

Disabling Practice? Enabling Nurses

DISABILITY NETWORK NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 2 JUNE 2000

Thank you all for your very positive comments about our first Disability network newsletter. Within hours of sending it the RCN was inundated with requests for personal copies from as far afield as Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the USA such is the power of email! Please do continue to send in your contributions.

Sue Thomas

STOP..PRESS.. STOP.. PRESS..

DISABLING PRACTICE? ENABLING NURSING

DID YOU MISS OUR FIRST CONFERENCE? SEE PAGE 3

New Guidance

Drive to increase employment of disabled people in the NHS:

'Looking Beyond Labels'

"NHS managers must do more to recruit and retain disabled people as part of the NHS workforce", says Health Minister John Denham. In a Department of Health press release on May 18th Mr. Denham announced new guidelines on how NHS employers should take on and keep staff with disabilities at all levels in the NHS. Mr. Denham said: "The NHS is the largest employer in Europe and should be developing best practice for the employment of disabled people. The NHS cannot afford to ignore the skills, experience and potential of disabled people."

Last month the Government stated that all NHS organisations must qualify to use the Employment Service 'two ticks' disability symbol -which

guarantees an interview to qualified disabled applicant's -by April 2001.

The new guidance, *Looking Beyond Labels*, will help employers meet this target. Latest figures show that 6% of those working in NHS trusts and health authorities are disabled, compared to an average of 8% in local government. The health service currently employs about one million people (Labour Force survey winter statistics 1999-2000). *Looking Beyond Labels* will help fill the gap by helping employers: recruit more people with a disability, develop flexible working practices to accommodate disabled workers and promote greater understanding of disabled employees in the workplace. Examples of specific steps employers should take include:

- arranging special leave to allow disabled employees to undergo treatment
- advertising jobs in magazines aimed at disabled readers
- providing application forms in usable formats, such as Braille or on tape
- making necessary adjustments to the workplace to accommodate disabled employees
- Providing an interpreter or reader if necessary.

Mr. Denham added: "Last month I launched a new equal opportunities framework for the NHS, *The Vital Connection: working together for quality and equality*. This places a fresh urgency on improving the health service's record as an employer of disabled people. "I want to see NHS employers give the same priority to disability issues as other parts of their equality strategy. "We want to see the NHS achieve this by working in partnership with organisations who represent disabled people and who can offer practical advice and support -and by working with all areas of the community they serve." The guidance also provides information and advice on the legislative framework, including the DDA. To obtain a copy www.doh.gov.uk/nhsequality.htm or contact NHS Response Line on 0541 555 455 - copies are available in Braille and audio formats.

Recent initiatives aimed at tackling inequality in the NHS include:

- An action plan to tackle racial harassment distributed to the health service last year,
- The NHS Equality Awards, an annual award aimed at highlighting and promoting good practice in tackling inequalities.
- Action on Race Equality published by the Department of Health in January this year, which sets out a series of actions to tackle race inequality in both health and social services.
- The Disability Rights Commission, which came into being on 19 April 2000 and is working with employers to ensure equal treatment for disabled people.

NEW CONTINENCE GUIDANCE

Incontinence is an issue that can seriously affect the quality of life of people with a disability but continence services in some areas of the UK have sadly been inadequate. The government commissioned a review of continence services following considerable criticism from health professionals and the public, and new continence guidance¹ was launched just before Easter. A copy can be downloaded from www.doh.gov.uk/continence_services.htm. We now have an excellent starting point with the guidance to press at local levels for implementation for the benefit of all people with this distressing problem. A resource pack on how to lobby health services in your local area to Invest in Continence Services can be obtained from the Continence Foundation Tel 0207 404 6875

¹ DOH (2000) Good Practice in Continence Services. HMSO London

OFFICE FOR NATIONAL STATISTICS

HEALTH STATISTICS QUARTERLY SUMMER 2000 published on 6th June includes amongst the data published an examination of persisting disadvantage and mortality in the regions of England and Wales using a Longitudinal Study and a study Are we looking forward to a longer and healthier retirement?

Mortality rates:

In 1999 the main causes of death were cancer (25 per cent), heart disease (21 per cent), respiratory disease (17%) and cerebrovascular disease (10%).

These proportions varied little from those for corresponding conditions in 1998. Feature articles include:

An examination of persisting disadvantage and mortality in the regions using the Longitudinal Study by A. Reid, ONS, and S. Harding, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. This article examines regional differences in England and Wales in long term disadvantage and its impact on regional inequalities in mortality. Living in rented housing in the 1981 and 1991 Census was used as a measure of long term disadvantage, while being in owner occupied housing on both occasions was used as a measure of long term advantage. Some key findings include:

Long term disadvantage was greater in the North than the South. The long-term disadvantaged had higher mortality than the long term advantaged in every region. Regional differences in mortality were largely independent of long term disadvantage.

Are we looking forward to a longer and healthier retirement? K Dunnell & D Dix, ONS.

This article reviews trends in health among people aged 55-64. They are experiencing rapidly decreasing death rates leading to a greater expectation of life and longer retirement. But are they more healthy and will their extra years be increasingly free of chronic illness and disability? Some key findings from recent ONS work show:

- Mortality since the late 1980s has improved more among those aged 55-64 than for any other adult age group.
- Signs of increasing health problems in this age group are increasing rates of some cancers and obesity.
- Signs of little or no change are: self-reported health problems and high blood pressure.
- Signs of improving health are decreases in smoking and in the incidence of lung cancer, and improved dental health.
- There has been no reduction in the number of years expected to be spent in ill health after retirement.

Data from the Office for National Statistics
1 Drummond Gate London SW1V 2QQ Tel:
Public Enquiries 020-7533 5888 Statfax - fax
retrieval service. This release 0906 7360 262
Internet <http://www.ons.gov.uk>

Forthcoming events

DISABLING PRACTICE? ENABLING NURSING

For those of you that were unable to attend our first Disabling practice? Enabling nursing conference you have a further opportunity to attend. Our aim was to hold the conference in each of the regions of England this year and spread out to the Boards in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales as we identify local support.

Our second conference is being held in conjunction with Cornwall Healthcare NHS Trust July 17th in Bodmin Cornwall. To attend contact CHCT Disability Adviser Vicky Eathorne on Eathrovi@chct.swest.nhs.uk
CHCT 57 Pydar Street Truro TR1 2SS
Tel: 01872 272494

A place at the event will cost you £10

Speakers include:

- Michael Freaney Disability Matters
- Ruth Northway University of Glamorgan
- Philip Scullion University of Coventry
- Stephen Lloyd Grassroots and
- The Really Disabled Theatre Company

WARRINGTON DISABILITY AWARENESS DAY

Sunday 18th July 2000 is Warrington Disability Awareness Day (DAD) is in its eighth year and is now probably the largest voluntary led disability information event in the UK. Held in the Walton Hall Gardens Warrington admission is free. There will be over 180 stands this year staffed by voluntary, statutory organisations and businesses. For more details contact Dave Thompson.

(Email dave.thompson@warrchc-tr.nwest.nhs.uk)

News & Views

Resources for professionals

Equal ability produces some excellent information and posters including Disabling Practice and how to avoid it - a guide for clinicians in the NHS, Access - Tips and Hints for NHS Administrative and support staff. For more details contact Equal Ability Email: @equalability.ltd.uk web: www.equalability.ltd.uk Tel: 01924 270335

RECOGNITION OF BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE PETITION

British Sign Language (BSL) is the first language of 57,000-65,000 Deaf people in the UK. Thousands more use it as a second language and over a million have mastered a basic level of proficiency. In the past Deaf people have been prevented from using their own language. Just as Welsh people have secured their right to have Welsh language legally recognised, Deaf people should be allowed to have the same choice, and in turn be full and equal citizens.

The Federation of Deaf People (FDP) is organising a march for the legal recognition of BSL by the British Government. The march will take place on Saturday 8 July 2000. They are collecting names for a petition. Please send them your name or name list to bslpetition@fdp.org.uk

EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

The British Columbia Institute Against Family Violence has launched a project called "The Person Within" (TPW). The project has produced a video and handbook to speak on behalf of those who are most vulnerable to abuse and neglect in our society - children and youth with disabilities.

"The Person Within" video explores emotional abuse and neglect of children and youth with disabilities. The voices of young people with disabilities and their parents give the video authenticity and a focus on ability, not disability. The project highlights the importance of emotionally responsible caregiving in group homes, schools and treatment facilities. Written in clear language, the "The Person Within" handbook complements the video and provides additional information.

In addition, the BC Institute against Family Violence is conducting a public awareness campaign and offers workshops in co-operation with community agencies and organisations tailored to the specific target groups. The main themes are the identification and impact of emotional and psychological abuse and neglect, the necessity for emotionally responsible caregiving, and strategies for building a community network to prevent abuse and neglect of children and youth with disabilities. If you wish to order a video or handbook or make inquiries about potential workshops, please contact: Tracey Moropito at BCIFV Suite 551-409 Granville St. Vancouver, BC, Canada V6C 1T2
Tel: 604-669-7055 Fax: 604-669-7054
E-mail: HYPERLINK accounts@bcifv.org

Clinical Placement Access for Nursing Students with Impairments

March's newsletter gave details of a research project carried out at The School of Healthcare Studies, University of Leeds, into the barriers facing nursing students with physical or sensory impairments. This was followed by an article in *Nursing Times* (Volume 96, No 15, page 7). A further article is expected to be published in *Therapy Weekly* in the next few weeks. There has been tremendous interest in this research with in excess of 100 people contacting the School requesting further information. This is particularly encouraging as interest has been shown at both a national and international level, from academics, disability officers, and nursing practitioners and occupational health departments. Leeds University now plans to audit all of its nursing student placement circuit using the audit tool in order to ascertain which placements are suitable for students with impairments.

Further details are available from Sangeeta Richhariya-Leahy (Research Officer) by e-mail: sangeeta@slbd.u-net.com

Request for assistance

The Department for Education and Employment has awarded a contract to Incomes Data Services to monitor and evaluate all cases brought under the DDA. The project involves gathering information on disability discrimination cases in the fields of employment and access to goods, facilities and services. IDS would like to hear from anyone involved in providing advice or representation in cases brought under the Act (particularly Part 111) who is willing to provide them with any information on cases including those that are awaiting hearing or have been withdrawn or settled. They are also interested in canvassing the views of advisers or others involved in interpreting and applying the act on a day to day basis. If you can assist, contact Sarah Leverton Tel: 020 7608 0949 or Email: sarah@incomesdata.co.uk

Consultations on a New Code of Practice Regulations and Practical Guide

Want to make comment on the new DDA consultation papers being circulated by the Disability rights Commission and Department for Education & Employment? New requirements to

make goods, facilities and services more accessible to disabled people from 2004. A hard copy is available from the DRC helpline - 0345 622 633 or email ddahelp@stra.sitel.co.uk. Available on web from <http://www.drcgb.org> and at <http://www.disability.gov.uk>.

Press

Scullion P (2000) Disabling practice? Enabling nurses *Nursing and Residential Care* 2:5 235-239

Scullion P (2000) Disability as an equal opportunity issue within nurse education in the UK *Nurse Education Today* 20,199-206

Turner-Stokes L, Turner-Stokes T, Schon K, Turner-Stokes H, Dayal S and Brier S (2000) Charter for disabled people using hospitals: a completed access audit cycle *Journal of the Royal College of Physicians of London* 34:2 185-189

Newsletter Contacts

If you wish to contribute to this newsletter please send your contributions to:

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Vicky Eathorne Disability Adviser Cornwall
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