Exclusive to members, our Disability Rights Bulletin covers issues relating to independent living, learning and career opportunities, welfare rights, disability equality and more.

We also keep members up-to-date on our activities aimed at mobilising disabled people’s leadership and control.

DISABILITY RIGHTS UK
We are the leading charity of its kind in the UK. We are run by and for people with lived experience of disability or health conditions.

Our key decisions are made through our members who elect the Board of Trustees: and by our Senior Management Team.

We work with our members to influence national policy on independent living, benefits, education, employment, transport, human rights and other issues – shaping policy through direct experience and expertise.

A copy of DR UK’s 2016 Annual Report and a report on the DR UK 2016 AGM and Conference are both available @ www.disabilityrightsuk.org
News

A message to DR UK members from CEO Liz Sayce

I wanted to let you know that after 10 years as CEO of Disability Rights UK and its legacy charity Radar, I’ve decided the time is right to retire from full-time work and move on. I will leave at the end of May 2017.

This has been one of the hardest decisions I’ve made as I love this job, in particular the incredible team, the great relationships with members and partner organisations and the chance to be part of a network with such rock-solid shared commitment to the vision of equal participation for all. It’s been a huge privilege to be CEO over this time.

Reflecting on the 10 years, there have been both great highs and real challenges. Amongst the highs has been merging three organisations to create a new, national disability rights organisation that can genuinely describe itself as ‘disabled people leading change’ (with 86% of Trustees having lived experience of disability and over 60% of staff; and decisions in the hands of our voting members, all disabled people or Disabled People’s Organisations).

And then co-developing a new strategy and building the confidence of partners and funders, so that we have been able to reach over 1.5 million disabled people each year with desperately needed information and advice on rights, and set up innovative programmes to test new approaches – from research led by disabled people into independent living solutions (DRILL) to opening up job opportunities for young disabled people (I Can Make It).

We have worked with partners to shape debate, inform policy and campaign: for instance, helping get ‘peer support for employment’ on the map, influencing apprenticeships to be more inclusive and campaigning successfully for specific changes to proposals on issues including PIP, housing benefit and social care.

But the challenges are huge. In 2016 we held seven events around the country on the UN Convention – and heard again and again how disabled people’s rights to live independently in the community, or even to have basic access, are often simply not met. We will report on this soon.

There has been a damaging slippage in debate on disability to seeing support in terms of protecting so called ‘vulnerable’ people – rather than support being a springboard to equal participation, an investment in people’s potential. And the prevalence of poverty amongst disabled people places deep restrictions on participating in ordinary activities in our communities. On top of that many DPOs struggle financially with sustained cuts in public funding. DR UK was fortunate to resolve a historic pension deficit and is in a sustainable financial position for the future.

It’s been amazing to work with such great colleagues and allies over these sometimes turbulent years. We’ve seen that it’s through alliances and joining forces that we have the greatest chance of achieving positive change. I’d like to offer my personal thanks to all of you who have supported me and Disability Rights UK over the last decade.

Best wishes, Liz

A message from Anne Beales, Chair of DRUK

We’re very sorry to see Liz go, but appreciate the reasons why and wish her all the very best in her retirement from full time work.

We are grateful for the time, energy and commitment she has brought to both Radar and Disability Rights UK over the years, as well as the wider sector. She will leave us with a solid legacy which we will continue to build on, and ensure that DRUK continues to be ‘disabled people leading change’.
Job opportunity
Chief Executive at Disability Rights UK

We are seeking a Chief Executive with lived experience of disability or a long-term health condition. We are looking for an outstanding and passionate person to drive progress towards our vision of equal participation for all, build our profile and increase the engagement of our growing membership base.

The successful candidate will demonstrate an ability to provide inspirational leadership to the organisation and its members, influence the policy environment and develop a range of partnerships and income streams.

Critical to your success will be your personal integrity, people management experience, demonstrable influencing and ambassadorial skills and ability to deliver messages in a complex policy environment.

To read the full role and person description, and for further details on how to apply, please visit the Prospectus website.

http://prospect-us.co.uk
(Job ref HQ00169325)

The closing date for applications is 10 March 2017

DR UK’s ‘I Can Make It’ campaign

‘I Can Make It’ is a campaign run by and for young disabled volunteers to smash barriers to employment and create better job opportunities for young people living with disabilities or long-term health conditions.

We’d like the opportunity to meet young disabled jobseekers, tell them about the campaign and listen to their experiences as search for local young disabled volunteers to take part.

DR UK has produced two videos to highlight the campaign available @ www.disabilityrightsuk.org.

► In the first video, project coordinator, Leo Capella explains more about the project and Will Case, one of our network volunteers, talks about why you should get involved;
► In the second video, our own apprentice, Corrin McLelland and Para Legacy Agent Luke Brook talk about what working has done for them and why they want you to help other young disabled people to benefit from the same experience.

To find out more about the campaign visit www.disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/i-can-make-it
If you think you can help, email our Campaign Project Co-ordinator, leo.capella@disabilityrightsuk.org or call him on 0207 250 8193.
Disabled people tell UN committee that UK is failing on international rights convention

Successive British governments and other public bodies are failing to fulfil pledges they signed up to under a major international disability rights convention, campaigners have told a United Nations (UN) committee.

The committee is reviewing the United Kingdom’s (UK) progress in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – which the UK signed in 2009.

A range of disability rights groups have submitted a “shadow report” to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities after extensive consultation with disabled people.

It argues that there is “little evidence that the UK government is consistently taking account” of the convention in developing policy and making decisions – and that ministers explicitly rejected it in developing key legislation such as the Care Act 2014.

Liz Sayce, chief executive of Disability Rights UK, said: “When the UK ratified the convention in 2009 millions of disabled people hoped for a new era of equality, fair treatment and the opportunity to take full part in society, like all other citizens. Sadly, successive Governments have often failed to take account of disabled people’s rights when making policy; and have introduced some policies that actually make things much worse.

Examples are the 2008 expansion of compulsory mental health treatment to the community – which research shows has had no beneficial effects but has infringed human rights; and, more recently, cuts to social care, which have made it harder for many disabled people to live independently and take part in their communities.

Governments have introduced stand-alone measures that are helpful – for instance, recently making apprenticeships more flexible so more disabled people can get started on their careers; or introducing peer support to give more tailored employment help – but overall we are not seeing the ‘progressive realisation of rights’ that the Convention expects.”

Liz Sayce also stressed that: “Every day we hear about practices that fly in the face of the convention’s principles and that affect the chances of disabled people enjoying their basic human rights and being part of our society as equal citizens.”

With many health, social care and public transport services now devolved to local, regional or national organisations, the Government should do more to ensure public bodies and providers adhere to the convention, the report argues.

It says that access problems in buildings, on the street and public transport frustrate many disabled people and prevent them playing a full part in the community and earning a living.

Other concerns highlighted in the report include:

- More children in ‘special schools’ rather than mainstream education – aggravated by the failure to provide clear guidance on education and the public sector equality duty;
- Rapidly growing use of compulsory detention and forced treatment powers contained in mental health legislation that are incompatible with the UN convention;
- A massive shortfall in housing that meets the needs of disabled people; and, for many, no security of tenure;
- The loss of investment in health and social care services which support disabled people to live independently;
- Inadequate or no investigations into unexpected deaths of disabled people in the care of the state – particularly those with learning disabilities or mental health problems;
- Delays in implementing requirements for reasonable adjustments that allow disabled people to work and use services;
- Concerns about the level of hate speech and hate crime; and
- A tendency by public bodies to focus on processes rather than meaningful outcomes when fulfilling their legal duty to eliminate discrimination and promote equality.
Sue Bott, deputy chief executive of DRUK, who led on the report added: “We have drawn on the experiences of disabled people across the UK to present a full picture of our daily lives and the impediments that prevent so many fulfilling their potential and living full, independent lives. Whether you look at the shockingly low average life expectancy of people with learning disabilities or the sheer poverty of disabled people, it is clear that progress towards real equality continues to be patchy and torturous.

We urge the UK Government and the devolved administrations to work constructively with this welcome inquiry by a team of international experts. More importantly, they must then work with disabled people and act on the UN team’s conclusions and recommendations.”

The report – which combines two separate documents focussing on England and Wales and Scotland – was produced with support from the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Scottish Human Rights Commission. Disability Rights UK, Disability Wales and Inclusion Scotland led the work.

The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities investigation throughout 2017 will assess what steps the UK has taken to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Committee is a body of experts, nominated and elected by governments, the majority of whom are disabled people.

Disability Confidence Training

Register your interest in our next course

This is an ideal course for HR professionals or individuals who have management or leadership roles. It will focus mainly on increasing awareness and knowledge about supporting disabled people as staff members, volunteers or people gaining work experience.

Our courses are designed and delivered by people with lived experience of disability to help you improve not only the implementation of your legal obligations but also your staff and customer relations. Creating an open and fair environment where all employees are valued is good for morale and enabling all employees to work to their full potential creates greater efficiencies.

Our course has been developed over several years by our expert trainers and covers:

- Myths and misconceptions about disability
- Equality legislation and its effects on business (including reasonable adjustments)
- Communication and appropriate language
- The business case for equality
- Developing the leadership potential of your disabled staff
- The different models of disability

Training from the experts

The course runs from 10am to 4pm at our office in London. Lunch and refreshments are provided.

The cost of the full-day course is £99 + VAT per person.

For more information visit our website
To book a place contact chelsey.french@disabilityrightsuk.org
Bus wheelchair space: Supreme Court case successful

The Supreme Court has unanimously approved the principle, fought for over five years by Doug Paulley, that disabled passengers have a right to priority access over the wheelchair space on a bus.

DR UK welcomes the Supreme Court’s decision but says that the position of wheelchair users in relation to bus transport needs further legal clarification.

The Supreme Court suggests that FirstGroup’s “provision criterion or practice” (PCP) should specify more than simply requesting a non-wheelchair user to vacate a wheelchair space without taking any further steps, depending on the circumstances. The ruling suggests that, in certain circumstances, a driver should rephrase the request to vacate and refuse to drive the bus on for several minutes. This is important. It is not enough to ask once.

But Disability Rights UK would like to see a further change in the law that will further strengthen and clarify the rights of wheelchair passengers, particularly when bus drivers are confronted by unreasonable passengers.

In demanding this, we accept that in most cases, the actions of most bus passengers are reasonable. For decades, wheelchair users could simply not get on any bus – they weren’t physically accessible. After a long and hard-fought campaign, that changed – but if the wheelchair space is taken by luggage or buggies, then the bus might as well still be physically inaccessible. The clock just turns back to the days when disabled people were denied the right to travel.

We urge bus – and indeed train, tram and underground companies – to bring in designs that offer space for both wheelchair users and buggies.

Meanwhile, we need to understand that whereas luggage can be moved and buggies can be folded up, wheelchairs cannot be folded – that is why we believe further legal clarification is needed.

For further information, see:
• DR UK summary of the Paulley case The Paulley case explained (blog by DR UK trustee Daniel Holt); and
• The “Paulley Principle” (blog by DR UK ambassador Stephen Brookes MBE)

The EASS Advice Line

The Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS) provides information advice and support on disability discrimination and human rights issues to individuals in England, Scotland and Wales.

You can contact the EASS by telephone, textphone, webchat, letter or email. If you are a BSL user then skype. Welsh speakers available.

By telephone or textphone
Telephone: 0808 800 0082
Textphone: 0808 800 0084
Open: Mon to Fri 9am-8pm, Sat 10am-2pm

By post: Freepost, Equality Advisory Support Service FPN443
If you are contacting the EASS by post about an issue for the first time, please do not send any documents with your letter.

To contact the EASS by email go to www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

THE EASS PARTNERS

www.disabilityrightsuk.org
Taxi drivers will soon by law not be able to discriminate against wheelchair users

Taxi drivers face a fine of up to £1,000 if they refuse to transport wheelchair users or attempt to charge them extra.

From 6 April 2017 taxi and private hire vehicle drivers will be obliged by law to:
- transport wheelchair users in their wheelchair;
- provide passengers in wheelchairs with appropriate assistance; and
- charge wheelchair users the same as non-wheelchair users.

Transport Minister Andrew Jones said: “We want to build a country that works for everyone, and part of that is ensuring disabled people have the same access to services and opportunities as anyone else – including when it comes to travel. People who use wheelchairs are often heavily reliant on taxis and private hire vehicles and this change to the law will mean fair and equal treatment for all.”

The new rules will apply in England, Wales and Scotland affecting vehicles that are designated as wheelchair accessible and will apply to both taxis and private hire vehicles.

All taxis in London and a significant number in most major urban centres are wheelchair accessible.

Drivers found to be discriminating against wheelchair users face fines of up to £1,000 as part of provisions being enacted from the Equality Act. Drivers may also face having their taxi or private hire vehicle (PHV) licence suspended or revoked by their licensing authority. Drivers unable to provide assistance for medical reasons will be able to apply to their licensing authority for an exemption from the new requirements.

DR UK welcomes the law change on equal treatment for disabled taxi users. Accessible transport is both an ongoing and growing concern for disabled people so this is good news.

London Underground Turn Up and Go assistance

Please complete the survey

London Underground operates a policy that disabled customers can request assistance from station staff on arrival, without needing to book in advance – Turn Up and Go assistance.

It is aware there are times when customers don’t get the assistance they need to travel, and are asking older and disabled people to complete a survey about their experiences of Tube staff assistance.

Please complete the survey by 31 March 2017
The link to the survey is here: [https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/lutuag](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/lutuag)

If the survey is not accessible to you, you can email lutuagsurvey@tfl.gov.uk and ask for somebody to call you to complete it over telephone or textphone.

The survey will be open until 31 March 2017, and you can complete it more than once.
Disability costs must be covered before applying £30 week ESA cut says Work and Pensions Committee MPs

The Government must establish additional financial support for disabled people before introducing lower benefit rate, says Work and Pensions committee.

In a new cross-party report, the Work and Pensions Committee says that, if the DWP is to press ahead with introducing a lower rate of benefit for new claimants of the Employment Support Allowance (ESA) in the Work-Related Activity Group (WRAG) it must first have set out a clear plan for identifying where new claimants have additional, unavoidable living costs relating to their conditions, and how it will ensure that these costs are covered.

Frank Field MP, Chair of the Work and Pensions Committee, said: “We expect the Government to respond to this report before the proposed new lower rate of ESA is due in April. If they intend to proceed with these cuts, we expect an explanation of how this will not be detrimental to its target of halving the disability employment gap, by making finding and keeping a job even more difficult for disabled people than it already is.”

Commenting on the Work and Pensions select committee report on disability employment, DR UK CEO Liz Sayce said: “The select committee is right to highlight the forthcoming cuts to Employment Support Allowance as wrong in principle and ineffective in practice.

We’re not aware of one single disability employment or benefits expert who thinks this particular cut will be an incentive for disabled people to get a job. The House of Lords twice tried to get this damaging cut reversed, but to no avail.

While there are many ideas in the Government’s Green Paper to be welcomed, the select committee report says much more is needed and the government must be pragmatic about any plans to close the disability employment gap.

Many disabled people could and would work, if they got the right specialist support and employers were more open to employing them.”

The Committee’s Disability Employment Gap report is available at www.parliament.uk

Show your support for our London Marathon runners
Make a donation to Disability Rights UK via their Just Giving pages

We have eight runners in this year’s London Marathon on 23 April 2017, raising money for Disability Rights UK. To support our runners, please donate via Just Giving. Every little helps!

Click the links below to go to their JustGiving pages:
• Martin Baxter
• Amy Cochrane
• Leon Hann
• Lewis Johnson
• Sam Kersey
• Stephanie Schuler
• Daniel Sosnowski
• Yvette Thorman

Or visit www.disabilityrightsuk.org/support-us/support-our-fundraising-events
Attendance Allowance not to be localised

Following a consultation, the government has decided not to localise attendance allowance to local authorities.

In December 2015, the Government outlined plans for the devolution of responsibility for Attendance Allowance to local authorities, and in July 2016 launched a consultation on whether councils might fund the benefit from business rates.

However, on 21 January 2017, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Sajid Javid, announced to a Local Government Association Councillors’ Forum that the Government will not now move forward on its plan.

Responding to the announcement Carers UK’s CEO Heléna Herklots said: “We are pleased that the concerns of older disabled people and carers have been listened to and we’re grateful to all those who made their views known.

Localising Attendance Allowance would have risked fragmenting and reducing essential sources of practical and financial support both for older disabled people, and for carers.

Attendance Allowance helps thousands of older people with the extra costs of disability and enables people to live in their own homes for longer.

The benefit also provides a clear route for those caring for 35 hours or more, unpaid, to get vital recognition and financial support by enabling them to claim Carer’s Allowance – the main benefit for those caring unpaid and essential income for many who are unable to combine paid work with caring.”

Get back to where we do belong
An employment skills guide for people with newly acquired disabilities or health conditions

When you’re diagnosed with a long-term health condition, have an accident, or your condition worsens, you may be worried about whether you can keep working or get back to work. You may need new skills – either to learn how to work differently, or to find new opportunities.

The guide includes:
- Advice about using coping strategies and developing resilience in the face of change
- Information on what to expect from employers
- Advice and signposting on careers, education and training opportunities
- An overview of welfare benefits you might be able to claim, and links to further information available on our website
- Personal stories from people writing about their own experiences, the challenges they faced and how they tackled them.

“This document should find its place on every employer’s and manager’s desk, or better, in their pocket.” Professor Dame Carol Black, Expert Adviser to the government on Health and Work, Chairman of the Nuffield Trust, Principal of Newnham College Cambridge

Free to download Download a PDF from: www.disabilityrightsuk.org
Default single member appeal tribunal panels rejected

The Government has published its response to its Transforming our justice system consultation.

DR UK welcomes its decision not to proceed with proposals to introduce single member panels as the default for unified tribunals.

The consultation sought views on two areas:
- tribunal panel composition;
- assisted digital facilities.

In our response to the consultation we highlighted that social security appeals are increasing and are predominately being made by disabled people. And that the value for disabled people of attending tribunal hearings is having impartial clinicians and experts ask them about the impact of their condition, in order to fully assess whether the initial ESA or PIP decision was correct.

We also raised concerns that a move from in-person face-to-face hearings to online hearings could result in some disabled claimants not being able to present their case effectively and with tribunal panels not being able to effectively assess the claimant’s case.

We welcome the Government’s commitment to ensuring that paper channels will be maintained for those that need them and research and testing for service users before digital reforms are implemented.

Tribunal panel composition
The Government says that respondents indicated a high level of concern around the proposal to introduce a default of single member panels in the unified tribunals, particularly in jurisdictions where there may be a high proportion of vulnerable users.

It concludes that:

“Whilst we do not consider that there is anything in our proposals which would result in decisions being made without the appropriate expertise being drawn on where required, or users being left without the support that they need, we recognise the concerns at the proposed approach. We therefore do not intend to proceed with the proposal to introduce a single member panel as the default position in the unified tribunals.”

The Government has committed to the following:

Assisted digital facilities
“We will work with third party providers to provide a national network of accessible, quality assured assistance. Telephone and webchat services will also be available and clearly signposted for those who already have access to IT but require extra support, and paper channels will be maintained for those who need them, as necessary.

As well as providing assisted digital support, HMCTS will make sure that its online services are easy for users to understand and navigate.

HMCTS is researching the expected users for each service to identify their needs, and will test each service with these groups. The findings from research and testing will be fed back into the service design process, resulting in a higher level of accessibility.”

The Government’s response to its Transforming our justice system consultation is available @ www.gov.uk
15 minute homecare visits for 30,000+ disabled people

At least 34 councils in England are still carrying out 15 minute visits for personal care, despite official guidance saying this should not happen, according to Leonard Cheshire Disability.

New research shows that at least 33,305 people in England received 15 minute ‘flying’ care visits during 2015/2016 despite statutory Care Act 2014 guidance that says that:

“Short home-care visits of 15 minutes or less are not appropriate for people who need support with intimate care needs.”

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) also advises that carers must spend a minimum of 30 minutes during visits to help keep people well.

Of the 33,305 people, 16,311 received visits in areas where councils admit to still using ‘flying’ visits for personal care to support people with intimate needs such as washing, dressing and eating.

Freedom of Information responses from councils in England revealed that 34 councils (22%) are still commissioning 15-minute visits for personal care, while another 60 councils gave unclear responses when asked or did not respond.

The proportion of flying care visits being used by councils has also been revealed. 10 councils which admitted to using 15-minute visits for personal care, also said they commission more than 20% of all their homecare visits in 15-minutes or less. One council is commissioning over 40% of all visits in 15 minutes or less.

Leonard Cheshire Disability’s CEO Neil Heslop that disabled should not have to endure the indignity and disrespect of receiving flying personal care visits: “All of us need time to wash, eat and drink for ourselves, and 15 minutes is nowhere near enough to do these essential tasks if you need support.

The reality is thousands of disabled people have to choose whether to go thirsty, go without a hot meal, or go without the toilet during these rushed visits.

Councils should be observing official guidance and putting an end to 15-minute personal care visits for good.”

In England, at least 400,000 fewer people are now receiving social care compared to 2009. This is against a backdrop of 1.4 million more working age adults living with a disability compared to 2010.

For further information, see Flying 15-minute care visits still a bleak reality for thousands of disabled people @ www.leonardcheshire.org

Have problems holding or gripping a mobile phone?

DR UK now stock ‘grip rings’, to attach to the back of your phone or tablet and provide added support when carrying or using your device.

- Simply attached to any sleeve or cover
- Full 360-degree rotation
- Can be easily removed and reused

To order, visit our online shop

Price: £4.00
New ‘Tell Us About Your Care’ partnership

Disability Rights UK has formed the ‘Tell Us About Your Care’ partnership with the Care Quality Commission.

Disability Rights UK is working with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) as part of a new ‘Tell Us About Your Care’ partnership together with a number of national charities, including Mind, The National Autistic Society, Patients Association and the Relatives & Residents Association.

Disability Rights UK will be gathering feedback from disabled people who contact us about their experiences of using health and social care services.

DR UK’s Deputy CEO Sue Bott says: “Disability Rights UK are delighted to be working with CQC as part of the tell Us About Your Care Partnership. We are pleased that through this initiative disabled people and people with long-term health conditions will have the opportunity to tell the regulator about their experiences of the health and social care services they use, not only specialist services but services like GP surgeries that are used by everyone.”

The CQC website can be accessed @ www.cqc.org.uk

You can also provide direct feedback to the CQC on your experience of using any of the services they regulate.

Your Guide to the Care Act
What you need to know about social care in England

This guide is for disabled people and people with long-term health conditions who have support needs. It concentrates on those parts of the legislation that are most relevant to people of working age.

The guide includes:
- General principles that should apply to social care
- Who can get social care support from their local authority
- What should happen when you have an assessment
- How to plan meeting your care needs
- Personal budgets and direct payments
- How much you might have to pay
- What to do if you move to another area
- A glossary of social care terms and links to further information

Free to download
Printed copies £5

Download a PDF from: www.disabilityrightsuk.org
Printed copies are available from our online shop
Welcome changes to make apprenticeships more inclusive

DR UK welcomes several helpful initiatives to make apprenticeships more inclusive for disabled people.

Disability organisations like our own have proposed ways to improve access to apprenticeships and the Government is listening. Its target for three million apprentices by 2020 should be significantly assisted by measures that mean disabled people can access these opportunities.

The disability sector had long questioned the requirement to obtain specific qualifications (like GCSE English and Maths grade A-C) if apprentices can just as well learn on the job (or for some roles, if these qualifications are not needed at all).

The Government initiated the Maynard Review that led to the recommendation to exempt disabled people with a learning difficulty from this requirement.

DR UK is now in discussions about the merits of extending this exemption to other disabled people who may have missed out on education.

We also discussed with the treasury the rules for the apprenticeship levy, in order to secure an additional payment for employers taking on a disabled person with an education and healthcare plan aged 19 to 24 years of age.

This incentive can help employers cover any additional training or support needs. The government acted and reference to the change can be seen at paragraph 54.4 of its Apprenticeship funding: rules and guidance for employers May 2017 to March 2018.

An important change was also made in the interests of deaf and hearing impaired young people this month when British Sign Language (BSL) was recognised as the equivalent of a functional skill in English for apprentices. This gave the language the same status as English. We are much encouraged by these moves and look to disabled apprentices, trainees, those hoping to become apprentices, and employers looking to capitalise on their skills and strengths – to tell us what more can be done.

Last October we held a workshop on inclusive apprenticeships addressed by Disabled People’s organisations, Government and skills providers: you can view a video of the event @ www.disabilityrightsuk.org.

We will be holding a further event on 23 March 2017 on post-16 education and training in relation to young disabled people.

We will also be publishing a new edition of Into Apprenticeships shortly – it will be free to download and contain everything disabled people and advisors need to know to take advantage of apprenticeship opportunities.

Into Apprenticeships
The guide for disabled people

Doing an apprenticeship is a great way to earn a salary, get qualifications and develop your career. This guide is designed to help disabled people, parents and advisers, answer the key questions about applying for an apprenticeship in England.

It explains the benefits of an apprenticeship, how to apply, find vacancies and what support is available in the workplace. It includes case studies where disabled students write about their own experiences and a resources section listing helpful websites, publications and organisations

Free to download

New edition out soon
DR UK project updates

New Programme: Get out Get Active

Get Out Get Active (GOGA) is an exciting new programme that supports disabled and non-disabled people to enjoy being active together. It focuses on getting some of the UK’s least active people moving more through fun and inclusive activities in their local communities.

Delivered by the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) and their partners and funded by Spirit of 2012, it runs for over three years (2016-2019) within 18 localities (areas) across the UK, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. Disability Rights UK is a National Partner.

As part of GOGA, Disability Rights UK is running a Peer Support project working with Disabled People’s Organisations and local sport and fitness organisations and providers to get people moving and enjoying fun activity – not just sport.

Visit our website to find out more about:
- Peer support and mentoring
- What helps to make activities more appealing and accessible and
- Read more about our partners

or get in touch with our Peer Support Lead email kate.pieroudis@disabilityrightsuk.org telephone 0207 250 8111

Read the latest Get Yourself Active project update!

Get Yourself Active is all about finding opportunities to get physically active in a way that’s right for you.

If you get active and would like to share your experience and be featured on our blog, email kirsty.mulvey@disabilityrightsuk.org for more information.

Follow us on Twitter or sign up to our new newsletter for partner updates, the latest ‘personal experiences’ blogs, key resources, upcoming events and the latest news stories.


Take a look at how Jonathon and his personal assistant Mandy get physically active, and the benefits it’s brought to their lives.
**DR UK Leadership Academy Programme**

**Now recruiting for our 2017-2018 course**

With the backing of Disability Rights UK, the Institute of Leadership & management (ILM) and a host of experienced professionals to act as mentors and key note speakers, you can be assured that the programme will be delivered to the highest standards and provide exceptional outcomes.

“What DRUK have created is an incredible platform which allows people with disabilities to develop new skills and grow, personally and professionally. It equips them to further their careers, continue their upward progression and break through barriers.” Andy Horne, KPMG (LAP mentor)

A short video of mentors and delegates who previously attended our LAP is available @ www.disabilityrightsuk.org

See our Mentor recruitment flyer and Delegate recruitment flyer for more information.

**LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME 2017-18**

The programme runs over four non-consecutive days (in London). Proposed dates are 30 November 2017, 8 February 2018, 22 March 2018 and 10 May 2018.

Mentoring is undertaken remotely or to suit delegates and their mentor. The mentoring is for two hours between each module day. Additional work is read in the delegates own time, in preparation for each new module.

Delegates attend two alumni events a year which take place late afternoon/evening, so will not affect work commitments. Line managers are invited to attend their staff’s graduation on 10 May 2018.

**Don’t miss our Early bird discount price!**

Places are offered on a first come first served basis, so please enquire without delay. Early bird cost: £1,900 (plus VAT).

Call Katrina on 0207 250 8188 or email katrina.morris@disabilityrightsuk.org

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**DR UK’s Leadership Academy Programme (LAP) is a career development programme for people in employment living with a disability or health condition. Our Leadership Academy Executive Katrina Morris explains more.**

Our leadership programme sets out to improve the employment position of employees living with a health condition or disability, whilst providing employers with access to a wider pool of talent.

LAP is different because:

- Employees are able to speak about any difficulties, that they might have internally in a safe and confidential setting;
- Employees gain knowledge from employees from different business’s which can help with perspective;
- Employees have an ongoing network/alumni to continue to glean information; have access to exceptional key note speakers and have a safe place to share information and establish long-term relationships with others outside of their place of work;
- It provides one-to-one mentoring from knowledgeable senior leaders with experience of disability; and
- Learning outside of their place of work often means new ways of thinking, and the development of good practice which can be brought back to the workplace.

Our LAP has been running for three years and have seen an 80% success rate of our delegates either applying for or being promoted into more senior roles within their place of employment.

All delegates have reported a significant increase in their confidence and identified key areas in their skills gap where they can improve and develop their professional attributes and increase their efficiency through more effective work practices and new found leadership skills.
Member Organisations’ Welfare Rights Helpline

Ken Butler highlights a recent adviser query answered by the helpline.

ENTITLEMENT TO DLA WHILE TEMPORARILY ABROAD

Q: A client has been in touch with regard to her daughter’s DLA. The daughter attends university and nine months of her four-year course is spent studying abroad (in Morocco). Both are British citizens. The mother notified the DWP before her daughter started studying abroad, explaining that her daughter would be out of the country for nine months from August 2016 as part of her course. In December 2016 the DLA award was removed. She is only going to be abroad for a total of nine months, so would not she still not be eligible?

A: You continue to be entitled to personal independence payment (PIP), or attendance allowance (AA) or disability living allowance (DLA) during a temporary absence abroad for:

- the first 13 weeks; or
- the first 26 weeks, if the absence is solely in connection with medical treatment for your illness or disability that began before you left Great Britain (GB).

The absence must be unlikely to exceed 52 weeks.

In this case, it looks as though the reason why her DLA was removed is because although she was going to be absent for less than 52 weeks, she is only entitled to be paid for the first 13 weeks (August to December 2016).

To be entitled to DLA (or PIP or AA) you must:

- Be present in GB
- Be habitually resident in the Common Travel Area
- Have been present in GB for no less than 104 weeks in the last 156 weeks.

The daughter remains abroad in Morocco. She cannot make a new claim DLA from Morocco as she would need to be present in GB at least at the time of his claim. As her DLA has now been ended any new claim will have to be for PIP.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

A step-by-step guide to claiming the new benefit

PIP is a new benefit for people who need help taking part in everyday life or who find it difficult to get around. It replaces disability living allowance for people between the ages of 16 and 64 inclusive.

Our free guide includes:

- What is PIP and when it’s being introduced;
- What happens to people already on DLA;
- The qualification criteria and new points-based assessment;
- How to claim, including step-by-step instructions on completing the claim form and helpful tools and tactics.

Free to download: Download your copy at www.disabilityrightsuk.org
Disabled Students’ Helpline

DR UK are pleased to announce the publication of two of our education guides. Both have been fully updated by Rundip Thind our Disabled Student’s Helpline Adviser.

Our education guides are designed to address typical issues and questions raised by students calling the Helpline. Into Further Education and Into Higher Education 2017 are now available to download. Into Apprenticeships is currently being updated and will be available soon.

Into Further Education 2017
The further education guide for disabled people

Further education offers lots of exciting opportunities for adults as well as young people straight from school. This guide is designed to help you make the right decisions and get any support you need.

This publication is for anyone with a health condition, learning difficulty or disability thinking about studying in further education in England. It aims to answer common questions such as whether colleges will be accessible, how to choose a course and what support will be available.

The guide also contains six inspiring personal stories and a resources section listing further websites, publications and organisations.

Download a free PDF from www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Into Higher Education 2017
The higher education guide for disabled people

This guide is designed to help disabled students make the right decisions about studying in higher education. It deals with common questions: whether the college or university will be accessible, how to choose a course and what support will be available.

The guide includes:
- The new student finance system, tuition fees, repayment methods and the support that will be in place for 2016 entry
- Case studies where disabled students write about their own experiences
- A useful resources section listing helpful websites, publications and organisations

“A great resource focused specifically on the needs of disabled learners. Highly recommended”

Undergraduate Recruitment and Widening Participation Coordinator, University of Manchester

Download a PDF from: www.disabilityrightsuk.org
CUTS TO CARE PACKAGE/USE OF DIRECT PAYMENTS

Q: I am severely disabled and need a lot of support during the day and night. I receive direct payments. However, I currently receive hours that are insufficient to meet all my needs and fulfil my role as a father of two young children.

I have asked for additional hours for my social and emotional support and activities. But my social worker actually wants to implement cuts to my care package. She is also asking me to apply for funding under health care because she said my additional needs are treated as health needs rather than social care. Is this correct?

They are trying to cut my hours from 47 to 30, and this will have a detrimental impact on my overall health condition.

They are also preventing me to use my direct payments flexibly as I want. Am I allowed to use the funding for activities?

A: You can only get funding from both adult social care and health bodies using pooled budgets and joint services if you are also eligible for NHS funding. The guidance of the National framework for NHS states that the assessment should be person-centred and that adult social care and health bodies should work together using pooled budgets and joint commissioning of services, to determine how you will be funded and who will fund what in order to promote your wellbeing. The NHS is responsible for meeting the healthcare needs that are free at the point of delivery.

Getting an assessment

If you have primary healthcare needs and ongoing support requirements, then an initial assessment will need to be conducted via the NHS team, medical qualified professionals such as the general practitioner doctor, nurse or even the local authority social worker.

The council should allow you to use the funding flexibly as “direct payment is designed to be used flexibly and innovatively and there should be no unreasonable restriction placed on the use of the payments, as long as it is being used to meet eligible care and support needs.” (Care & Support Statutory Guidance, chapter 12.35).

The hours you have been granted at the moment could be used flexibly to meet your needs and the hours could vary from one week to another if you are a direct payments recipient.
Direct payments enable you to purchase services from care providers or employ your own support worker – known as a personal assistant (PA). A PA can act as an ‘extension’ of you and support you, hence if your children need your support as a father, you should get relevant support from your PA to fulfil your parenting role.

Therefore, you should be able to use the funding to meet needs that includes fulfilling your parenting role, pay for all the associated costs in securing care provision such as employer’s liability insurance, national insurance contribution, advertising and recruitment costs, paying annual leave to your staff, brokerage services and so forth. Regardless of the lack of funding, you can utilize the funding for day and night needs as long as it is included in your care and support plan.

You could also use the funding to pay for indoor and outdoor activities, socializing, therapies and physio, horse riding, swimming, getting active, equipment not supplied by NHS, aids and adaptations, day services, meeting night needs, and purchasing respite care for periods up to four weeks.

The funding is to enable you to achieve the outcomes that matter to you in your life, focusing on your needs and goals. Those outcomes are important to you and the care package is meant to be personalized, personal centred and outcome based; it is about you and involves you in its process.

What to do now
To request further funding, you need to highlight to the social worker the kind of help you require as a disabled person and father for instance:
- you are entitled to engage in activities such as going to the gym, swimming etc;
- you should also get the relevant assistance when there are times you want support to involve your children; they may need help to have their hair washed or with activities such as going to parks, libraries etc;
- you can get support to attend appointments including GP and hospital appointments or going to the bank;
- you may need additional support due to the side effects of medication you take; and
- you should receive assistance to get meals ready for both you and family since your children can not cook for themselves.

Night support is needed due to the high risk of being on your own or on your own with your little children who won’t be able to assist you if you need help during the night or in emergency situations such as in the event of a fire or flooding.

If social services cut your hours, have they given any valid justification? They are supposed to write to you to explain the reasons behind the cut – which I feel may be unjustifiable given your needs. Your local authority should address your needs in a way that prevents further development of additional needs if adequate support is not offered. They should take account of your outcomes and goals, the kind of goals you want to achieve in order to remain independent. This should be reflected in your care and support plan.

The reduction in support will eventually have a drastic effect on your ability to be engaged in the community, be active and be a good father. You will certainly lose a level of independence. This may also impact on your overall emotional and psychological wellbeing.

The cut means that there are needs that remain unmet, so how did they plan to meet them? Have they come up with alternative solutions? Local authorities are not allowed to take into account their resources to deny or cut your support. They are supposed to discuss with you how the unmet needs will be addressed.

I recommend you to give the local authority letters of support from doctors or professionals who are well informed about your disability and circumstances.

You have grounds to appeal against the decision or seek legal advice. I suggest you ask social services to justify this unfair cut in writing and you respond to them in writing outlining to them the full range of your needs and how the cut will have an impact on your life. You could get in touch with an advocate to support you as well as contacting your local MP, going through the complaints procedure or seek legal advice.

We have several independent living factsheets that will be helpful for further information including how to complain about local authority decisions, self-advocacy and continuing health care.
Would you like priority access to over 9000 accessible toilets?

THE NATIONAL KEY SCHEME (NKS)
If you have a health condition or disability, finding an accessible toilet that’s clean, tidy and available to use can be a challenge. And they’re often kept locked.

Under Radar’s NKS scheme, special locks are installed on public disabled toilet doors to give disabled people priority access. Local authorities have adopted the scheme and ‘Radar toilets’ can now be found in shopping centres, pubs, stores, bus and train stations, and other locations nationwide.

Opening doors to independent living
We sell Radar keys to people who need to use accessible toilet facilities due to their disability or health condition. The key gives you independent access to locked public toilets around the country. The provider of the toilet has a key – but with your own key there’s no need to wait for a member of staff to unlock the door. You’re in control.

Genuine Radar NKS keys
• Available with a small or large head
• Ergonomically designed for grip and leverage
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Order your key from our online shop.
It’s VAT-free if you meet HMRC’s conditions.

£4.50 plus VAT
Includes delivery to anywhere in Europe

Don’t risk a cheap copy!
Radar locks have tight tolerances which need accurate keys

RADAR NKS REGIONAL LISTINGS
We keep a directory of the location, address and opening times of Radar toilets around the UK. When you order your key from us, we can send you a list of NKS toilets in your area. We just ask for a donation of £3.50 to cover the print cost.

Regions available:
• Greater London
• South East England
• Southern England
• West Country
• Devon and Cornwall
• Eastern England
• East Midlands
• West Midlands
• North West England
• Yorkshire
• Isle of Man
• North East England
• South East Scotland
• South West Scotland
• East Scotland
• Highlands and Islands
• North Wales
• Mid and West Wales
• South Wales
• Northern Ireland
• Channel Islands

Order your key and regional listings of toilets from our online shop.

With your own Radar key you can unlock most disabled toilets around the UK
Contact Disability Rights UK (DR UK)

DISABILITY RIGHTS UK
Ground Floor, CAN Mezzanine,
49-51 East Road, London N1 6AH.

How to find us
Our location on a map.
Nearest underground station:
Old Street (Northern Line).
We are 320 km/350 yards from the station.

CONTACT US
General enquiries
Office number: 020 7250 8181
Open Monday to Friday
9am-12.30pm and 1.30-4.00pm
Please note this line is not an advice line.
Email: enquiries@disabilityrightsuk.org

Membership enquiries
Phone: 020 7250 8180
Email: members@disabilityrightsuk.org

Sales enquiries
Phone: 020 7250 8191

Media enquiries (for journalists only)
Phone: 07590 929441

Website enquiries
Email: webmaster@disabilityrightsuk.org

HELPLINES FOR INDIVIDUALS
Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)
Phone: 0808 800 0082
Textphone: 0808 800 0084
Open Monday-Friday 9am-8pm and Saturday
10am-2pm (closed Sundays and Bank Holidays)
There is a webcam portal for BSL users via the
Royal Association for Deaf people.
Website: www.equalityadvisoryservice.com

Disabled Students Helpline
Phone: 0800 328 5050
Open Tuesday 11.00am-1.00pm
and Thursday 11.00-1.00pm
Email: students@disabilityrightsuk.org

Personal Budgets Advice Service
Phone: 0300 555 1525
Open: Tuesday and Thursday 9am-1pm
Email: selfdirectedsupport@disabilityrightsuk.org

HELPLINES FOR ADVISERS
Member Organisations
Welfare Rights Advice Service
Phone: 020 7250 8184
Open Monday to Friday
10am-12noon and 2pm-4pm
Email: ken.butler@disabilityrightsuk.org

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