

# CIL News



Issue 1  
November '05

**W**elcome to the first issue of *CIL News*, the quarterly newsletter of Centre for Independent Living - Belfast.

## ***A bit about us***

Centre for Independent Living - Belfast is an organisation of disabled people working to promote the right of disabled people to live the lives they choose and to have the support they need to do so.

At present, the main focus of our work is on supporting people who are using Direct Payments to employ their own Personal Assistants. We provide information, advice, training and support to enable people to gain the skills necessary to be good employers and make the best use of Direct Payments. Currently, we are funded to work in the EHSSB and SHSSB areas.

## ***National Minimum Wage***

The Government has announced an increase in the National Minimum Wage, applicable from 1 October 2005. The adult rate (workers over 22) has gone up by 20 pence to **£5.05** per hour. The development rate for workers aged 18 to 21 will also increase by 15 pence to **£4.25** per hour. The rate of £3.00 per hour payable to 16 and 17 year olds will not be changed this year.

***A Gift  
from  
the  
Taxman...!***



You may be surprised to know that, for a change, the Inland Revenue wants to give you some money. By 2010 all employers will be required to make returns for tax and National Insurance online.

As an incentive to register early, the Inland Revenue is offering a tax-free sum to employers. If you start e-filing for the 2006/2007 tax year, you could qualify for a £150 payment.

If you don't have access to the internet but would like to benefit from this incentive, CIL Payroll Service could make your returns online for you, for a small fee. Contact us for more details.

## ***Direct Payments Update***

It is now over a year since the Carers and Direct Payments Act was introduced and over that period there has been a steady increase in interest and uptake.

The new legislation makes Direct Payments available to a wider range of people including 16 and 17 year old disabled people, disabled parents, parents of disabled children and carers.



The legislation also permits the use of Direct Payments to employ close relatives if that is your choice. However, relatives living in the same household can only be employed in exceptional circumstances.

The other new provision places a duty on Trusts to make Direct Payments available to eligible people who request them. However, if the Trust has a waiting list for a service, someone requesting Direct Payments instead of that service will also have to wait.

## **Revised Direct Payments Guide**

The DHSSPS has published a revised version of the “ Guide to Receiving Direct Payments”.

The Guide which is aimed at Direct Payments users provides straightforward information about what is involved, how to get started and useful advice on becoming an employer. The Guide can be downloaded from the Department’s website:

<http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/publications/archived/2000/dirpayments.pdf>

We have some copies, contact us if you would like one.

## **CIL Website**

Have you seen our website? If not, it may be worth a look, particularly if you are using Direct Payments. You will find a series of information sheets that covers all aspects of recruiting and employing staff. You will find us at **[www.cilbelfast.org](http://www.cilbelfast.org)** We would be interested in hearing your views on the website and suggestions on how we might make it better.

## CIL Payroll Service

One of the things that often seems to put people off employing staff is the idea of dealing with calculations and paperwork for the Inland Revenue. In reality, with a little help, most people can manage it without too much difficulty

However, if you feel you would benefit from employing someone but are concerned about the paperwork, CIL Payroll Service can help you.

If you register to use the Payroll Service we will calculate the wages and deductions for your

staff and prepare records for the Inland Revenue.

The cost of the Payroll Service can be included in your Direct Payments. Contact us for more details.

## Frequently Asked Questions

CIL is asked many questions regarding Direct Payments and becoming an employer. We will deal with a few of the most frequently asked questions in each edition of **CIL News**.

If you have any questions, why not send them in to us and we will try our best to answer them.

**Q.** Do I have to give my Personal Assistant paid holidays?

**A.** Yes. Your PA's have the legal right to a minimum of four weeks paid holiday per year. They are entitled to four times whatever their normal working week is per year. For example, if your PA normally works 4 hours per week for you, he or she has the right to 16 (4x4) hours off over the year.

**Q.** I'm employing a neighbour, do I really need liability insurance?

**A.** Yes. The law specifies that you as an employer, have a legal responsibility to carry adequate Employer's Liability Insurance. It is recommended that you should also have Public Liability Insurance.

**Q.** Will accepting Direct Payments affect my DLA?

**A.** No. Direct Payments are not a replacement for benefits. If you choose Direct Payments you will not lose any other benefits.

If you want more information on any of these topics, please contact us.

## CIL Membership

Full membership of Centre for Independent Living – Belfast is open to disabled people who support the ethos of independent living.



*Members have a say.....!*

As a member, you will be able to meet other people and share knowledge and expertise. Membership will give you a say in the future direction of our work.

Non-disabled people who support the principles of independent living are welcome to join CIL as Associate Members. If you would like further information about Centre for Independent Living – Belfast or an application form for membership, please contact us.

## The Staff Team

Philomena McCrory	–	Manager
Paul Anderson	–	IL Adviser (EHSSB area)
Anne Mallon	–	IL Adviser (SHSSB area)
Debbie Whitson	–	Administrator
Irene McWatters	–	Support Worker



## Contact us at

61 Duncairn Gardens  
Belfast BT15 2GB  
Tel: 028 9087 5001  
Fax: 028 9087 5002  
Textphone: 028 9087

or

c/o 1 College Street  
Armagh BT61 9BT  
Tel: 028 3752 2282  
Fax: 028 3751 8432  
E-mail: [anne@mallon4032.freemove.co.uk](mailto:anne@mallon4032.freemove.co.uk)  
Web: [www.cilhelfast.org](http://www.cilhelfast.org)

***Tell us what you think.....!***

**CIL News** is your Newsletter. If you have ideas about what you would like to see in the Newsletter, drop us a line or give us a call.