## Autumn 2013 Newsletter

### In this newsletter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A word from our chair</th>
<th>Page 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Commissioning Groups</td>
<td>Page 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome to Active Independence</td>
<td>Page 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Living Fund</td>
<td>Page 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Making health and social care information accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Living well with dementia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Shaping Our Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Poetry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Disability Hate Crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Tell Someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Section Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Merry Christmas ARTWORK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>About Shaping Our Lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/12</td>
<td>Who to contact at SOLNET</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We have been trying very hard to keep in touch with members. Keeping in touch and sharing information is very important in these difficult times.

Many people are badly affected by the cruel effects of the changes to welfare benefits.

We are continuing to share information about how people’s lives are being affected.

Shaping Our Lives is also suffering from cuts. It is hard to get long term funding when we have to compete with big charities. Often big charities don’t speak up for disabled people, because they are afraid of what might happen to them.

Shaping Our Lives will always speak up for all disabled people. We have been looking at how we can do this even better.

Please get in touch if you would like to get more involved with our work. You could join or management board or our national user group.

Everything we do we want to do involving you

Peter Beresford

information@shaping our lives.org.uk

Becki 0795 642 4511
Clinical Commissioning Groups

Clinical Commissioning Groups are groups of doctors (and others) who plan and pay for health services for an area.

Shaping Our Lives, Disability Rights UK and CHANGE are working together. They want to make Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) more aware of how useful groups led by people who use services can be to them.

If you want to contact your CCG you can find your local group on this website [www.england.nhs.uk/ccg-details](http://www.england.nhs.uk/ccg-details).

Welcome to Active Independence

Active Independence has just joined Shaping Our Lives. The organisation started in 2003 as a direct payment support group in Doncaster.

In 2011 they got some money and set up as Active Independence. They are 100% led by people who use services. They provide advocacy, information, guidance and training to people who are (or want to be) managing their own support.

They are setting up a list of people who want to work as personal assistants.

Active Independence believes that disabled people have the right to control the support they need.
Independent Living Fund

The Independent Living Fund gives money to 18,000 disabled people so that they can live at home, not in residential care.

Recently 3 appeal court judges have decided that it was against the law for the government to close down the Independent Living Fund (ILF).

The case was made by 5 disabled people who believe that closing the fund would make it very difficult for them to live independently.

The Department of Work and Pensions will have to look at the decision again.

Making Health and Social Care Information Accessible

NHS England has started work to make information more accessible. They are writing a guide to make information easy for everyone.

They want to hear from people who –
- are deaf (or have some hearing loss),
- are blind (or have some visual loss),
- have learning difficulties
- and family carers.

There will be an online survey and meetings starting in autumn 2013.

If you have any questions email england.nhs.participation@nhs.net or look at the website www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/patients/accessibleinfo-2/
Living Well with Dementia

If you or someone you know has dementia there is advice and support to help you live well. It is natural to be worried about the future, but there is help, you don’t have to face it alone.

People with dementia should –
- try to stay as independent as possible
- keep in contact with friends and family. Having a good social life helps.
- Think about joining a local group for people with dementia, or their families
- Contact the NHS or voluntary organisations for advice and support

More information at http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/dementia-guide/Pages/living-well-with-dementia.aspx

Shaping Our Age

Shaping Our Age was a project of Brunel University, De Montfort University and the Royal Voluntary Service. Shaping Our Lives helped by interviewing some groups of older people.
We talked to –
- Black and minority ethnic groups
- Lesbian, gay and transgender groups
The aim of the project was to find out what services people are likely to want as they get older.

The research found that older people don’t always want traditional services. Services will need to change.

www.royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk
Poetry

Diagnosis Hysteria? Prescription Hysteria?
is a book of poems by
CoolTan Arts Women’s Poetry.

You can get the book from
sara@cooltanarts.org.uk or

020 7701 2696

Disability Hate Crime

The Law Commission was set up by Parliament to recommend changes to laws.

They have been looking at whether the law on hate crime should be changed. They have been talking to people from the 5 groups affected by hate crime –
- Disabled people
- People of different races or ethnicities
- People with different religions or beliefs
- Lesbian, gay and bisexual people
- Transgender people

They asked 2 questions

1. whether crimes should be punished by a longer sentence if they are hate crimes

2. if there should be new crimes of stirring up hatred against people from all 5 groups
This happens already but only if the victim is from some of the groups.

Katherine Quarmby wrote “Why We are Failing Disabled People”. She thinks that these changes should be made.
Tell Someone

More people who are Gypsies or Travellers commit suicide than people from the rest of population. There is evidence that suicide is rising among travellers. “Tell Someone” is a DVD to raise awareness of the problem. Travellers were involved in making the DVD.

The DVD is for travellers and mental health workers to use.

For more information go to www.irishtraveller.org.uk

And finally...Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Artwork provided by Vicky at Connect in The North

Artwork provided by Leo at easy on the i

Artwork provided by Vicky at Connect in The North

Artwork provided by Leo at easy on the i
About Shaping Our Lives

Shaping Our Lives started in 1996. It is a national network of user led organisations.

It wants to see a society that is fair and where disabled people have choice and control over the way they live and the support and services they use.

**Our aims**

- to support the development of user involvement
- to give a shared voice to organisations controlled by people who use services
- to support user involvement at a national level
- to work with all user groups
- to improve the quality of support people receive
- to help user led groups to link to each other
- to develop links with groups led by disabled people around the world

[www.solnet.org.uk](http://www.solnet.org.uk)
Contact us

Eamon Andrews
Office administrator, project worker and SOLNET editor

eamon@shaptingourlives.org.uk

Becki Meakin
General Manager

becki@shaptingourlives.org.uk

BM Box 4845
London
WC1N 3XX

0845 241 0383
| Main website | www.shapingourlives.org.uk  
|             | networking  
|             | www.solnetwork.org.uk |
| Easy read newsletter produced by |
| **Words**   | 0113 270 3233  
|             | info@citn.org.uk |
| **Pictures**| 0113 305 5773  
|             | easyonthei.lypft@nhs.net |