



# Carers And Parents of adults with learning disabilities in Enfield

## CAPE NEWS – April & May 2021

Hopefully everyone is still coping OK, and looking forward to the greater freedom which we now have. Hopefully this will continue to progress, as we all feel more secure from having had our vaccinations. It is a while since my last newsletter, and I apologise for that, but I wanted to make sure I had some good news for you all. So here it is:

### **CAPE has arranged an ‘in person’ meeting for Monday, July 12<sup>th</sup>!**

We shall be meeting at our new venue – Park Avenue Disability Resource Centre, at 10.00 a.m. We have booked the main room, which is very large and should allow for everyone to maintain an appropriate level of social distancing. Vicky Main, the head of the Integrated Learning Disabilities Service (ILDS), who has taken over from Niel Niehorster, will be coming along to meet CAPE members. She will be telling us about changes in personnel and structure of the team, and she will also answer questions which members have submitted (see below).

CAPE members have continued to meet with Enfield officers and still attend various ‘remote’ meetings, such as the L.D. Focus Group, the Health Sub Group, the Transition Implementation Group, Enfield Healthwatch, and the L.D. Partnership Board, making every effort to raise concerns and issues on behalf of carers of adults with L.D. We have now taken a leading role in a new group, the Money Matters Group, which is being lead by Enfield Disability Action (EDA), via their Enfield Advocacy Service (EAS) to monitor social care charging and other financial issues (see below). In addition, CAPE committee members have participated in nationwide meetings to discuss the future of charging for adult social care.

#### **Local Covid-19 PCR Testing.**

The Covid-19 PCR testing is still available, even for those who do not have symptoms, and we are grateful to Enfield for providing this. Tests are available on Mondays at Park Avenue Disability Resource Centre. If you, your Direct Payment staff, or the person you care for would like a test, please ring Rosemary Mann, on 020 8360 1195 or email her at [Rosemary.Mann@enfield.gov.uk](mailto:Rosemary.Mann@enfield.gov.uk). Enfield has also now set up several centres where the high speed Lateral Flow Display (LFD) tests are freely available to anyone who would like one. Please check [Enfield.gov](http://Enfield.gov) for a centre in your area.

#### **Re-Opening of Day Services.**

This process is continuing successfully, and many more service users have now been invited to resume their use of day services. Letters have been sent out to service users from their day service providers, detailing the processes which are required to ensure that everyone remains safe. If you have not heard from your provider, please contact them and request information or contact the Duty Social Worker (020 8379 5075). ILDS is also offering a ‘virtual’ day service, provided by Radio Marathon. If you would like more information about this, please contact the Duty Social Worker.

Some members may still feel uneasy about their family member returning to day services, as this time. We have been told that the L.A. appreciates our concerns, and is prepared to retain the placement for the disabled person, until such time as the service user feels able to return. We are unsure how long this will be the case.



## **C**arers **A**nd **P**arents of adults with learning disabilities in **E**nfield

The Formont pool is now open for private hires, and you may use your personal budget to purchase sessions, which will be for your family member's sole use. You will need to organise appropriate support for these sessions. This is a really excellent facility, which my family is now using and enjoying tremendously. Please check with Shard Madhewoo at the Formont (020 8363 6388), for more information.



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## **Covid-19 Vaccine.**

Hopefully, most carers and adults with L.D. will have received their Covid-19 vaccinations. The G.P. hubs are excellent, and have made extensive adjustments to accommodate people with L.D. who might be fearful of having the jab. In addition, Enfield L.A. has set up a special hub at Chase Farm Hospital, for carers and people with L.D. You will note that this is only suitable for those who are aged over 30, as they are only offering the AstraZeneca vaccine. If your relative is younger, you should contact your G.P., go on-line or call 119, as all individuals with learning disabilities are entitled to the vaccination, as one of the priority groups.

We also understand that nurses will visit people's homes to vaccinate the most challenging individuals. Please contact the Duty Social Worker if you have been unable to organise vaccines for yourself or your family member. It is so important to obtain this vital protection. For more information about the vaccine and how to access the Chase Farm hub, use the following link:

<https://mylife.enfield.gov.uk/enfield-home-page/content/learning-disabilities/coronavirus-vaccine-hub/>

## **Money Matters Group (MMG)**

This group has been set-up, at the request of the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board, to consider Social Care Charging and other Finance issues. It comprises members from various care groups (older people, mental health, carers, physical disabilities, L.D., etc.), and representatives from the main information and advice providers. The group is being chaired by Karen Grimes who leads EDA's Enfield Advocacy Service (EAS), and meetings will be facilitated by EDA. The MMG will report regularly to the Learning Disabilities Partnership, and any issues will also be taken forward to the L.D. Focus Group, for more detailed discussion. We still have concerns that this group has no direct involvement with L.A. officers, so all communication is taking place via the MMG's chair, which does make the whole process more time-consuming and complicated. The group met again in May, and hopefully this will develop in a positive way – it is still in its very early stages.

## **Charging Assessments for 2021-22 and Claims for Disability Related Expenditure (DRE).**

The Charging Policies for 2021-22 have now being finalised and published on MyLife – this proved to be a lengthy process, requiring a good deal of input from CAPE reps, as there were many issues of concern. At the time of writing this newsletter, the annual financial review letters, informing people of their revised social care charges for 2021-22, have not yet been sent out. We are hopeful that this will happen very soon. Again, we have been informed that a breakdown, explaining how the charge has been arrived at, will not be sent out to every affected service user. I do urge you to request that your charging breakdown be sent to you by calling the Financial Assessment Team (020 8379 8177) and requesting this. Enfield is acting unlawfully by not sending this information out as a matter of course, with the annual charging review letter, but apparently their I.T. system is STILL incapable of doing this.

You will need your breakdown so that you can check the levels of Disability Related Expenditure (DRE) you are claiming. You must ensure that you update your DRE regularly, otherwise almost all of your benefits increases will be taken as additional charges. The more DRE you claim, the lower your charge will be! Please request a printed copy of the latest DRE Factsheet and DRE Claim Form, to remind yourself of the DRE which you can claim, alternatively, you can access the Charging Policy and the DRE Factsheet via this link to MyLife:

<https://mylife.enfield.gov.uk/enfield-home-page/content/financial/community-based-charges/>

The 'reasonable' levels, described in this factsheet, which you can claim for certain DRE categories, have been increased in line with inflation (.9%). You can claim DRE amounts which are less than, or equal to, a 'reasonable' level, applicable to that category, by simply explaining how they relate to your disability. You will not be required to provide 'evidence', either by receipts or by it needing to be specified on the Care & Support Plan, for these 'reasonable' DRE claims. Any DRE claims above the 'reasonable' levels,



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will require 'evidence' to be provided. If you feel that you are being treated unfairly by Finance, then please contact the Duty Social Worker (020 8379 5075), as sometimes Finance officers appear to be applying the DRE policy incorrectly. If you require any further assistance or advice, you can contact the Enfield Carers Centre (0208 366 3677) or Enfield Connections (0203 960 0129).

Finally, please remember that you can add or change items of DRE, whilst retaining previously evidenced DRE from the previous year, if they still apply. You should not be required to undergo a full DRE assessment. If a Finance Officer attempts to make you do this, please contact the Duty Social Worker, or take advice. Obviously, if you wish for a full DRE assessment, you may request this.

Please be absolutely clear that if you are not receiving any services at all from Enfield L.A., then you should not be paying any charges. You must call the Duty Social Worker (020 8379 5075) and ask for a refund of any charges which you have paid during periods when your family member was not receiving services. Duty should organise for a refund of incorrect charges, on your behalf. Remember that you will still have to pay charges for any week when you do receive a service from the L.A.

## **High Court Ruling against Norfolk County Council.**

I have included this as a separate item, and it may well have a beneficial effect on social care charges for some of your family members. Enfield has produced its response to this ground-breaking ruling, although we were disappointed that they decided not to engage in any form of consultation or involvement with disabled people or carers. This refusal to consult is currently being challenged via the MMG. Nevertheless, Enfield has acted swiftly and its Charging Policies for 2021-22 now reflect their new proposals. We are hoping that this will all be explained when the annual financial reviews are sent out, but details are included in the main Charging Policy – particularly in Appendix 6. This can be viewed at:

<https://mylife.enfield.gov.uk/media/34370/asc-charging-policy.pdf>

Appendix 6 explains the ruling against Norfolk County Council, and then details the way that Enfield is responding to this. Enfield's policy changes result in possible reductions in social care charges from some of the most disabled service users, with larger reductions for those in supported living environments. In addition, there are also significant refunds being made for 2020-21 charges, to a smaller number of service users.

## **Fairer Enfield Policy.**

Enfield has published a new policy, which is excellent, and gives important information about Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Enfield. This details the over-arching principles and practices which should be applied at all times by Council staff, elected representatives, service providers, residents and disadvantaged groups. You can find this policy document at:

<https://new.enfield.gov.uk/services/your-council/fairer-enfield-policy-2021-2025-your-council.pdf>

## **Learning Disabilities Partnership Board - May 2021.**

CAPE representatives have participated in a very interesting meeting where the main topic was 'What happens when my family carers are not there anymore?' This is a question which many of us have been asking for so many years, and the answers have been difficult to obtain. In this meeting, we welcomed speakers from the Enfield Deputies Service, Enfield Carers Centre, Commissioning & Brokerage, and Edenvale Care. Resulting from this, and the issues raised by carer representatives, Vicky Main has agreed to set up a group which will work with Commissioning to identify services to provide the wider support which families continue to provide, even when a learning disabled family member moves into independent living, or even residential care. It will include issues around D.P. employment support, overarching supervision, support with finance, advocacy, contingency arrangements, 'future life' planning, etc. This will hopefully be a productive project and we shall keep CAPE members informed about its progress.



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## Questions for Vicky Main on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

We are delighted to welcome Vicky to our first meeting since lockdown began in March 2020. She was scheduled to attend our CAPE meeting in April 2020, but obviously this had to be cancelled. Vicky has now been in her post, as head of ILDS, for well over a year – but what a year it has been! As part of her presentation, she is happy to answer members' questions, and address any general issues which members may have. She has asked that these questions be put together and forwarded to her in advance of the meeting. She will be unable to address issues relating directly to individual service users. If you do have any questions for Vicky, would you email these to Luan (see below), by Friday, June 25th, and we can then forward these to Vicky, for her to consider.

## **Finally!**

Luan continues to support us from EDA, and we are always pleased to hear from members who wish to contact CAPE, or who have issues of concern. She will be sending out a flier about our meeting on July 12th, to remind everyone. I do hope we have a good turnout to welcome Vicky, and please encourage any carer friends to join us in July. Fingers crossed we shall not need to cancel!!!

Wendy Berry (Vice-Chair).

Contacts - Tel: Luan, 0208 373 6249 (or 07745 795347) email: [CAPE@e-d-a.org.uk](mailto:CAPE@e-d-a.org.uk) website: [www.CAPE-LD.org](http://www.CAPE-LD.org)