

Newsletter

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Open Mon-Fri
11-3pm

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Benefits Update

Employment and Support Allowance replaces Incapacity Benefit for new claimants from 27 October 2008. If you are already receiving Incapacity Benefit, you will continue to get it as long as you are eligible.

How it works

Employment and Support Allowance consists of two phases:

- the assessment phase rate is paid for the first 13 weeks of your claim while a decision is made on your capability for work through the Work Capability Assessment
- the main phase starts from week 14 of your claim, if the Work Capability Assessment shows that your illness or disability does limit your ability to work.

There are two groups within the main phase:

Work Related Activity Group

If you are placed in the Work Related Activity Group, you will be expected to take part in work focused interviews with your personal adviser. You will get support to help you prepare for suitable work.

In return, you will receive a work related activity component in addition to your basic rate.

Support Group

If you are placed in the Support Group because your illness or disability has a severe effect on your ability to work, you will not be expected to take part in any work. You can do so on a voluntary basis if you want to.

You will receive a support component in addition to your basic rate.

Further information can be given on www.direct.gov.uk or call Telephone 0800 055 6688

North Lanarkshire Disability Forum

Well 2008 was a busy year for all at North Lanarkshire Disability Forum , and now that we are into 2009 we are looking forward to an equally productive year ahead.

At the Forum we keep up to date with all that is happening in North Lanarkshire and we try and keep you as up to date as possible.

What's new for us? Well firstly we are working on a recruitment drive on volunteers, we need dedicated people who are interested in attending informative meetings within North Lanarkshire to help promote our service and to keep people with a disability in the loop and of course to make sure they have a voice.

We hope to continue the outreach services we have in Airdrie, Cumbernauld , Bellshill and Shotts and make sure that literature is available but without voluntary support this is difficult.

So if you have a few hours each week that you can spare to help us spread the word, gain information and campaign on disability issues it would be such a great help

Lanarkshire Deaf Club

Lanarkshire Deaf Club are situated within our office space, they have recently set up basic sign language classes for any member of the public or organisations to attend. They have had a huge response, overwhelming infact so we hope this will lead to great things for them. They have a social night every Saturday in Motherwell's Daisy Park Centre and this is open to anyone, so if you have a loved one, friend, relative who is hearing impaired then this may be what they need please contact Ian Galloway either on 01698 275710 or email lanarkshdeafclub@btconnect.com for more information.

Should you be interested in the sign classes it is a basic class lasting 8 weeks, it is a free service however any donations to help with the cost of materials would be a greatly appreciated. Due to the high demand please call to book on 01698 275710.

Lanarkshire Helplines:**Mental Health**

North Lanarkshire Mental Health Information – 0800 073 0918

Lanarkshire Links - 01698 265232 or 265254

Deaf and Hearing Impaired

Lanarkshire Deaf Club – 01698 275710 lanarkshdeafclub@btconnect.com

Blind and Sight Impaired

RNIB -0131 311 8500 (Edinburgh Head office)

Children and young people with disabilities

Partners in Play – 01698 230130

Carers

North Lanarkshire Carers Together – 01698 404055

Elderly

Voice of Experience – 01236 758855

Disabled Access Information

North Lanarkshire Disability Access Panel – can be contacted through North Lanarkshire Disability Forum 01698 275710

National Freephone Telephone Counselling Service for Disabled People in Scotland.



'Your Call' is a free telephone counseling service which is open to disabled people from all over Scotland. The 'Your Call' counsellors are all disabled people themselves, providing them with an understanding of what it means to live as a disabled person in Scotland. The counsellors work as volunteers, and are trained to a professional standard in counselling.

The service takes calls to its appointment line from 11am - 3pm on Mondays & Tuesdays, and from 11am - 1pm on Wednesdays. Calls are free from a land line and from most networks (including T-Mobile, Vodafone, Orange, O2, 3 and Virgin mobile).

The number is withheld so it will not appear on the phone bill. For more information visit the Your Call website.

<http://www.lothiancil.org.uk/whatwedo/yourcall>

The 'Your Call' number is **08088 01 03 62**, and the service is open to all disabled people in Scotland who are over the age of 18, and their immediate family members.

Sad News for the Forum

In our last newsletter one of our volunteers Katie Murphy was kind enough to tell us about her and her volunteering experience, it is with great sadness that Katie passed away on December 5th 2008 aged just 27 years – she was a wonderful person and we were all very fond of her, she will be greatly missed.

Moira's Word

It had been a long year for Helen as she had lost her husband. They were always out and about now she was home alone. Wish I could meet other folk in the same situation. Helen's walking ability was poor and being a senior citizen it was harder to find anyone who understood her plight.

If you can relate to this situation please contact us or visit our office. One of our volunteers is interested in organising a social morning for tea/coffee and chats. Please call and ask for Lorraine on 01698 275710.

I have been a volunteer with the Disability Forum for almost 5 years now – it was actually my Doctor who suggested that I had to do something to occupy my time or I would develop health problems (on top of the ones I already had). By coincidence the Disability Forum were advertising in the local press and I thought I would give it a go. At first I was doing things around the Office - answering phones, dealing with enquiries and generally getting to know what the Forum did.

Not long after I started volunteering there was a lot of information coming out about the Disability Equality Act and I was really interested in getting involved at a North Lanarkshire level. As part of the Act, Public Bodies such as North Lanarkshire Council, the Health Board, Public Transport Authorities all had to produce a Disability Equality Scheme. In order to do this, they had to consult with people who have disabilities and I found myself enjoying being part of the process that ultimately led to local Disability Equality Schemes being drawn up and approved.

Around the same time North Lanarkshire Council was setting up Joint Care Partnership Boards covering Disability, Older People, Mental Health and Addictions. In order for them to be true Partnerships Service Users and Carers had to part of the process and I was more than willing to get involved.

Along with the Disability Forum, Lanarkshire Links (Mental Health), Voice of Experience Forum (Older People) and Carers Together have come together to form an organisation called Partnership 4 Change that aims to ensure that we have a co-ordinated and meaningful approach to our participation on the various Partnership Boards.

Partnership 4 Change has been given funding to employ a development worker to assist Service Users and Carers to have a strong voice on the Partnership Boards and be part of shaping how care services are developed so that they meet the needs of people in North Lanarkshire.

However, participation needs volunteers. So if you have time on your hands and want to be involved in shaping care services, then why not get in touch with the Disability Forum. You will be supported and I can assure anyone that your time will be well spent.

This article was written by Greg McFarlane who has been an active volunteer with us since June 2004. **You can contact us at 41-42 Civic Square, Motherwell, ML1 1TP. TEL: 01698 275710. EMAIL: lorraine@nldforum.plus.com**