INCLUSION IRELAND
2012 – 2013 REVIEWED

PATRON
MICHAEL D. HIGGINS, PRESIDENT OF IRELAND
Budget 2013
Social Protection: Call to reverse 20% cut to respite support for carers

Vested interests profit from disability as cuts bite

TD says people with disabilities 'not charity cases'

Preparing for the 'children' referendum

Protest at cuts to disability payments

Disabled people bear brunt of cuts, say protesters

Disability group takes to streets over cuts

We Demand Rights, Not Charity

Call for reform of ‘Lunacy Act of 1871’

Lack of sleep, no holidays and now less money: how the cuts affect full-time carers

My social circle will dwindle when payment goes

New inspections for child services

Home help regulation required to protect vulnerable institutions

Autistic boy left on bus may have been asleep

Home help regulation required to protect vulnerable people outside institutions

Inclusion Ireland 2012 – 2013 Reviewed
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Inclusion Ireland, now in its 51st year, continues to play a very important role in ensuring that people with an intellectual disability live full participating lives in the community with equal rights to all others. The New Directions Report published by the HSE in February 2012 supports this vision and emphasises the concept of “person-centeredness”. The report recognises that in order to move to a person centred approach “cultural change” will be fundamental. This could be brought about through a national education campaign and Inclusion Ireland and all of its members will have an important role to play in this campaign.

The new approach will see a shift from group programmes for adults with a disability. Each person will be offered a flexible and individualised set of supports so that they can live a life of their choosing in accordance with their own wishes, aspirations and needs. The core values of the New Directions approach are person-centeredness, community inclusion and active citizenship and high quality service provision.

In November we had a General Meeting and the “café style” assisted in a good exchange of views between all members who attended. In February Inclusion Ireland joined with Leap in running a very successful conference entitled “Creating Sustainable Lives – Personalisation and Support Options from a Family Perspective”. Caroline Tomlinson gave a very inspiring presentation on the work she has done in the UK in developing the concepts of citizenship, personalisation and individualised budgets.

Minister Kathleen Lynch recently invited the CEO and all board members to meet her in the Dáil. We congratulated her on the publishing of the National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities by HIQA. The Minister hopes that the necessary regulations can be passed shortly so that the inspections can start in the near future. During our meeting with the Minister we had a comprehensive discussion on other issues of concern to our organisation such as services for school leavers, self-advocates platform, assisted decision making legislation and the implementation of the various recent reports, Value for Money, Congregated Settings, New Directions and Progressing Disability Services for Children. We emphasised to the Minister the importance of consulting and engaging with self-advocates and family members in relation to the implementation of all of these reports. Inclusion Ireland believe it is vital for successful reform of disability services that people with an intellectual disability and their family members are at the centre of the change program and are partners in the planning and implementation of these strategy documents. Inclusion Ireland remains firmly committed to partnership with the HSE and service providers in developing and improving services and in communicating the vision of full participation.
of people with a disability in our society as equal citizens. With this in mind we aim over the coming year to continue to develop capacity building and networking opportunities for people with a disability and for parent and family groups. As part of this we will continue offering parent training opportunities such as Pathways to Progress which is outlined later in this report.

I am delighted to welcome our new CEO Paddy Connolly who has joined our organisation at a time of great change. During his first year with the organisation he has prepared an Interim Strategic Plan and published Inclusion Ireland’s position paper on the implementation of the National Disability Strategy. I would recommend that document to all members as it gives an overview of the National Disability Strategy introduced by government in 2004 and identifies the work required in order to implement it fully. The position paper also highlights the importance for us all of Ireland’s commitments as signatories to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This will be a key document in guiding Inclusion Ireland’s strategy and work in the years to come.

I wish to thank the CEO Paddy Connolly and all the staff for the support they have given to me as Chairperson during the past year. I commend them for the work they have undertaken. Some of that work can be seen on the website. In particular I would recommend the Information Pack which gives a very useful guide to disability law and policy in Ireland including a summary of all of the relevant reports which frame the current National Disability Strategy.

I also wish to thank all of the members of the Board of Inclusion Ireland for their work and support. In particular I want to pay tribute to the long years of service as Board members given by the seven retiring members, Ursula King, Bill Shorten, Kevin Doyle, Avril Webster, Sinéad Ó’Nualláin, Marie Wolfe and Jean Spain. The coming year will be a challenging one for the new Board and I look forward to working closely with them and the staff of Inclusion Ireland on behalf of all members.

Máirin McCartney
Chairperson
Inclusion Ireland

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This review of the past eighteen months comes at a time when Inclusion Ireland’s labours over a long number of years would seem to be bearing some fruit; for twenty years Inclusion Ireland has been advocating for the implementation of best practice standards in disability services and it is over fifteen years since we led out with the publication of a draft set of standards.

The publication and launch in recent weeks of the Health Information and Quality Authority Inspection Standards for Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities and the expressed commitment by the Government that inspections will commence in September this year marks, not the end, but a further stage in Inclusion Ireland’s work to ensure that supports for people with a disability are of the highest standard, conform to recognised best practice and provide people with a disability with the appropriate self-directed supports to live their lives according to their own wishes.

That it has taken this length of time for standards to be finalised and inspections to commence is not something of which Ireland can be proud and forms part of a long-standing malaise in the political system when it comes to vindicating the rights of people with a disability.

This is nowhere more apparent than in the failure of successive Governments to reform the Lunacy Act, 1871. The imminent publication of Assisted Decision making legislation represents another significant landmark for this State and for Inclusion Ireland’s campaigning work to influence policy change. It is a decade since Inclusion Ireland published ‘Who Decides and How? – People with Intellectual Disabilities – Legal Capacity and Decision Making’ and we are hopeful and expectant that many of the recommendations we have made will be incorporated into the new Bill.

The present Government and Minister Kathleen Lynch TD who has responsibility for disability, mental health and older people are to be acknowledged for advancing the commitments on HIQA standards and capacity legislation which formed part of the programme for Government.

In broader terms Inclusion Ireland has expressed its concerns to Government on the gradual but consistent erosion of supports to people with disabilities and their families that this Government has overseen. Cuts to or new charges for respite services, non-replacement of front-line staff providing services to children with a disability, reductions in home help and personal assistant hours, restriction on funding and a lack of forward planning for school leavers, withdrawal of payments to people with intellectual disabilities working in sheltered work and attending rehabilitative training, and the lack of investment in advocacy and other
supports for people with disabilities and their families has placed a disproportionate level of stress and anxiety on people with a disability and their family members at a time of general uncertainty in the wider economy and society. The increase in Inclusion Ireland activity in holding public meetings throughout the country and in provision of information and advocacy supports attest to a sense of great unease among those with whom we work. There are few people with a disability and few parents or family members who would state that this Government has delivered on its commitment in the Programme for Government to ensure that ‘every person with a disability would be supported to enable them as far as possible to lead full and independent lives to participate in work and in society and to maximise their potential’.

Inclusion Ireland has a track record and reputation over the past fifty years of being the leading organisation advocating for the rights of people with intellectual disability and their families, in continuing to build on this work we must utilise all opportunities to achieve change. This can be through participation on various policy structures and committees; influencing legislation through informing TDs and local councillors; public campaigning; developing alliances with other like-minded groups and organisations; EU level activity; and increasingly, through public interest litigation. This report summarises our work in advocating for the rights of people with an intellectual disability and their families.

In working to achieve change we must be mindful of national, EU and international developments and in particular EU and UN level obligations to which our Government has committed. In this context the pending Assisted Decision making legislation and repeal of the Luncay Act 1871 should clear the way for the Irish Government to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability (CRPD). The full implementation by Ireland of the obligations in the CRPD to which it is a signatory will be the true measure of Ireland’s recognition of people with a disability as full citizens of this republic. A key role for Inclusion Ireland over the coming years will be to monitor the Irish States implementation of the CRPD.

**Inclusion Ireland Strategy**

Due to the significant change underway in disability policy and the attempt by Government to implement a number of major reform programmes (at a time of extreme austerity) in the areas of Congregated Settings, Day Services, Childrens Disability Services and Special Needs Education coupled with the recent publication and now implementation of the Value for Money Review of the Disability Services Programme there are many unknowns in how the supports that people with
disability need will be resourced and delivered in the coming years. Despite the stated policy position which locates choice and control with the individual it remains unclear how this commitment will find expression in new service delivery models.

Given the uncertainty, and the importance of people with a disability and their family members being centrally involved in the planning and implementation of this change programme Inclusion Ireland has developed an Interim Strategy which prioritises building the capacity of people with a disability and their families to have their voice heard, to participate and to be drivers of the changes underway.

Framed in the context of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability (CRPD) the strategy identifies three priority action areas: the first two aim to address the right of people with a disability and their families to be partners in the planning, design and delivery of disability policy and programmes. We aim to build participation by developing networking and advocacy supports for people with a disability and their families locally and nationally. The third area, Policy Advocacy, aims to build on Inclusion Ireland’s achievements in campaigning for legislative and policy change which affords people with an intellectual disability their rights as full citizens of Ireland.

The report is in four parts; part one will summarise our information and advocacy support work over the past eighteen months and will focus particularly on highlighting issues that have been predominant in our advocacy work, particularly, reported irregularities in the management of people’s finances and the lack of control people with a disability have over their own money; the over-representation of parents with an intellectual disability in child protection proceedings and recent cuts and charges that are affecting people’s standard of living. Part two will outline Inclusion Ireland’s work and future plans to build greater participation of people with a disability and their families in the planning and delivery of the national disability services programme. Part three will review Inclusion Ireland’s policy work and critique this Government’s achievements to date, while Part four will provide Inclusion Ireland’s accounts and other organisation information.
**Introduction**

Inclusion Ireland uses a human rights-based approach to its work. Our focus is on the realisation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). By using a human rights-based approach, Inclusion Ireland identifies people with an intellectual disability as rights holders with entitlements, and corresponding duty bearers and their obligations. The aim is to strengthen the capacities of people with an intellectual disability to make their claims and of duty bearers to meet their obligations. In this context, duty bearers can be considered as government or public bodies and service providers.

A core element of Inclusion Ireland’s work since its foundation over fifty years ago has been the provision of information and advocacy support to people with an intellectual disability, parents and family members.

The majority of requests for information and support are received by telephone and email. Issues are also brought to our attention through meetings with parents, family members and self-advocates. We also have a significant presence on social media platforms, which are becoming a growing source of enquires. The number of requests for information and advocacy support increased significantly over the past 18 months.

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**Emerging themes**

We use the CPRD as the framework to contextualise the emerging themes from our information and advocacy support activities. It is important to emphasise that human rights are indivisible, interrelated and interdependent. For example, the right to live independently and be included in the community is dependent on the right to adequate standard of living and social protection. The deprivation of one right denies the enjoyment of another.

The main themes emerging from our information and advocacy work during the past 18 months have been:

- Legal capacity
- Adequate standard of living and social protection
- Access to justice

**Legal Capacity**

Article 12 of CRPD reaffirms the right of people with a disability to enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life. Legal capacity can be understood as having both the right to make decisions and, crucially, the right to receive support to exercise that right. This means that people with an intellectual disability have the right to make decisions on all matters that affect them and the right to...
receive support and assistance to give effect to that right. The denial of legal capacity has been described as ‘civil death’.

Examples of enquiries we continue to deal with in respect of legal capacity include how the right of people with an intellectual disability to sign contracts and tenancy agreements is denied or restricted. Another area where legal capacity is questioned is in relation to medical decisions.

However, the majority of enquiries to Inclusion Ireland about legal capacity are related to financial matters. One dominant theme is the lack of control exercised by people with an intellectual disability over their own finances. This includes denying the right of people with an intellectual disability to manage their own social welfare payments, make a will or even open a bank account.

People with an intellectual disability who do control their own finances have reported how they are regularly refused permission to open accounts in banks and other financial institutions. Banks and credit unions often insist that joint bank accounts are opened - often with a family member or service provider. This is often explained as a measure to ‘protect’ people by having a ‘responsible person’ named on the account.

Any practice that denies people with an intellectual disability their right to legal capacity on the same basis as other people is a violation of their human rights.

Sophie (17) has an intellectual disability. She wants to open a bank account and goes to her local bank with her mother. The bank manager suggests that Sophie and her mother open a joint bank account. He tells Sophie that it is the bank’s policy for people with a disability to have a ‘responsible person’ on the account.

Henry is a 59 year-old man with a mild intellectual disability. Henry lives in a residential service. Henry has a large sum of money. He is keen to make arrangements for his financial affairs. Henry visits a solicitor. The solicitor tells the staff member accompanying Henry that as Henry has an intellectual disability he won’t take instructions from him. He says that Henry’s legal capacity must be certified first by a medical practitioner. Even with this certification the solicitor said he would have reservations about taking instructions from Henry.

Many enquiries we receive from people with an intellectual disability are about another person collecting and managing their social welfare payment. These types of calls also come from parents and family members. They tell us how some service providers insist on controlling social welfare payments as a condition of receiving a service. Many of the people affected are living ‘in the community.’ It is not just people in institutional care that are denied the right to manage their own affairs.
Inclusion Ireland is concerned that many people who, with the right support, could manage their own finances are not being supported to do so. They are at risk of having their money misappropriated or controlled by others.

One parent reported to Inclusion Ireland money was withdrawn from a bank account of their son to pay for property improvements to property belonging to the service provider. Another parent reported money being withdrawn from the account of their son with a disability to pay for a vehicle for the service. These are inappropriate uses of people’s money without their permission or knowledge. People reported being afraid to complain for fear of their service being withdrawn.

There are also numerous incidents of people with an intellectual disability, who through inheritance, courts awards or other events have come in to significant financial means, being made a ward of court. Being made a ward of court removes the right to legal capacity. The legislation governing legal capacity (Lunacy Regulations Act 1871) is not compliant with the Irish Constitution or the CRPD. For many years Inclusion Ireland has led the campaign to repeal this law.

**Adequate standard of living and social protection**

Article 28 of the CRPD reaffirms the right of people with disabilities to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families.

Many people with an intellectual disability are experiencing poverty. Official poverty figures do not consider the costs associated with having a disability. A recurring theme emerging from our information and advocacy support work over the past 18 months relates to the lack of an adequate income of people with an intellectual disability to meet their needs. This has been exacerbated by the introduction of cumulative cuts to income supports in various budgets.

People with an intellectual disability are now being asked to pay new charges and contributions if they wish to continue receiving disability services and supports. People are telling us of the intense pressure they are under to pay these levies. Up to now, these services would have been provided at no cost to the person with a disability or parent. The charges affect both adults and children with an intellectual disability.

**People are being threatened that services will be reduced or withdrawn if new charges or contributions for service and supports are not made. In some cases, people have been asked to contribute over €100 per month to continue attending a day service. Others have been asked to pay up to €70 per week for transport.**
Inclusion Ireland continues to campaign for the introduction of a cost of disability payment to ensure people with an intellectual disability enjoy the right to adequate standard of living and social protection.

Access to justice
Access to justice is a broad concept, encompassing people’s effective access to the systems, procedures, information, and locations used in the administration of justice (Lord, 2009). Access to justice includes complaints and appeals to social welfare, complaints to public bodies, participating in legal proceedings and receiving information on your rights.

The CRPD places an obligation on governments to ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others.

A significant element of our information and advocacy support work has involved issues relating to access to justice. People with an intellectual disability face significant barriers to accessing justice. Quite often, people have no idea of their rights. Information is rarely provided in a format that is understood by people with an intellectual disability. This makes it very difficult for people to make official complaints. People have told us how they have experienced negative attitudes when they try to complain or report something. Many people insist on confidentiality in the fear that it might otherwise lead to repercussions.1

Our work in supporting parents with an intellectual disability in child care proceedings continued over the past 18 months. This involves providing information to parents in a format suited to their learning needs; supporting parents at meetings with their legal representatives; accompanying parents to meetings and court hearings.

Mary is a 38-year-old mother. Mary does not fully understand what is happening in the court proceedings she is involved in. Inclusion Ireland provided Mary with information and advocacy support to enable her to enjoy effective participation in the proceedings. This involved assisting her to obtain legal representation, attend meetings and consultations and accompanying her to court. It also involved explaining the contents of court reports with Mary in advance of each hearing.

The above section briefly highlights some of the themes to emerge from Inclusion Ireland’s information and advocacy support work over the past 18 months. Other areas that we have generated a lot of enquires about include; delays on processing social welfare applications and appeals; delays in having children assessed under the Disability Act; lack of access to therapeutic services and supports for children and young people; cuts

1 Inclusion Ireland adheres to its legal requirements in reporting allegations of abuse
to training allowances for people attending day services and access to education for children with special educational needs.

**Inclusion Ireland Information and Advocacy Support Data 2012 – 2013**

- 4597 people receive health, social welfare, Inclusion Ireland news and other information updates every six weeks
- 4679 people are in regular contact with Inclusion Ireland
- 772 new people contacted Inclusion Ireland in the past twelve months
- 1208 organisations or groups are in regular contact with Inclusion Ireland
- 185 new organisations or groups contacted Inclusion Ireland in the past twelve months
- 2642 information, support and general enquiries were received by Inclusion Ireland in the past twelve months

The most common queries received relate to legal issues, Inclusion Ireland publications, advocacy, education, health charges, personal finance, accessing services, social welfare allowances, wills and trust funds, and issues relating to legal capacity.

Inclusion Ireland uses Salesforce CRM (Constituency Relationship Management) system. All enquiries, cases, contacts and organisations are recorded. The information is kept strictly confidential and in accordance with data protection legislation.
Building self-advocacy
Self-advocacy is acting on issues that are relevant and important to a person or a group of people with a disability.

Article 12 of the CRPD has particular significance to self-advocacy. Article 12 reaffirms the legal right of people with a disability to make their own decisions, and the right to assistance or support should they require it. The general principles of the CRPD include respect for inherent dignity and autonomy including the freedom to make your own choices and independence of persons; full and effective participation and inclusion in society. Self-advocacy is about people with a disability enjoying these rights.

In the context of Inclusion Ireland’s self-advocacy work, it is about people with an Intellectual disability building their capacity to act on issues that are important to them as individuals and a collective self-advocacy group.

Self-advocacy is about:

• Self determination and autonomy

• This is the right to make decisions for yourself, to have control and power over your own life.

• Giving voice to concerns

• Participating meaningfully in society

• The right to have an identity

Self-Advocacy – Independence, support and participation
Ireland has been slow to support the emergence of independent self-advocacy groups for people with a disability. The findings in relation to advocacy of Wave 1: Intellectual Disability Supplement to the Irish Longitudinal Study on Aging 2011 (IDS-TILDA) show that only 12.2% of circa 740 people captured by the study stated they were members of a self-advocacy group. Where people were members of self-advocacy groups 70% were in service-user type groups inside an Intellectual Disability service. Only 14% of people were involved in independent community-based self-advocacy groups.

In 2010 Inclusion Ireland published a strategy to develop independent self-advocacy in Ireland, this strategy aimed to;

• Establish a national self-advocacy platform

• Provide independent facilitation to self-advocacy groups

• Provide training to people with a disability
Encourage services to support self-advocacy

Provide information on self-advocacy

Simultaneously, Seasamh, an independent network of self-advocates in Kilkenny, and other self-advocates were working towards establishing a national network.

Self-Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU)

With the support of the Citizens Information Board (CIB) Inclusion Ireland aims to further develop independent self-advocacy through the establishment of a Self-Advocacy Resource Unit (SARU), modeled on a similar programme in Victoria, Australia. The specific aims of Inclusion Ireland’s SARU will be to;

- Strengthen existing self-advocacy groups by building on their capacity and enabling networking with other self-advocacy groups
- Support the establishment of new self-advocacy groups
- Develop a ‘toolkit’ for self-advocacy start-ups
- Build sustainability of self-advocacy groups by creating linkages and relationships with community infrastructure

The activities of this initiative will compliment and collaborate with other self-advocacy work being developed in Ireland, particularly the National Platform and service provider initiatives to support people to live independently in the community.

This initiative will adopt a community development approach. Community development works through participative processes and structures which include and empower marginalised and excluded groups within society; challenges the nature of relationships between people accessing services and those delivering services; and seeks dynamic, innovative and creative ways of working.

National Platform of Self-Advocates

The emergence of Genio (an independent non-Government funding agency) provided an opportunity for a consortium to secure funding to support the development of a national platform of self-advocates.

Seasamh, Inclusion Ireland, The National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) and a number of committed individuals secured a grant for a period of twelve months to establish the national platform of self-advocates.

An interim steering committee of twelve self-advocates was elected by self-advocates nationally in February 2012. The interim...
steering committee has hired an independent facilitator. This recruitment process was lead by the self-advocates who short listed and carried out the interviews. The National Platform meets monthly and has a vision to:

- Get more people to join the platform to share ideas and to make our voices and the voices of other people with a disability heard
- To improve the lives of people with a disability by campaigning on issues that are important to us
- Meet with politicians
- Work to improve jobs and training opportunities for people with a disability
- The group wants to make people understand; see their abilities not disabilities and make a clearer path for others with a disability
- Give opinions on reports that the government write
- Hold a conference
- Share information and our experiences
- Circulate information, write a newsletter, go on radio and TV

The steering group will consult on the vision statement, with a broader group of self-advocates at four regional meetings. The final vision document will be agreed at a national conference.

A permanent steering committee for the platform will be in place, chosen by the members and the future structure and operation of the national platform will be agreed.

**Self-advocacy board sub committee**

Inclusion Ireland wishes to build the representation of people with an intellectual disability in the structures and strategy of the organisation; this will be achieved through the establishment of a board sub-committee and increasing the number of self-advocates who sit on the board of directors of Inclusion Ireland.

**Parent and Family Advocacy – Networking, support and participation**

The focus of Inclusion Ireland is on the realisation of the core principles and values expressed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Article 23 – Respect for home and the family reaffirms the right that children with a disability should have the same equal right to family life as every other child in the state. There is an obligation on Government to provide early and comprehensive information, services and
support to children and their families. The preamble of the CRPD asserts that the family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the state. Family members should receive the necessary support and protection to enable them to contribute towards the full and equal enjoyment of rights of persons with a disability.

Parent and family groups with the individual at the centre
As the primary organisation supporting parents/families and people with intellectual disabilities Inclusion Ireland views these two groups as central to a successful change process. Parents/families and their local parent groups will be the critical support base for people with a disability living independently in the community. In addition to being the natural support provided by family and friends they are also the networks through which local community based supports and services will be demanded and on occasion organised. They can be a key support in supporting the emergence of community based self – advocacy groups.

Keeping families informed
At present, we find ourselves in an environment that is rich in policy relating to the area of disability service provision. These policy documents are important as they will shape the landscape of disability service provision over the coming years. The main tenet of current policy is towards community inclusion for people with a disability. This move will

Natural Supports of family members and friends
Community linking & supporting access to community based networks, self-advocacy
Seeking and engaging community based services e.g FRCs, GPs Sports Clubs etc
herald a paradigm shift in how day service, residential services, therapeutic inputs and respite are provided to people. It is envisaged that segregated service provision will cease, and this means a vast amount of change for people, families and service providers.

Many families tell us that they do not know of the existence of, or the implications of the very important policies that will directly affect their lives and their family. People report to Inclusion Ireland that they are simply not being informed or they are being poorly informed of the impending change.

One barrier in accessing information on current policy is the sheer volume of these documents; the Value for Money and Policy Review extends to over 300 pages. To keep families informed on current policy and law pertaining to disability, Inclusion Ireland has published an information pack ‘A Guide to Disability Legislation and Policy in Ireland’. The main policy and laws that affect people with disabilities are summarised into clear and concise sections in the information pack.

Listening to families
To ensure Inclusion Ireland is better informed on the issues that face families, we have hosted meetings all around the country and in our offices in Dublin. In addition to hosting meetings representatives of Inclusion Ireland have attended meetings of many parent and friends groups across the country. Feedback from people at these meetings and our advocacy work continue to shape and inform the work of Inclusion Ireland.

During the last year Inclusion Ireland has supported a number of parents of people with a disability to participate in many of the national, regional and local consultative fora of the HSE. This is done through the provision of information and support to parents who sit on these fora. This work will be further developed in the coming year.

Training and capacity building
In 2012 Inclusion Ireland obtained funding from Genio to deliver two exciting courses for parents and family members of people with a disability. The delivery of these courses will continue until September 2013 by which point more than 100 people will have attended ‘Pathways to Possibilities’ and ‘Communications and Supporting Skills’. The courses have been delivered in locations around the country such as Limerick, Clifden, Naas, Dublin and Dundalk.

These two courses seek to empower parents and support them to be advocates for their child. Parents who participate learn how to manage stress and prevent burnout from their caring duties. In addition to this, parents
are challenged to devise a plan for their child that involves building circles of support within the community. The overall aim of Inclusion Ireland’s capacity building is to assist families in making a journey towards a good life for their son or daughter and wider family. Both ‘Communications and Supporting Skills’ and ‘Pathways to Possibilities’ deliver a message that is in line with the CRPD in advocating for a move towards full community participation for people with disabilities and building on the capacity of families to partake in the vindication of the rights of their family member with a disability.
Pushing for Reform: Public Policy Advocacy

Inclusion Ireland has been to the fore in advocating for policy and legislative change to further the rights of people with an intellectual disability since our inception in 1961. This focus on public policy advocacy remained an integral part of the organisation throughout 2012 and into 2013. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) encompasses every aspect of a person’s life: from equal recognition before the law, to equality of access to education, healthcare and information, and the right to privacy. Similar to the breadth of the CRPD, Inclusion Ireland represents children and adults with an intellectual disability, from birth to older people. The queries we receive from people with an intellectual disability and their families, be it over the phone, via email, or at public meetings, influence the issues we raise with Government and the reform we advocate for in policy and legislation. It is deeply frustrating that despite being one of the first countries to sign the CRPD, Ireland has yet to ratify it. Our work shows the deep levels of anger and anxiety that families and self-advocates face on a daily basis as they battle to access what should be basic services and supports. Unnecessary bureaucracy, seemingly endless waiting lists and a lack of understanding from State agencies result in people feeling like they belong to an underclass, and are considered less of a citizen than their non-disabled peers. The medical model is still used by State agencies, and they ask families and people with disabilities to emphasise what they can’t do in order to qualify for supports, instead of emphasising their abilities. In our public policy advocacy, Inclusion Ireland raises this frustration and anxiety in a number of ways, from highlighting issues in the media, to working with Oireachtas Members and contributing to groups such as HSE-led committees.

Policy shift: from charity model to individuals’ rights

There have been many reports published over the last eighteen months, which further emphasise that policy affecting people with disabilities is moving towards a more person centred approach, which deals with individual rights. A major strategic review of education supports for children with disabilities was published in May 2013, which advocates for a new resource allocation model for schools, and the Carers Strategy was published in July 2012, which recognises the supports carers need to maintain their own wellbeing. However, it is the area of service provision which has seen the greatest number of policy developments. In March 2012, New Directions – Personal Support Services for Adults with Disabilities, the National Review of Autism Services, and Respite/Residential Care with Host Families in Community Settings, were
all published. This was followed by the long awaited Value for Money and Policy Review of Disability Services in July 2012. These reports, together with the Congregated Settings Report, show a very clear direction from Government that moves away from traditional services into a new era that will allow for more effective, person centred disability service provision.

**Vision versus reality**

However, Inclusion Ireland continues to see a major disconnect between the vision of these documents and the reality of life for people with disabilities and their families. While it is very important that Government is putting forward a vision in terms of how people with disabilities will be supported in the future, this vision is simply not filtering down to ground level and changing the lives of people who use support services. In addition to the lack of movement on real change at ground level, work has not been done in the area of information provision to families and self-advocates. This has resulted in many people feeling that these policy documents are simply a way of cutting back on supports. The names of policy documents are regularly quoted to families and people using services as reasons for change happening, but what these documents mean and the benefit of them is not being communicated, and Government must address this.

The input of families and self-advocates into shaping this change has also been very disappointing. Nominations are often sought for local HSE committees, and this is considered to be a tick box signed off when a name is received and a person attends. However, the reality is that one person cannot be representative of a wider group. If real change is to happen, we must start by building the capacity of families and self-advocates, through growing networks and providing information. Government insists policy is not being used to bring in changes that are only about cost savings, and the detail of many documents stand up to international best practice in terms of person centeredness, however, it is in the implementation that Ireland has constantly fallen down and failed people with disabilities. The National Disability Strategy is in disarray due to a lack of implementation of many key elements, and we have umpteen reports with fantastic visionary statements, sitting on shelves, gathering dust, and having no impact on the day to day lives of people with disabilities. Producing a document is one thing, implementing it is another, and there have been far too many false dawns.

**False dawn or a new era?**

It is nearly twenty years since the Report of the Commission on the Status of People with Disabilities, A Strategy for Equality, was published in 1996. This groundbreaking document came about following meetings
around the country and many written submissions from people with disabilities and their families. It contained many elements we still strive for today and echoes what people need, and want. We have heaving shelves of policy documents and international best practice is well known, yet we still are not seeing the changes we need, and people with disabilities continue to be caught in the middle of disputes between service providers, Government and the HSE. People with disabilities and their families still feel they are shouting from the back of the room and nobody is listening as their voice is too weak and too small. What we really need is leadership that will push through change and actively include the voice of people who should be at the heart of this process, and in a meaningful way. That is the challenge this Government faces, and one which it has yet to fully embrace.

Disability Rights Coalition Ireland

We have raised many issues over the last eighteen months, but one issue unfortunately continues to be of major concern every year, and that is the lack of appropriate supports and choice for young adults with an intellectual disability or autism leaving school. One of the major issues Inclusion Ireland raises with this debate is the lack of consultation and information given to young people and their families. This leads to massive unnecessary stress. Inclusion Ireland worked together on this issue with a number of other organisations in 2012 and this led to the creation of the Disability Rights Coalition Ireland (DRCI), which is an alliance of organisations that specifically advocate for the rights of people with a disability and their families. The steering group consists of Inclusion Ireland, Down Syndrome Ireland, National Parents and Siblings Alliance, Special Needs Parents Association, Irish Autism Action, Seasamh, and disability activist Suzy Byrne. In November 2012, the DRCI led a protest that saw 5,000 people with disabilities and their families march to Leinster House. The march was about the rights of individuals with disabilities and their families. Protesters called on the Government to fulfil disability related promises made in the 2011 Programme for Government and for equal rights for people with disabilities. This protest was preceded by a smaller, but very effective protest by a number of people with a disability outside Government buildings...
in September 2012 following proposed cuts to Personal Assistant budgets. This cut was then reversed. Both events showed that activism among people with disabilities remains strong and people are very eager to voice their anger and concern and to make Government listen. The DRCI are currently working together to organise a series of briefings to Oireachtas Members in 2013 to help better inform policy debates on issues affecting people with a disability. The first briefing will be held at the end of June and aims to inform TDs and Senators on what issues are facing school leavers this year.

**Value for Money and Policy Review of Disability Services**

The Report of the Value for Money and Policy Review of the Disability Services Programme (VFM), was published in July 2012, and was followed up with an implementation plan in February 2013. Inclusion Ireland was represented on the policy review group that fed into the overall VFM Review, in addition to presenting numerous written submissions. However, prior to this we have been raising the need for choice and control over services people receive for many years. This need was evident through our advocacy work and the many issues people approach us with. The importance of the VFM Review is constantly cited by Government and the HSE, including in the HSE’s 2013 Service Plan. The VFM Review outlines two main goals: the full inclusion of people with disabilities in their communities, through access to individualised supports; and the creation of a system of providing disability services that is cost-effective, responsive, accountable and supports self-determination for people with disabilities. The HSE’s Service Plan says this Report “provides the framework within which significant change will be implemented in disability services”. This will involve changes to governance, funding and the focus of service provision. The Implementation Plan outlines priorities for 2013 and 2014, and details a new reporting and monitoring structure for disability services feeding into the HSE. Inclusion Ireland has been highlighting the need for more person centred services for many years, and has been calling for greater choice and control for people with a disability and their families over the services they receive. The implementation of the VFM Review will be a core part of this, and Inclusion Ireland will push for a strong voice for self-advocates and families as part of this process.

**Legal Capacity Legislation**

While a legal capacity bill has still not been published, there was a lot of activity in this area in 2012. Capacity relates to a person’s ability to make decisions. The current Irish
law governing capacity is the 1871 Lunacy Regulations Act, and Inclusion Ireland was one of the first organisations that raised the need for reform in this area. In 2003 we published a booklet on legal capacity and decision making, and followed that up with more publications in 2008 on issues concerning money and medical decisions. All the while we constantly raised the need for reform with Oireachtas members and worked with our European and international colleagues to look at best practice in other jurisdictions. The current Government committed to introducing modern capacity law in the 2011 Programme for Government. In February 2012, Inclusion Ireland presented to the Oireachtas Justice Committee hearings on reform of capacity legislation. A Capacity Bill was on the ‘A’ list of legislation in the Spring 2012 session of the Dáil, and has remained there since for five consecutive sessions. Being on the ‘A’ list means that the legislation is expected to be published during that Dáil session. In the Spring 2013 session, the name of the Bill changed from the ‘Capacity Bill’ to the ‘Assisted Decision-making (Capacity) Bill’.

At the time of writing, we are hopeful that the Bill will be published before this Dáil session finishes in July 2013.

Regulation and Inspection of Disability Services

After nearly twenty years of constant campaigning on the issue, it is now very likely that regulation and inspection of disability services will begin in 2013. Inclusion Ireland welcomed the launch of the Health Information and Quality Authority’s (HIQA) National Standards for Residential Services for Children and Adults with Disabilities in May 2013. This is the third set of standards for disability services published in the last ten years - previous sets of standards for disability services were published by the National Disability Authority in 2003 and by HIQA in 2009, yet both sets of standards did not result in inspections of disability services. This was because regulations weren’t published to accompany the standards. While the standards are very important, they are not binding or enforceable – it is the regulations that are enforceable, and services must meet the regulations in order to be designated a registered service. However, it is hoped that the May 2013 launch is different, as Disability Minister Kathleen Lynch gave a very strong commitment on behalf of the Government that regulations will be published shortly and the process towards starting inspections will begin in September 2013.

Public Affairs

We believe our constant campaigning on legal capacity, inspection of disability services, and individualised funding, has strongly contributed to the movement we have seen on them in the last eighteen months. Inclusion Ireland works with Oireachtas Members in many ways to
raise issues, from briefing individual Deputies on an ongoing basis, to presenting before Oireachtas Committees. Another example of this work was a motion on disability issues that was debated in the Seanad in January 2012. The motion was put forward by Senators Mary Ann O’Brien and Marie Louise O’Donnell and supported by a number of Independent Senators. Inclusion Ireland briefed Senators in advance of the debate, following an invitation from Senator O’Brien, and we highlighted what issues needed to be addressed in the motion. The motion included inspection of disability services, modern law to replace the 1871 Lunacy Act, and creating a welfare system that recognises the individual needs of people with disabilities. The motion was passed unanimously by the Seanad after receiving cross-party support.

**Collaboration**

Inclusion Ireland is an active member of a number of alliances. These alliances offer the opportunity to work collaboratively with other like-minded organisations and individuals to achieve common purpose. All of the alliances we are involved with are concerned with human rights issues. To this end, Inclusion Ireland has been collaborated on a number of campaigns and initiatives during the past eighteen months, including with the Equality & Rights Alliance (ERA), which is a coalition of civil society groups and activists working together to protect and strengthen the statutory equality and human rights infrastructure in Ireland. Inclusion Ireland is a member organisation of the ERA, and Inclusion Ireland CEO Paddy Connolly is on the steering group of the alliance. Inclusion Ireland also supported the Children’s Rights Alliance in campaigning for a yes vote, during the referendum campaign for a constitutional amendment to strengthen the rights the child.

**Submissions and Representation**

Inclusion Ireland sits on a number of national working groups and committees, in addition to local groups or pilot projects. Inclusion Ireland contributed to the following in 2012 and early 2013:

| HSE New Directions - National Implementation Group; | National Advocacy Service - National Advisory Group; |
| HSE Progressing Disability Services for Children and Young People; | Disability Stakeholders Group; |
| HSE Congregated Settings - National Implementation Project Group; | Department of Social Protection Consultative Forum; |
| HSE National and Regional Consultative Forums; | Department of Social Protection Review of Domiciliary Care Allowance; |
| HSE Investigation Process Pilot Project Working Group; | Possibilities Plus, Independent Support Brokers; |
Finally, we make various submissions to Government as issues arise, and in 2012, submissions were made on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Submission</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review of Domiciliary Care Allowance</td>
<td>Public consultation on improving the lives of children and young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Budget submission</td>
<td>Merger of Equality Authority and Irish Human Rights Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice Bill 2012</td>
<td>National Standards for Residential Services for People with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submission on Ireland’s Fourth Periodic Report</td>
<td>Under the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights (ICCPR)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Below are extracts from the Directors’ Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2012.

A full set of audited accounts are available by calling our office on 01-8559891.

Extract from independent auditor’s report to the Members of Inclusion Ireland:

Opinion:
In our opinion the financial statements:

• give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting practice in Ireland, of the state of the company’s affairs as at 31 December 2012 and of its loss and cash flows for the year then ended; and

• have been properly prepared in accordance with the companies Acts 1963 to 2012.

We have obtained all the information and explanations, which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the company. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account.

In our opinion the information given in the directors’ report is consistent with the financial statement.

Michael Cronin
For and on behalf of,
Cronin & Company, Statutory Audit Firm
Terenure place
Terenure
Dublin 6W
Inclusion Ireland - National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

Directors' report  
for the year ended 31 December 2012

continued

The directors are responsible for keeping proper books of account which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure the financial statements are prepared in accordance with accounting standards generally accepted in Ireland and with Irish statute comprising the Companies Acts 1963 to 2012 and all Regulations to be construed as one with those Acts. They are responsible for ensuring that the company otherwise complies with the provisions of those Acts relating to financial statements in so far as they are applicable to the company.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Where financial statements are to be published on the web, the directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the company’s website.

In so far as the directors are aware:
- there is no relevant audit information (information needed by the company’s auditors in connection with preparing their report) of which the company’s auditors are unaware, and
- the directors have taken all the steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company’s auditors are aware of that information.

Auditors
The auditors, Cronin & Company, have indicated their willingness to continue in office in accordance with the provisions of Section 160(2) of the Companies Act, 1963.

This report was approved by the Board on 15/4/13 and signed on its behalf by

Mairin McCartney  
Director  

Eamon Sleevin  
Director
Independent auditors' report to the members of
Inclusion Ireland - National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability (continued)
(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

Basis of audit opinion
We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the directors in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the company's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements.

We have undertaken the audit in accordance with the requirements of the APB Ethical Standards - Provisions Available for Small Entities, in the circumstances set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Opinion
In our opinion the financial statements:
- give a true and fair view, in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice in Ireland, of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 December 2012 and of its loss and cash flows for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Acts 1963 to 2012.

We have obtained all the information and explanations, which we consider necessary for the purposes of our audit. In our opinion proper books of account have been kept by the company. The financial statements are in agreement with the books of account

In our opinion the information given in the directors' report is consistent with the financial statements.

Michael Cronin
For and on behalf of,
Cronin & Company, Statutory Audit Firm

1 Terenure Place
Terenure
Dublin 6W

Date:
Inclusion Ireland - National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

Income and expenditure account  
for the year ended 31 December 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuing operations</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notes</td>
<td>€</td>
<td>€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover</td>
<td>617,020</td>
<td>678,405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative expenses</td>
<td>(-638,822)</td>
<td>(-605,725)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operating (deficit)/surplus</td>
<td>(21,802)</td>
<td>72,680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other interest receivable and similar income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest payable and similar charges 3</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>4,569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(deficit)/surplus on ordinary activities before taxation</td>
<td>(35,367)</td>
<td>(38,463)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax on (deficit)/surplus on ordinary activities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(deficit)/surplus on ordinary activities after taxation</td>
<td>(56,493)</td>
<td>38,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(deficit)/retained surplus for the year</td>
<td>(56,493)</td>
<td>38,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained surplus brought forward</td>
<td>125,571</td>
<td>86,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained surplus carried forward</td>
<td>69,078</td>
<td>125,571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are no recognised gains or losses other than the deficit or surplus for the above two financial years.

On behalf of the board

Mairin McCartney  
Director  

Eamon Slevin  
Director
Inclusion Ireland - National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability  
(A Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital)

Balance sheet  
as at 31 December 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th></th>
<th>2011</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>€</td>
<td>€</td>
<td>€</td>
<td>€</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangible assets</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>753,134</td>
<td></td>
<td>772,389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current assets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debtors</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2,419</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash at bank and in hand</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>118,803</td>
<td></td>
<td>134,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>121,222</td>
<td></td>
<td>140,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(124,191)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(61,505)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net current (liabilities)/assets</td>
<td></td>
<td>(2,969)</td>
<td></td>
<td>78,749</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total assets less current liabilities</td>
<td></td>
<td>750,165</td>
<td></td>
<td>851,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>(681,087)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(725,567)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net assets</td>
<td></td>
<td>69,078</td>
<td></td>
<td>125,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital and reserves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue reserves account</td>
<td></td>
<td>69,078</td>
<td></td>
<td>125,571</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members' funds</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>69,078</td>
<td></td>
<td>125,570</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On behalf of the board  

Mairin McCartney  
Director

Eamon Slevin  
Director  
Date: 15/4/2013
### Appendix A – Board of Directors (as at June 1st 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Máirín McCartney</td>
<td>Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom Healy</td>
<td>Vice-Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin Doyle</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Gunning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hannigan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Kieran</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine O’Leary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Sinéad Ó’Nualláin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Shorten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eamon Slevin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverly Smith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean Spain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avril Webster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Wolfe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Appendix B – Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paddy Connolly</td>
<td>CEO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Alford</td>
<td>Self-Advocacy Project Worker Part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiona Duignan</td>
<td>Policy and Projects Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edel Gilchrist</td>
<td>Accounts &amp; HR admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karen Horan</td>
<td>Receptionist &amp; Administrative Officer Part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siobhán Kane</td>
<td>Communications &amp; Information Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Áine Ní Aileagáin</td>
<td>Advocacy Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celine O’Brien</td>
<td>Receptionist &amp; Administrative Officer Part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mark O’Connor</td>
<td>Advocacy Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Winters</td>
<td>Advocacy &amp; Rights Officer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Inclusion Ireland enjoys the support of many people and organisations which enables it to continue its advocacy work. It is not possible to name them all here but we would like to extend our thanks to all those with whom we work and collaborate.

We would also like to acknowledge the grant aid support of the HSE, Citizens Information Board, Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and Genio.

In particular we would like to thank

Pat and Barry at Neworld

David Fennelly BL

Anna Hickey

Michael J. Clancy BL

Ryan Gibbons

Pauline Conroy & Maire Meagher

The Inclusion Ireland Self-Advocacy Working Group

The Interim Steering Committee of the National Platform of Self Advocates

Phil Davy

John Cullinan

Public Interest Law Alliance

Inclusion Ireland values the collaborative relationship it enjoys with many organisations which include the Disability Federation of Ireland, Federation of Voluntary Bodies, National Disability Authority, National Parents and Siblings Alliance, Special Needs Parents Association, Leap, Clann Beo, Centre for Disability Law and Policy, National University of Ireland Galway, Inclusion Europe
Budget 2013
Social Protection: Call to reverse 20% cut to respite support for carers

Vested interests profit from disability as cuts bite

TD says people with disabilities 'not charity cases'

Preparing for the 'children' referendum

Protest at cuts to disability payments

Disabled people bear brunt, say protesters

Disability group takes to streets over cuts

Children's groups hit out at crushing cutbacks

Call for reform of 'Lunacy' Act of 1871

Lack of sleep, no holidays and now less money: how the cuts affect full-time carers

New inspections for child services

My social circle will dwindle when payment goes

We Demand Rights, Not Charity

Ombudsman names Justice and Health as toughest departments

Autistic boy left on bus may have been asleep

Home help regulation required to protect vulnerable people outside institutions

Inclusion Ireland

2012 – 2013 Reviewed