

Information and news for disabled and older people  
and family carers

Edition 99 – December 2010

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The deadline for article contributions for our next newsletter is the 1st February  
Don't forget the prize for every star letter/article printed is **£25!**



**A regular column to keep you up to date on developments at SIL, in Herefordshire Social Care and nationally.**



***A Vision for Adult Social Care: Capable Communities and Active Citizens*** (the Coalition Vision for Adult Social Care November 2010)

I thought you might like to know about the key points of the vision. The whole document is available on our website at [www.s4il.co.uk](http://www.s4il.co.uk)

The idea of the 'Big Society' comes through strongly, with an emphasis on preventing need for services supplied or paid for by the state. The vision talks of 'empowered people and strong communities' working together to maintain independence. My interpretation of this is increased reliance on **family carers and volunteers**.

Do these volunteers exist? We don't yet know, but if they do **and they supplement** services this could lead to more community inclusion, and reduce isolation and vulnerability, perhaps especially in our rural county where transport can be a big problem for disabled people.

The government has set a target of 100% service users having a personal budget by April 2013, preferably taken as a direct payment. They want to see an increase in

direct payments to family carers for 'respite care'. However some people, perhaps older people, may not want more choice and control, and those that do must be supported by excellent information and advice.

A PA strategy is to be published next year. This will highlight the need to give people who use services choice and control over their care needs. It will also emphasise that with this freedom comes responsibility to be a good employer and to train, recruit and retain staff

The Vision also commits to exploring greater portability of assessments, so that people can move into a different county/city without the fear of a new assessment reducing their support. This will be considered alongside the findings of the Law Commission which is currently looking at reform of social care legislation and will report next Spring and the Commission on Funding of Care and Support due to report next summer.

**So there is a Government vision: the question now is do Council's have the financial resources, skills and motivation to realise it?**

***My very best wishes to all our service users and their families for Christmas and the New Year.***

## Pump it Up! Caroline Hill's Gym Success

Star Story!

Hi my name is Caroline Hill, I just thought it would be nice to let people out there know that there is a great place called Point4. The Point4 is a gym adapted for people with disabilities who like to keep fit.



All the equipment is designed for wheelchair users incorporating the latest technology. The gym is very spacious and the staff are experienced in disabilities. You get your own personal trainer who will do a personal program for you based around your needs. It's great fun and also hoists are available so I

am able to go into the Jacuzzi for the first time in my life. They also have a hydro pool which anyone is free to use. After I've done my work-out, I like to relax in the Jacuzzi and maybe even have a sauna/steam and then go for lunch in their beautiful café. Since I have been going to the gym, I am more motivated, have toned up, lost weight and feel great! They have great parking facilities and for just



£19 a month I can go any time and stay as long as I like. The Point4 is located at the Royal National College for the Blind. For anyone interested in joining the Point4, telephone 01432 376376 and mention the SIL newsletter as where you heard about it.

For more service user stories visit our website [www.s4il.co.uk](http://www.s4il.co.uk)



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## **Government pledges extra £70m for reablement services**

Article credited to Community Care

The government has pledged an extra £70m for reablement services in England over the next six months to support an estimated 35,000 people leaving hospital.

Health secretary Andrew Lansley said the funding, which will be allocated to primary care trusts and shared across the health and social care system, would help people regain their independence and remain in their own homes.

The announcement follows a Community Care investigation which found 22% of councils in England were illegally charging service users for re-ablement packages of care. Richard Jones, president of the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, said the announcement was "an encouraging first step towards ensuring that sensible, effective preventive services can be put in place quickly and carefully so that the NHS can be spared the expense of unnecessary and disruptive readmissions". He stressed that the funding should build on existing services that both support people to return home and prevent the need for readmission into hospital or residential and nursing care.

[www.communitycare.co.uk](http://www.communitycare.co.uk)

**For more news see our website: [www.s4il.co.uk](http://www.s4il.co.uk)**

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## **Calling all Volunteers**

Have you ever been an employer? OR Have you ever been an employee?

If so, you may have the skills and experience which SIL and our service users are looking for. We already have several potential volunteers who want to share their experiences in this way and know there are many more of you out there.

We are looking for volunteers to join the Direct Payment Support Service to support disabled employers. This could involve helping out at interviews or supporting with paper work.

In return, you will receive full training and be supervised by the DPSS Team.

If you think you would like to volunteer or know of someone who would please call Amy Deacon on 01432 353397 or e-mail [amy@s4il.co.uk](mailto:amy@s4il.co.uk)

All volunteers will have to undergo a criminal records check.

## Make a Difference - Become a Trustee

Being a trustee is a great challenge which provides you with the opportunity to apply the skills and experience which you have gained to a totally new environment and context. Many trustees find working as part of a team hugely energising and satisfying. As a trustee you could help a charity improve people's lives, change the environment or transform a community. Being a trustee can also build your social contacts, broaden your CV experience or get you involved in something completely new.



For example, Trustee, Liz Lloyd has brought her impressive career experience in financial management, business development and marketing to SIL. She has helped the organisation move away from grant funding towards the process of tendering for contracts and guided the organisation in the proactive marketing of their services.

For more information about Trustee or any other volunteering opportunities, please contact Marion Tweed-Rycroft on 01432 353397 or e-mail [marion@s4il.co.uk](mailto:marion@s4il.co.uk)

## Help – Your User Led Organisation needs you!



Following on the co-production\*\* theme from this year's AGM and conference, we feel that the way forward for next year's conference is to 'co-produce' it with the users of SIL services.

This is a real opportunity for many of you who we know have untapped skills that could be put to excellent use in such a venture and we know you are out there!

We feel that it should be you who decides on the venue, content, guest speakers and of course refreshments and facilities for the event. A budget will be set and you can decide how it is best spent. Together with a facilitator (our Marketing Manager, Wendy Rutter- Butcher - who will action all the ideas and make necessary arrangements as required) you will be asked to agree the aims of the event at the start of the process (such as how many service users need to attend on the day) and also think about the following

- What do you want?
- How do you want it to happen?
- What would inspire you to attend?

SIL regards our Service Users as a huge asset and feel that a project like this can extend the range of opportunities to all participants.

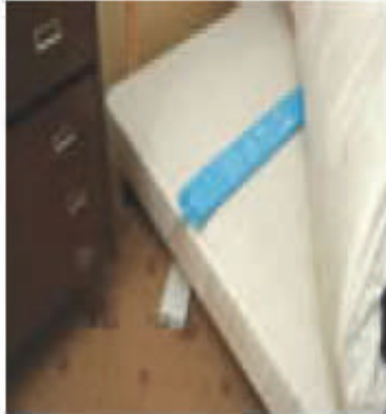
It is hoped that a working group will meet in early January 2011 to plan for action.

Please contact Wendy on 01432 353397 or [wendy@s4il.co.uk](mailto:wendy@s4il.co.uk)

\*\* Co-production' has emerged as a general description of the process whereby clients/service users work alongside professionals as partners in the delivery of services.

## Maintain Your Independence with Telecare

Telecare uses discrete sensors, placed around the home, to send a call for help when a situation arises which means that someone might be at risk. Usually, the call goes through to a monitoring service, but sometimes the call is picked up by a carer or family member through a pager or mobile phone.



**Bed occupancy sensory**

Everyone's situation is different and the risks that they might encounter vary. Here is an example of how telecare helped Clare and her friends to live independently:

Clare lives in a village just outside Hereford. She is 30 years old, has lots of friends and loves music. Until recently, she lived in a residential setting, where she had been for the past eight years. Now, with the help of telecare, Clare and her friends Simon and Janie are able to live in their own home.

Before Clare moved in, her family were anxious about how she would cope in an emergency, since she no longer felt able to use the telephone and support staff would

not always be in the house especially at night. The Telecare team were asked if they could help with making the environment safe and they initially provided two smoke detectors, linked to a call centre through a LifeLine Connect box in the house. They discussed with Clare whether wearing a pendant would help her, but Clare felt that she might forget to put it on and, as her fingers were very stiff, she worried that she might not be able to press it if she needed to.



**personal pendant**

A Fall Detector was also provided for Janie to wear during the day as she was often unsteady on her feet and was at risk of falling. A pull cord was fitted in the bathroom to ensure Janie could call for help if she were to have a fall whilst visiting the bathroom during the night.

Clare and her friends moved in and began a whole new life. However, in the best ordered homes, accidents happen...

After Simon forgot to turn the taps off and

flooded the bathroom, the telecare team talked to all three of the tenants to build up a picture of how best to support them. The team put flood detectors in the bathrooms and added a Temperature Extremes Sensor in the kitchen, which would send a warning if the cooker was left on. A bogus caller button is now fitted by the front door so that if Clare, Simon or Janie aren't sure who is at the door, they can press the button and get advice from the monitoring centre before they let anyone in.

When Clare, Simon and Janie first talked about telecare, they were anxious about "talking to a box", but they are now happy to

communicate with the team at the monitoring centre and they take it in turns to carry out the monthly check to make sure everything is working.

Before telecare was installed, Claire, Simon or Janie may not have been able to live as independently and safely as they are doing now that it is, unobtrusively, supporting them in their independence.

For more information and an explanatory leaflet, please contact the Telecare Team at Herefordshire Council on 01432 261650 / 261554 or Email: [telecare@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:telecare@herefordshire.gov.uk).

### **Work Focused Support for Carers**

Work Focused Support for Carers (WFSC) is a voluntary scheme designed to help people who wish to combine paid work with their role of caring for someone.

You can choose to take part, and are free to stop taking part, at any time. Even if you don't feel ready to work now but might like to in the future, you can still take advantage of the support available. Work Focused Support for Carers is available to carers who:

- do not work or work less than 16 hours a week
- are aged 18 or over
- are not able to get help from any of the other Jobcentre Plus employment support programmes such as New Deal or Pathways to Work.

To find out more about getting into work or training, you can:

Visit - [www.direct.gov.uk/carersemployment](http://www.direct.gov.uk/carersemployment)

Or arrange an appointment with an adviser at your nearest Jobcentre.

Alternatively please see our website [www.s4il.co.uk](http://www.s4il.co.uk) and click on latest news.

## **Services Users 'Get Connected'**

SIL has won funding of £10,000 from the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE's) *Get Connected* campaign which is a new programme enabling organisations like ours to access Information and Communication Technology (ICT) on behalf of staff and service users more effectively.

We recognise that living and working in our sparsely populated county disadvantages many service users and the staff who support them and we want to try and overcome this through training and support in the use of IT and to develop skills and knowledge.

Each team leader with The Independent Living Service will be supplied with IT equipment and will be trained to train the service user and wider team of support workers to explore whether IT can enhance their independence and choice using a variety of ways such as social networking, virtual attendance at meetings via webcam, obtaining information and researching activities, benefits and rights. Other uses may include responding to consultations and surveys, updating and personalising support plans, and on-line shopping.

We want our service users to become more confident in the use of ICT, and to appreciate its value to enhance and improve their lives and to overcome some of the geographical and accessibility barriers which they face.



SIL's IT co-ordinator, Shane Millward-Kennedy with equipment ready to go to service user's homes

## **'Everybody's Business' - Adult Safeguarding**

'Everybody's Business' is the start of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board campaign to raise awareness about abuse to adults and the action which can be taken to prevent and to respond to incidents.

As the name suggests, all Herefordshire people have a part to play in safeguarding themselves, and others. The aim of the campaign is for everyone to be confident about their rights and responsibilities in taking steps to safeguard vulnerable adults.

People at risk are those who are vulnerable when they cannot take steps to protect themselves. Some people need support throughout their life and anyone can become vulnerable - maybe through stresses at home or at work, or an illness.

Abuse can take the following forms:

Physical – hitting, slapping, undue restraint, inappropriate sanctions

Psychological/Emotional – threat of harm, abandonment, isolation, racial

Sexual – rape and sexual acts without consent

Financial – theft, fraud, misuse of benefits

Neglect – failure to provide access to medical care, nutrition or heating

Institutional – mistreatment due to inadequate care

If you suspect an incident of abuse has taken place, you should raise the alert and report it.

Gather and write down all the facts such as where the incident took place, what time and who was involved.

**If you have a concern, please contact: Adult Safeguarding: Everybody's Business**

**Call: 01432 260 715 or email: [safeguardingadults@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingadults@herefordshire.gov.uk)**

**In an emergency call: 999      Police (non urgent): 03003333000**

**Out of hours: 03301239309**

Vigilant communities can reduce incidents of harm and it is everybody's responsibility to take action if they suspect abuse has or is taking place. Copies of the Everybody's Business leaflet can be downloaded from the SIL website [s4il.co.uk](http://s4il.co.uk)

## **Anger as ILF changes threaten independent living**

The Independent Living Fund's (ILF's) decision to restrict new applications for financial support to disabled people who work more than 16 hours a week "undermines the Government's commitment to advancing equality", campaigners claim. The ILF is funded by the Department for work and Pensions (DWP) and, at present, provides money for claimants between 16 and 65 with high support needs (regardless of whether or not they work) and who receive local authority support worth more than £320 a week.

But changes are being introduced which mean that from May 1, 2011, the ILF will only accept new applications from people who are in paid work for more than 16 hours a week.

Jim Elder-Woodward of the user-led project, Independent Living in Scotland, accepts that cuts are inevitable in the current economic climate. But he says that the changes will bring about a contradiction that could have been avoided if disabled people had been consulted about changes.

Rachel Hurst, Director of Disability Awareness in Action, said that the fact that the ILF was making changes without consulting disabled people showed that

despite its rhetoric, the government was not interested in co-production or commenting on the new changes to eligibility criteria. Sue Bott, Director of the National Centre for Independent Living, said: "I'm really very angry about this. This completely goes against the review of the ILF which the government seems to have shoved aside because it raises too many difficult questions."

She warned that the changes would be "devastating for disabled people".

A spokesman for the ILF told Disability Now that the decision to restrict eligibility for new applicants had been prompted by the rising costs of existing users' care packages.

He said that existing claimants were the ILF's first priority and that they would not be affected even if they did not meet the employment requirements for new applicants.

The ILF is also increasing the threshold sum that local authorities are required to meet in order to access ILF funding, and for increases to existing users care packages, from £320 to £340 a week.

For more disability news visit our website, [www.s4il.co.uk](http://www.s4il.co.uk)

## Forum Focus

The SIL Service User Forum meets every six weeks to discuss current issues.

Some areas which the Forum have already been involved with are:

- The services that other organisations (such as Age Concern) provide
- Personalisation updates from the council
- Workforce development. For example recruitment and retention of staff. (If you are interested in getting involved in discussions around workforce development please contact [Claire@s4il.co.uk](mailto:Claire@s4il.co.uk).)
- Herefordshire Council's E-catalogue, which lists all the services available in the area.
- Service Manager at Hereford Council adult services attended to discuss how payments are going to be made monthly from April 2011.
- Several meetings have contained consultation on council documents and information leaflets.

**At the last meeting, Marion Tweed-Rycroft came to discuss changes which are happening to the DPSS service:**

As numbers of Direct Payment users grow, and the Council has less money to go round, the Support Service has considered how it can work in a more cost effective way. In future we will be focusing on training employers so they have the skills, knowledge and confidence to become more independent of the Support Service, but still able to access the service for information and advice.

**Four meetings are being held to discuss this new model of service further.**

Meeting dates are:

### **Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

11:15-12:45—Larruperz Centre Ross-on-Wye  
2:15-3:45—Hope Family Centre Bromyard

### **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

11:15-12:45—The Point 4 Hereford  
2:15-3:45—Leominster Community Centre

**We recommend all DPSS Service Users attend one of these meetings to see how the changes will affect them directly. To book your place at one of these meetings or, if you would like more information, please contact [Claire@s4il.co.uk](mailto:Claire@s4il.co.uk)**

**Next Forum Dates** - The forum is held at South Wye Learning centre between 11am and 1pm. Please contact [Claire@s4il.co.uk](mailto:Claire@s4il.co.uk) for more information about future speakers and topics, or if you wish to attend.

18<sup>th</sup> January 2011, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2011 and 12<sup>th</sup> April 2011



## Stroke Identification

**STROKE:** Remember the 1st Three Letters.... **S. T. R.**

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify.

Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer severe brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

**S** \*Ask the individual to SMILE.

**T** \*Ask the person to TALK and SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (Coherently) (i.e. It is sunny out today.)

**R** \*Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.

If he or she has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call emergency number immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher..

NOTE: Another 'sign' of a stroke is this: Ask the person to 'stick' out his tongue... If the tongue is 'crooked', if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.

Office  
Opening hours  
over the  
Christmas  
Period

Closed  
25th  
December

Closed  
27th  
December

Closed  
28th  
December

Closed  
3rd January

*Merry  
Christmas*



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