

DA News

Issue 55 February 2009



International Day of Persons with Disabilities, 3 December, 2008

To mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2008, Disability Action's Centre on Human Rights for People with Disabilities (CHRPD) hosted a panel debate on the Northern Ireland context of The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Gerry Kelly, Junior Minister, gave the opening address and stated publicly OFMDFM's commitment to working with the centre on the Convention and its implications and application in Northern Ireland. Over 120 key political, disability, private and public sector stakeholders attended the event.



Left to right: William Crawley BBC, Evelyn Collins Chief Executive Equality Commission, Gerry Kelly Junior Minister OFMDFM, Peter O'Neill Chief Executive Human Rights Commission, Dr Colin M. Harper Manager Centre on Human Rights for People with Disabilities and (front) Monica Wilson Chief Executive Disability Action.

William Crawley, chaired the debate with Evelyn Collins, Chief Executive Equality Commission, Peter O'Neill Chief Executive Human Rights Commission and Dr Colin M. Harper, Manager at the Centre on Human Rights at Disability Action, serving on the panel and discussing a number of the questions from the floor.

The Human Rights Commission and the Equality Commission will work together on monitoring the implementation of the UNCRPD here in Northern Ireland.

Speaking about the event Monica Wilson, Chief Executive, Disability Action said, "People with disabilities have the same human rights as everyone else but unfortunately for far too long disabled people have been subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment."

"The UN Convention is unique in terms of International Human Rights law as it is the only one that has been developed by the people it has been created to protect. Disabled people throughout the world were involved at every stage of its development so it reflects the lived daily reality of the lives of people with disabilities."

Colin Harper, Manager Centre on Human Rights for People with Disabilities at Disability Action added: "It is vital that disabled people and all key stakeholders understand how the Convention will impact upon and benefit people in the Northern Ireland context.

The Convention will increase the level of protection of disabled people's human rights but will also be an effective lobbying tool for people with disabilities."

"We have been working with other disability organisations throughout the UK to lobby to ensure that the UK Government ratifies the Convention in full.

The UK Government currently has 4 areas on which it is considering having reservations. These include education and capacity law. If the Convention is ratified with reservations, the UK Government would in effect, be declaring its willingness to accept less than the agreed international standard for the protection of the Human Rights of disabled people across the UK"

For further information on the Convention and the work of the Centre contact Gráinne Teggart at Disability Action on Telephone: 028 9029 7880, Textphone 028 9029 7878 or Email: grainneteggart@disabilityaction.org



Back row Left to right: Centre on Human Rights for People with Disabilities at Disability Action Staff: Judith Markle administrator, Grainne Teggart Communications and Campaigns Officer, Dr Colin M. Harper Manager, Gerry Kelly Junior Minister OFMDFM, Jennifer-ruth McAnlis Advocacy Officer. Front row left to right: Michelle Millar Outreach Officer, Nicola Molloy volunteer, Dr Bronagh Byrne Research and Policy Officer and Heather Logan Training Officer.

ICE - In case of Emergency

In Case of Emergency most of us carry a mobile phone with names and numbers stored in it's memory. If we were to be involved in an accident or were taken ill, the people attending us would have our mobile phone but wouldn't know who to call.

The following advice was provided by the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service. All you need to do is store the number of a contact person or persons who should be contacted during emergency under the name 'ICE' (In Case of Emergency). For more than one contact name, simply enter ICE1, ICE2, ICE3.

The idea was thought up by a paramedic who found that when he went to the scenes of accidents there were always mobile phones with patients but they didn't know which number to call. He therefore thought that it would be a good idea if there was a nationally recognised name for this purpose. In an emergency situation, Emergency Service personnel and hospital staff would be able to quickly contact the right person by simply dialling the number you have stored as 'ICE'.

Rural Development Programme 2007-2013

The Rural Development Programme (RDP) 2007-2013 is now open for business. The Programme aims to protect and enhance our rural environment and contribute to the development of competitive and sustainable rural businesses and thriving rural communities. Consisting of a wide range of funding schemes, the RDP also provides opportunities for advice, mentoring and training for farmers, farm families, rural dwellers and community groups.

The Rural Development Programme 2007-2013 is part financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

If you would like further information on what support is available, details of who can apply, how to apply and when to apply, please visit www.rdpni.info, Email: rdp@dardni.gov.uk or Telephone: 084 5304 4509 to request a free information pack.

Fundraising

Swimathon

Could you swim 100 lengths? Not only would you be getting fit and healthy after the festive period but you would be raising valuable funds for Northern Ireland charity Disability Action. We need 17 people to swim 100 lengths each to make up the 26 miles!

The swimathon will take place on Tuesday 24 March 2009 at Lisburn Leisureplex. Minimum sponsorship £300 - must be able to swim 100 lengths!

Trek Everest Base Camp!!

Challenge yourself to take part in the Trek of a Lifetime to Everest Base Camp, and support Disability Action!

Follow in the footsteps of some of the most famous explorers of modern times as you join the Outdoor Concepts Team on this once-in-a-lifetime Open Challenge opportunity! During this 14 day epic journey in October 2009 you will see some of the most breathtaking scenery in the Himalayas, visit Kala Pathar the famous Everest view point, as well as the actual site of the base camp as it sits below the Khumbu Icefall.

Price - £3450 per person

- Price includes all costs for the trip, as well as a contribution of vital funds towards the valuable services that Disability Action provides to over 45,000 people with disabilities every year in Northern Ireland.
- Price includes information evenings and a training weekend locally.
- Prices are quoted for flights departing from Belfast or Dublin.

If you think you would be up to either of the above challenges, please contact Clare Sheeran at Disability Action for a fundraising pack, on Telephone: 028 9029 7880, Textphone: 028 9029 7882 or Email: claresheeran@disabilityaction.org

Speechmatters Re-launches as The Stroke Association Northern Ireland

Speechmatters – Part of The Stroke Association, has re-launched itself as The Stroke Association Northern Ireland. This marks the completion of a three year merger between Speechmatters and The Stroke Association which will ensure a united voice for stroke survivors across the UK and enable more stroke survivors, their carers and families in Northern Ireland to benefit from services, support and advice.

The Stroke Association Northern Ireland is now the only local charity solely dedicated to stroke. The Stroke Association NI will remain dedicated to the needs of people living with aphasia, their families and carers across Northern Ireland but will expand its services and support to reach more people touched by stroke who vitally need help.

Speechmatters identity will not be lost through the re-branding. Speechmatters will continue to represent the communication support services currently offered through the 13 Conversation Groups across Northern Ireland.

Speechmatters will operate as a sub brand of The Stroke Association Northern Ireland

and will concentrate on developing the communication skills of people living with aphasia.

The Family Support Service will also continue to thrive and be known as Supportmatters. Supportmatters will continue offering services to stroke survivors, their carers and families.

The Stroke Association NI will continue to raise awareness of stroke and aphasia and fundraise locally to benefit stroke survivors, their carers and families in Northern Ireland. All money raised in Northern Ireland will be invested back into Northern Ireland to continue providing services and support.

Tom Richardson, Director Northern Ireland comments on the re-brand: "This is a very exciting time for The Stroke Association Northern Ireland. Over the past few months we have been consulting with service users, stakeholders and colleagues to ensure that we hear their views about our re-brand and ensure that we successfully re-launch as The Stroke Association Northern Ireland.

The future of stroke in Northern Ireland is changing for the better and The Stroke Association NI is preparing to develop and grow to ensure that stroke survivors, their carers and families get the help, support and services they are entitled to."

DA News is the Newsletter of Disability Action, it is published quarterly and aims to bring our members and associates up-to-date information on what is happening within the sector.

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