

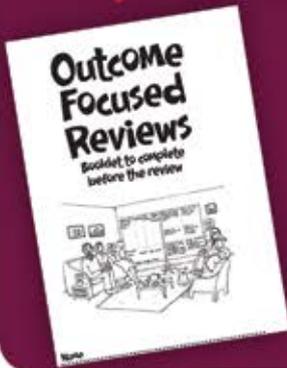
NEWS & VIEWS



WINTER EDITION 2014 / 15



**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**
to all our readers!



Getting the best out of your review

Following the success of our workshop in November we have been asked to put on another session to give more of you the tools and information you need to prepare for your review. Many of you will be concerned and anxious that care and support packages will be reduced because of the cuts so we would urge you to come along to the next workshop to make sure you get the best possible outcome from your review.

Date: Wednesday 18 March 2015

Time: 10.00 am to 1.00 pm

Venue: Knowsley Carers Centre, 143 Bewley Drive, Kirkby L32 9PE

Demand is high so reserve your place as soon as possible by calling Johanne on 0151 480 4090.



We need to know What do you think of our service?

Here at KDC we are proud of our reputation for good customer service and we are always looking for ways we can measure how we are doing so that we can do things better. This month sees the launch of a major customer survey and we will be contacting as many of you as possible to find out what you really think of our services.



A member of our team will telephone you to ask a short series of questions with multiple choice answers. The survey will take about 15 minutes and we hope you will be willing to take part. We look forward to analysing your responses with a view to publishing the findings in the Spring edition of 'News and Views'.



You can keep up to date with all the latest news and information via our website.

Visit us at www.kdc.org.uk.



Follow us on twitter.



Make us a friend on Facebook.

Meet the Team

The KDC Direct Payments Team has a wealth of knowledge and experience and is always on hand with help and information as well as the answers to any questions you might have.

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In October we welcomed Michelle Allan onto the Direct Payments team.

Michelle is volunteering her knowledge, skills, experience - and of course - her time to help us streamline our systems for storing confidential information and undertaking our customer survey.

Michelle has a background in finance and enjoys reading, amateur dramatics, volleyball and badminton.



She spends most of the remainder of her spare time as Treasurer and Trustee for the Mersey Regional Kidney Patient Support Group, a charity set up to help kidney patients and their carers.

Email merseykidneyorg@live.co.uk for more information.



Advocacy helps you to have your say in what happens in your life.

Advocacy is about supporting you in speaking out about what you need.

The Knowsley Advocacy Hub is your first port of call for an independent person to help you speak up and have your views and wishes heard. The Advocacy Hub works with all the specialist providers in Knowsley to ensure that free effective, efficient independent advocacy is available for all.

If you need an independent advocate, contact Vicki at the Knowsley Advocacy Hub on 0151 244 4090.



Support for you...

New Pensions Regulations - important information

A key topic of conversation for our Huyton Peer Support Group recently was the impact of the new Pensions Regulations on people who employ their own personal assistants.

You may have seen the adverts on the TV or read in the press about how the Government is introducing the new pension arrangements, called 'automatic enrolment'.

Basically, the aim is that by October 2017, everyone will be saving towards their old age through a pension scheme provided by their employer. This means that if you employ a Personal Assistant, you have a legal duty to automatically enrol them into a workplace pension scheme - if

- they are aged 22 years and over, and
- their average earnings are more than £192 per week.



Automatic enrolment is similar to your employer responsibility to deal with National Insurance and tax. So, in the same way that you have to pay employer National Insurance in respect of your PA's earnings and deduct tax from their pay, depending on the circumstances, you must also put your PA into a pension scheme and pay money into it on their behalf. The Council will increase the amount of your Direct Payments to cover the extra costs of the pension payments.

Over the coming months, you will need to take steps to make sure you comply with the new regulations but don't worry because KDC is on hand to help.

As part of our payroll service, we will be checking to find out who qualifies for automatic enrolment and the start date for the new arrangements (this is your 'staging date' which is set by The Pensions Regulator). We will act as your nominated key contact to deal with the setting up of the scheme and liaise with the pension provider. For small employers like people who employ a Personal Assistant, the staging date will be no earlier than January 2016, however, some people have already received a letter from The Pensions Regulator advising them of their new legal duties. If you have had such a letter, please contact Joanne or Sandra on **0151 949 5442** in the first instance. They will be able to advise you and put your mind at ease.

At your convenience?



We've recently been talking about accessible toilets and it has prompted us to publish details of local facilities for disabled people.

Changing Places are publicly accessible toilets with enough space and the right equipment, including a height adjustable changing bench and a hoist. Changing Places are essential for people who cannot use standard accessible toilets, including those with profound and multiple learning disabilities, to help them enjoy the day to day activities many of us take for granted.

Liverpool Football Club's newly installed Changing Places facility has been awarded gold standard - setting the benchmark for other clubs and sporting venues. Member of our Huyton Peer Support Group and keen LFC fan, Beverley Christian, says it's made a real difference to match days for her. She told us: "I can relax and enjoy the game knowing there is a good facility there if I need it".



Beverley pictured at Anfield with her sister Diane

Locations of all Changing Places toilets can be found on the website at www.changing-places.org. We have listed here the ones in Knowsley:

- Huyton Municipal Buildings One Stop Shop (9am to 5pm Mon-Fri, 10 to 12.30 Sat)**
- Knowsley Leisure and Culture Park, Longview Drive L36 9YU**
- The Prescott Shopping Centre, Aspinall Street, L34 5GA**
- Stockbridge Village Neighbourhood Centre L28 1AB**
- Halewood Centre One Stop Shop, Roseheath Drive L26 9UH**

The Centre for Independent Living situated at the corner of Brickfields and Ellis Ashton Street in Huyton has good disabled toilet facilities which have a hoist. Open 9am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday.

Other good local public disabled toilet facilities

The following locations may be useful when you are out and about: Kirkby Leisure Centre, Cherryfield Drive; Jubilee Park, Dinas Lane, Roby; Asda Huyton; Court Hey Park; Halewood Park, Okell Drive; Stadt Moers Park, Whiston; Wetherspoons - The Barker's Brewery, Huyton.

There are around 7,000 locked public toilets around the country which can be accessed by disabled people if they have a RADAR key. RADAR keys are available from any of the One Stop Shops in Knowsley at a cost of around £4. Keys can be also purchased from Amazon at a price of £2.45 including delivery.

Support for you...

If you would like to join the discussions at a Peer Support Group near you, contact Joyce on **0151 480 4090** for more information.



Payroll Points

Does your Personal Assistant need a pay slip?



As an employer, you are not obliged by law to provide a pay slip to your PAs. Many large employers have arrangements in place whereby payslips are distributed on a 'by request' basis. Some people prefer to have their pay slips sent to them by email.

KDC prides itself on offering a 'personalised' service so if you would like to change the way your payslips are provided in the future, contact Joanne or Sandra on **0151 949 5442**.

Important Dates for your diary

Date DP received	Last date for payroll changes	Wages Pay Date
19 January	12 January	26 January
16 February	9 February	23 February
16 March	9 March	23 March
13 April	6 April	20 April
11 May	4 May	18 May



Pleased to meet you!

Anthony Kildare is a young Huyton man who uses Direct Payments to employ a PA to support him to get out and about. Anthony is a keen Everton supporter and has a season ticket for Goodison Park. He also enjoys X-box, playing football and socialising with friends. In November, KDC was pleased to welcome Anthony as a volunteer on the team which delivers our advocacy services. He has helped set up and facilitates self-advocacy groups for other young people with learning disabilities in Knowsley. Anthony says "I love going into work at KDC – it's great to meet new people, make friends and help people like me to think about what they want and how they can make their lives better".

Anthony obviously enjoys a challenge and recently achieved his Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award. He travelled to London and was presented with his certificate by Prince Edward, Duke of Essex. He is pictured with three other local gold medallists outside St James Palace after the awards ceremony.

Congratulations Anthony!



A NEW YEAR - A NEW CHANCE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Research shows that volunteering is good for you!

Volunteering can help you meet new people, improve your self-confidence, give you a sense of purpose and has even been proved to extend life expectancy!

Here at KDC we rely on a fantastic group of people who volunteer their time to help us make a positive difference for disabled people. We currently have a range of volunteering opportunities. So if you have some spare time on your hands and would like to get involved in a worthwhile activity as part of a team, contact Joyce on **0151 480 4090**. Alternatively you can visit our website at www.kdc.org.uk and check out the specific volunteering vacancies in the 'Working with Us' section.



HAVE YOUR SAY

Do you have any questions about any aspect of direct payments? Have you had an experience – good or bad - which you would like to share? Is there anything you need to know more about?

If the answer is yes, then contact us here at KDC and we can include your views in our next edition. Contact Joyce on **0151 480 4090** or email her at joyce.greaves@kdc.org.uk