to take this opportunity to wish all our readers the compliments of the Season and an accessible 2006 from all our staff and volunteers. That's all for this year folks.....See you in the NEW YEAR!!!

**Manisha Vadgama**

This edition of CDP News comes to you with the kind assistance of:

**BLYTHE & LIGGINS SOLICITORS**  
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## **CDP NEWS**

The Regional Disability Network web-site, hosted and moderated by CDP has just been put on line.

**To view the web-site and join a forum the link is [www.rdn.org.uk](http://www.rdn.org.uk)**

This is a brand new project that we are developing so patience is needed as additional funding needs to be sourced. However the success and interest of the site depends on you as Disabled people.

There will be a space for bloggers – at the moment there will be two blogs, one written by Marlon Nyrienda and one by Hardtalk.

## **NATIONAL NEWS.....**

### **Long-term sick protected by law.....**

People with cancer, HIV and multiple sclerosis (MS) have new legal rights from today.

Such individuals are now protected by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) from the time of diagnosis.

It means that employers will not be able to sack someone because they have found out that they have one of the conditions.

People with mental health problems also have new rights - only some of whom enjoyed protection under the law.

Welcoming the legal changes, the chairman of the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), Bert Massie, said a significant loophole in the law had now been closed.

The laws which have just come into effect are the first parts of the 2005 Disability Discrimination Act to be implemented.

For a more detailed look at the article log on to [www.bbc.co.uk/ouch](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ouch)  
Article "Long Term Sick Protected By Law"

## **New Film brings disabled workers into the limelight.....**

A short film released today aims to encourage workers to 'come out' about their long term health condition so they can continue to work effectively.

The film – The Appointment - follows the journey of Alan, a hotel manager as he finds out he has diabetes. In the film, Alan is forced to think about how he needs to adjust his life, and whether others he employs at his hotel could be facing similar issues. The Appointment also aims to dispel the myth that disability is just about wheelchairs and white sticks.

The film, made by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), will give details on where to get help and advice about managing a disability in the workplace.

"I'm very proud of this film. It helps dispel the myths about whether disabled people can work and banishes some of the stereotypes.

"I hope it will help people feel more confident about disclosing their condition. And that it will teach employers that many people in their workplace probably have some sort of health condition."

Bert Massie, Chairman Disability Rights Commission

The Appointment DVD is available from the DRC Helpline on 08457 622 633

## **New tsar with learning disabilities to be appointed....**

The DH is to appoint a new 'tsar' with learning disabilities. They will work alongside the current National Director for Learning Disabilities Rob Greig.

As part of their role, the new tsar will co-chair, with Rob Greig, the Learning Disabilities Taskforce.

National Director for Learning Disabilities, Rob Greig said:

"Appointing a person with learning disabilities to this salaried role is a significant step forward. I hope other organizations follow our lead and employ people with learning disabilities at the highest possible level."

Minister Liam Byrne spoke at the Learning Disabilities Today conference today (Wednesday 23 November) and confirmed that £40m would continue to be identified for people with Learning Disabilities through the Learning Disability Development Fund, which will be kept in its present form until at least March 2008.

Minister Liam Byrne said: "To make sure that we are looking after each other in society, we have to weave a web of care around the individual. We have an ambitious agenda for people with learning disabilities and are determined that they will have more choice and independence in their lives."

As part of the change to his role, from 1 April 2006, Rob Greig will hand over the management of the Valuing People Support Team (VPST) to the Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP), where the VPST are based.

CSIP has appointed a new 'National Programme Lead' for learning disabilities to champion the learning disability agenda within their organization. Sue Carmichael and Debra Moore, both currently Regional Advisors within the VPST, will job share this role.

These changes bring the learning disability programme in line with other teams, such as those for older people, mental health and children, who have a dedicated National Director in addition to senior people leading the change programme through CSIP.

Rob Greig said: "These moves will allow for more senior leadership capacity around Valuing People and more resources to help the Learning Disability Task Force take its work forward."

Richard Humphries, Chief Executive of CSIP said "People with learning disabilities face similar challenges to other people in society. They want access to good healthcare, paid work, quality housing and to be respected by the community as and employ people with learning disabilities at the highest possible level."

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## **More disabled people below poverty line**

Three out of 10 disabled adults of working age are living in poverty and the proportion is increasing in spite of the government's commitment to tackle social disadvantage, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation reported yesterday. It found a higher proportion of disabled people are living in poverty than 10 years ago. They are more likely than pensioners or children to be living below the official poverty threshold and twice as likely as able-bodied adults to be below the breadline.

Research for the foundation by the New Policy Institute found 12 million people across Britain were living in poverty in 2003/4 - about 2 million less than the peak in the early 1990s. Government policies succeeded in reducing the proportion of pensioners and children living in households with below 60% of average earnings, but have not improved the lot of working-age adults without children, and disabled people have sunk further into poverty.

About 800,000 disabled people aged between 25 and retirement age were classed as being economically inactive but wanting to work,

compared with 200,000 officially counted as being unemployed. For any level of educational qualification, a disabled person was around three times more likely to lack employment but to want to work than an able-bodied person. A disabled adult was more likely to be seeking work and not finding it than an able-bodied adult with no qualifications.

The poverty threshold in 2003/4 was £100 a week for a single adult, £180 for a two-adult household or a single adult living with two children and £260 for two adults living with two children.

**Above Article Published in the Guardian Society Supplement  
Tuesday 13 December 2005**

## **Disabled Children and Secret School Exclusions**

Confidential letter reveals that local education authorities are deliberately breaking the law to avoid paying for 'special needs' children.

Up to 20,000 of the most vulnerable children are being excluded from school everyday says The Observer. A confidential letter by Ian Coates, head of the special educational needs and disability division at the DES admitted that local authorities are guilty of deliberate breaches of the law.

The Observer has discovered that children with statements of 'special educational needs' are nine times more likely to be excluded than those without them. Two thirds of permanent exclusions involve children deemed to have 'special needs'.

## **Father cleared of murder but guilty of manslaughter**

Andrew Wragg smothered his 10 year old son who had Hunters Disease. At the end of a protracted case exploring the question of 'mercy killing' Andrew Wragg walked free from court on Monday 12 December.

## Useful Information.....

### Bring your PIN, not your Pen

**Motability is planning to harness the latest technology to streamline and speed up the application process for the car schemes, by introducing electronic signatures.**

Dealers and customers alike have told us that ploughing through the current round of paperwork at the point of application is a time-consuming chore they would rather do without.

So, as Personal Identification Numbers (PINs) have transformed the way we handle transactions in the supermarket, we are planning to exchange the current series of signatures on all the Scheme paperwork for a simple 'electronic signature'.

#### **How will it work?**

Once your Contract Hire or Hire Purchase application has been accepted, you will be issued with a PIN. You will need to take this unique number with you to the dealership when you go to collect your new Motability car.

Instead of signing mountains of paperwork, you will simply enter your PIN into a secure system. Once the system acknowledges that the PIN matches your record correctly, your application is approved and all relevant documentation will be signed electronically.

The process will not only be quicker, but any issues surrounding accurate completion of the paperwork can be acknowledged and dealt with immediately.

We are confident that this system will be as safe, if not more so, than the current arrangement. Dealers will double-check the identity of the customer by inspecting photo identification such as a driving licence, passport or Blue Badge.

### **Testing, testing**

From November 2005 Motability will trial the new process initially in 127 accredited dealerships across the UK. If you are taking delivery of a new Motability car from a participating dealer, look out for your PIN when you receive your acceptance letter from Motability Operations.

If you don't receive a PIN, for whatever reason, the dealer will process your handover in the normal way. We plan to extend this arrangement across all dealerships early in the New Year if successful.

### **EMPLOYMENT UPDATES....**

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) has been increased as from October 2005. The adult rate of the minimum rate wage (for workers aged 22 and over) have increased from the hourly rate of £4.85 to £5. In October 2006 this will go up again to £5.30. However, the 2006 increase is subject to confirmation by the Low Wage Commission in February 2006.

The development rate (for workers aged 18-21 inclusively) has increased from £4.10 to £4.25. This will rise again to £4.45 in October 2006.

**Please Note:** The development rate can apply to workers aged 22 and over during their first six months that they are in a new job with a new employer who are receiving accredited training.

For more information contact NMW Helpline on 0845 6000 678.

## Stepping Out in Coventry

A countryside access project run by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust with Coventry Carer's Centre and the Asian Mental Health Access Project is making the countryside around Coventry more accessible. More information about the Stepping Out project at [www.warwickshire-wildlife-trust.org.uk/steppingout](http://www.warwickshire-wildlife-trust.org.uk/steppingout)

### **CDP CONTACT DETAILS**

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**Disclaimer Note**

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The CDP whilst producing and disseminating information that is correct to the best of our knowledge does not take responsibility for any views or comments or inaccuracies of information from external agencies.

**If you know anyone who would like to become a member of CDP, receive our newsletter and have voting rights at our Annual General Meetings, please pass this membership form to them. Membership is free for all disabled people and can be registered by phone on 02476 712984 or by e-mail to [info@cdp.org.uk](mailto:info@cdp.org.uk)**

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

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