

in touch

with United Response

The magazine for families and supporters of United Response / Winter 2010



Good to Great tool 4 + 1 Questions

This is the third in the series introducing and explaining the person-centred planning tools we use in United Response to fulfil the promise to make everything we do meet the needs and wishes of the people we support.

The 4 + 1 Questions tool is used to review all of our support – including procedures, risk assessments and the day to day ways in which we work, to check they meet the needs of the person being supported and to learn from this. The tool allows the person and their support workers to look again at what we are doing and see what is going well and what needs to be changed.

The 4 refers to four questions we ask ourselves:

What have we tried?

Ways of explaining how to budget:

- Bank and ATM statements
- Savings book
- Daily/weekly spending limit
- Planning purchases before going out
- Regular outgoings (rent, bills) paid by standing order or direct debit

Explaining the importance of Ben paying the bills for which he is responsible:

- Rent to maintain his tenancy
- Paying utility bills so that he can continue to heat and light his home, and cook his food.

What are we pleased about?

Ben's direct debits now cover his regular outgoings such as rent and utility bills so his tenancy is secure

- What have we tried?
- What have we learned?
- What are we pleased about?
- What are we concerned about?

And the plus 1 refers to

- So what will we do next?

Case study

The example below uses the same scenario described in the last issue in which we used the "Doughnut" tool to decide what the responsibilities of a support worker were when a person needed support with budgeting and in particular, in separating the money needed to pay bills from that which he could spend when shopping.

What have we learned?

- Ben gets bored when we sit and look at his bank statements
- Ben takes part in planning purchases before he goes out but likes to have money to buy CDs that take his fancy when he's out

What are we concerned about?

- Ben gets upset when he realises he doesn't have enough money to buy a CD
- The weekly spending limit is too rigid

So what will we do next?

- Try a monthly spending limit
- Support Ben to use the white board in his bedroom to keep track of his spending and what he has left for the month

The tool is easy to use and encourages people to review their decisions and refine them going forward. It helps us to recognise that people and situations change, and that something which works in some ways, or worked in the past, can be improved upon to support people more effectively.

Welcome to the November 2010 issue of in Touch! The last six months have seen a lot of changes in the environment that United Response operates in. At the time of going to press, we in the social care sector – along with many others – are digesting the results of the Coalition Government’s long awaited Comprehensive Spending Review.

In the run up to the review, United Response worked hard to ensure that the Government recognised how vital social care support is to many people’s lives. We worked to persuade the Government to treat support for people with learning disabilities or mental health needs as a priority – showing how providing even a small amount of support to someone early on can save money in the long run.

In the aftermath of the review, we, like many others, are waiting to see what the cuts will mean on the ground, so that we can respond appropriately. But one area where we are already taking action is against the announced removal of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) which allows people in residential care to get out and about. We know how damaging this could be for people’s lives and are compiling case studies and evidence to lobby for this decision to be overturned. Turn to page 6 to find out how you could get involved in this vital campaign.

We are doing our bit too, by looking at how we can be as efficient as possible in the support that we provide. This month sees the launch of our Christmas Appeal to raise money for assistive technology – to help support people not only more cheaply, but more effectively by boosting their dignity and independence. For more information or if you would like to make a donation, please see page 11.

Meanwhile, we are truly delighted that United Response has become the first employer to be awarded Recognition Status by the National Skills Academy for Social Care. This sets the highest possible standard for training and development in adult social care and we are thrilled to have received this endorsement of our learning and development programme.

Last but not least, with December nearly upon us, we are pleased to unveil our brand new charity Christmas cards on the back page. Designed by Hayley Rowland, who is supported by United Response, buying these is a great way of supporting us and spreading the word too. And if you are anywhere near London on 1st December, please do join us at our popular carol service (see page 17) – we’d love to see you.

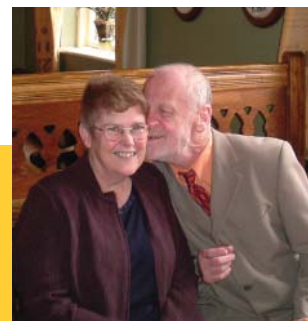


Best wishes,

Su Sayer OBE, Chief Executive

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Clare Million, Director of Finance and Administration



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Your real-life stories told.

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How we’ll be working with the new Government to make the Comprehensive Spending Review fair for people with disabilities. Plus, join our DLA campaign!

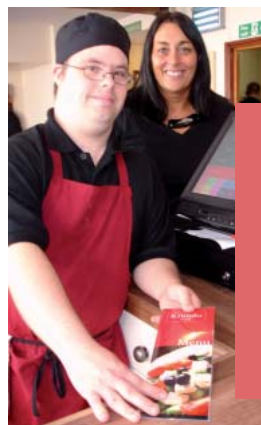
News 8 and 14-19

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Fighting for better care for people with learning disabilities in hospital

"United Response didn't view Peter as a patient but as a human being"

Lesley Moreland's Story

When I was 4 years old my brother Peter was born. He was a very sickly baby as he couldn't digest his food properly and his development was very slow - he couldn't walk until he was 3.

Very early on, I was aware of the pressure on my parents. Dad had a breakdown and was out of work for two years. When he did get another job it was in London, leaving Mum to cope on her own for two

years. This resulted in Peter breaking down. It was a very difficult time. I had to shoulder a lot of responsibility caring for Peter.

In 1953, when he was 9, Peter went to Leybourne Grange Colony in

West Malling in Kent. At that time we were living in Dover but we were quite poor and didn't have the money to visit and were also discouraged by the staff "in case Peter got upset after the visits".

The following year we moved to London and Mum got a job, so things got easier financially and we were able to visit Peter once a month. When we arrived for a visit we were shown into a large hall where there were many other families and Peter was brought to us. He was very hyper-active and it was difficult to find ways to make our visits more interesting for him. We were only allowed to stay for two hours and then we had the long trudge back home.

In 1992 the process of closing Leybourne Grange began and gradually conditions for Peter were getting worse - he was losing weight and his challenging behaviour was increasing. So I decided to give up full time work and work part time freelance so that I could devote time to finding a new home for Peter.

There were some good things about Leybourne Grange but so many difficult things for Peter and it is a

great credit to him that he came through his 37 years there without letting it destroy his spirit and personality - I really admire him.

Dispirited by the first places we saw, we were so lucky that Dovedale, which was run by United Response, was just about to open. It had space



indoors which Peter could retreat to when he needed to be on his own and had outside space that was safe for him.

Another plus was that the staff not only were welcoming and friendly but they came from a wide variety of backgrounds and life experience.



This was so good as they didn't view Peter as a patient but as a human being. They have greatly enriched Peter's life.

I was even more impressed when they regularly visited Peter in Leybourne Grange to see how he had been living and get to know him and for him to get to know them. They understood his needs and introduced him gradually into his new home by inviting him to tea for a short visit and increasing these visits so that he became familiar with his new environment before he moved in permanently. It is amazing to be included in decisions on things that affect Peter - whereas before, our family and Peter, had been shut out of his life and the things that affected him.

When I was a teenager, I had decided that I would never have children and consequently would never get married. Long before my parents died I felt like the third parent as I had to take responsibility for Peter and I didn't want my children to have to go through this experience.

But when I met my future husband he persisted until I said "yes" even though he accepted we would never have a much wanted family. Then, before we got married I saw a consultant who, based on the knowledge available at the time, advised that our risk was "no greater than anyone else in the general population". We had two daughters and neither was affected. When they were teenagers we found out that Peter has Fragile X and in fact there had been a high risk.

The last 20 years have been really great for both Peter and myself. Peter is being supported by people who have his best interests at heart. They are always looking for ways to make his life more enjoyable. I have nothing but the highest praise for all the staff and the values of United Response.

Clare Million

Director of Finance and Administration



What does your job entail?

My key role is to ensure that United Response is in a secure position financially, and that we have as much money available as possible to do the best we can for the people we support. As well as leading the finance team my responsibilities also cover information technology, central purchasing and contracts and legal support – I am Company Secretary.

When and why did you join United Response?

The time has gone so fast I can hardly believe it, but I joined United Response nearly 11 years ago. I was keen to join a voluntary organisation and United Response seemed an interesting option.

What did you do before then?

I worked for a multinational chemicals manufacturer. My last job there was as financial controller at a paint factory in east London, but prior to that I spent a number of years with the same company working in Italy, in Milan, Genoa and finally near Bologna.

What do you like about working for United Response?

The sheer variety - I can honestly say that there is never a dull moment! The organisation has grown and developed enormously in the last 11 years and it has been great to be part of that.

What are your hopes for the future?

I'd like to see changes so that everyone has access to bank accounts and also for more of the people we support to have jobs. Eventually I would like to be able to retire in time to study something new and learn new skills.

When you're not working, how do you relax?

I like best to take my rucksack and go on long walks preferably in the Alps or on long distance footpaths in the UK (my husband and I recently completed a 150 mile route round London).

Working with the new Government

The Coalition Government has now been in power for nearly six months, and has just unveiled its crucial Comprehensive Spending Review. As had been predicted, this contained a mixture of bad news for people with disabilities (welfare cuts which may end up affecting disabled people disproportionately and large cuts to local authority budgets) and some better news (a new £2 billion aimed at preventing any cuts in services to people who require social care).

Now seems a good time to reflect on what the Government's actions may mean for people we support, and the ways in which United Response is working hard to ensure that the Government recognises how vital social care support is to many people's lives.

In its first few months in power, the Government has announced a slew of new initiatives and reforms to public services. If David Cameron turns his idea of a Big Society into a reality - energising local communities, government and the voluntary sector into working together on projects and initiatives that create a fairer and more socially conscious country - that would be a major success. There are huge social benefits in developing more closely knit communities where everyone is valued and involved, whether elderly, poor, disabled or from different backgrounds.

However, the more worrying possibility is that the severity of cuts to local authority budgets may increase vulnerable people's isolation and cut them off from vital support. There have already been some signs that this is happening, with the Independent Living Fund running out of money and finding itself unable to provide support to people with severe disabilities. Disability allowances are another source of concern: few would argue that benefit fraud needs to be combated, but tightening up the system must not be achieved at the cost of taking away essential financial assistance to those

who need it to live their day to day lives.

In the run up to the review, we worked steadily to persuade the Government to treat support for people with learning disabilities or mental health problems as a priority. We have formally responded to the Comprehensive Spending Review, both on our own behalf and as part of the Learning Disability Coalition

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) – join the campaign!

United Response, alongside many others in the sector, is campaigning for the decision to remove the mobility component of the DLA for people living in residential care – which funds their ability to get out and about - to be overturned.

You can help by providing us with case studies on what DLA mobility funding means to your family member but why not get involved directly too?

We are urging family members to contact their MP to lobby for this decision to be reversed. A template letter to send to your MP is available on our website at www.unitedresponse.org.uk or please ask your local service manager for further details.

(LDC - a campaigning group of fourteen major learning disability organisations).

The LDC also campaigned at each of the three main party conferences and we worked with them on a report – Protect The Frontline – which illustrates how essential support is to people with learning disabilities, and their families. It tells real stories – including the moving testimony of Leo, who is supported by United Response, and his mother Cayce. As Cayce says, before she had adequate support, she found herself “despairing for our future”. “It felt like I didn’t really have a life,” remembers Leo, “it was just existing.”

Our main argument to the Government has been straightforward: its core values of freedom, fairness and responsibility are laudable, and must be adhered to in its actions. It is obvious that the UK is facing serious financial difficulties and bold steps are needed to tackle the deficit. But cuts to existing programmes should only be made after careful consideration of what the long term impact of those cuts would be and what will replace them.

In our own experience, we know that providing a small amount of support to a person with a learning

disability early in their lives can save money in the long run, by preventing a deterioration of mental and physical health that costs the NHS more, and by helping people to develop the skills to contribute to their communities.

For our part, those of us in the social care sector need to understand the financially difficult position the Government is in, and to work hard to find ways to be as efficient and effective as possible in providing services. One way forward is certainly greater use of assistive technologies, which can help people live their lives more independently at a fraction of the cost of one on one support (see page 10).

You can rest assured that we will continue to make this argument in the coming months and years. Where we feel that the people we support have been unfairly affected by spending cuts, we will speak out, starting with a campaign to overturn the decision to remove the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance for those in residential care. See the box on page 6 for more information on how you can get involved.

The Coalition has repeatedly said it believes in fairness: so do we.

The Equality Act 2010

For more than 40 years Governments in the UK have passed anti-discrimination laws to promote civil rights and equality – from the first Race Relations Act back in the 1960s to more recent laws relating to religion or belief, sexual orientation and age.

The Equality Act 2010, which came into force on 1 October, will replace the existing nine major pieces of legislation with a single Act. This simpler, clearer, law aims to provide clarity so that employers and service providers know what they need to do to comply, and it also provides a more consistent way to tackle any form of discrimination.

A simpler law

The law will introduce tougher duties on public authorities to improve equality and will also require all employers to be more open about pay specifically in terms of gender. There will also be further protection against discrimination for people who are associated with someone who is directly protected by the law – for example the carer of an individual with a disability will be protected as well as the person with the disability.

A stronger law

The Equality Act 2010 will focus on rights for disabled people, including:

- A new right for disabled people who live in leased homes to have reasonable adjustments made to communal areas, provided they meet the cost
- Increasing the number of wheelchair accessible taxis



Our trainee chefs want to meet you

You may be aware that we run a training café called Krumbs in York, where young people with learning disabilities are developing their customer service skills as well as training to become accredited as catering professionals.

The café serves delicious home cooked food sourced from local ingredients and also has a very exciting Christmas menu on offer at the moment. So if you are visiting York, why not drop in for a meal or a snack and meet the trainees? See page 10 on how to become a Friend of Krumbs.

**Krums Café,
3-5 Tanner Row,
York YO1 6JB /
Tel: 01904 672572**

Supported employment is now Matrix Standard

Having been awarded the Matrix Standard, we now have national recognition that we are providing a high quality service and that our practices and procedures are working effectively across our three supported employment services in Manchester, London and Cornwall.

The Matrix Standard is all about helping people to realise their potential in learning and work. So working for an organisation that has achieved the Matrix Standard typically means that staff:

- get easy access to good quality information
- will be actively supported in developing skills
- can be confident of good processes and systems
- can easily get hold of clear, accurate and up-to-date information resources, policies, and latest news
- will have greater opportunity to contribute to your own development
- will get lots of practical help and support.

We are delighted to have achieved the Standard and impressed the assessor over his three day visit. He is writing a report that lists our strengths but overall he felt all our policies and procedures, feedback systems, staff development tools and paperwork used for everyone involved were excellent.

The Practice Development Team works with operational staff and managers throughout United Response to increase their skills and knowledge and to make sure their focus is on the quality of care experienced by the people we support. The team helps to solve difficulties, review progress, recognise success and agree actions.

The team provides training for staff and managers, and works with directors and trustees on organisational direction and policy around best practice. As well as visiting services, the Practice Development team holds regular meetings with area managers and their staff to review progress, discuss issues and plan future actions.

The Practice Development Team's Co-ordinator, Bev Ashman, says "The importance of staff skills and motivation is vital. Clarifying expectations and ensuring staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities enables the support teams to help each other to improve the quality of their support."

The team works with support staff and managers to share their range of skills, knowledge and practice experience of person centred tools and approaches. They also train staff in positive behavioural support to enable them to deliver person-centred active support.

'Person-centred Active Support' means providing a good life for people, especially those with severe and profound learning disabilities, by helping them to directly engage in all the activities of daily life in the home and the community.

"Providing the right level of support involves recognising people's routines

Practice Development Team

and rituals and incorporating them into daily planning and structures. All these skills are vital to ensure that staff are empowered to deliver the right kind of care that suits the person they are supporting.” says Practice Development Adviser Bob Iles.

Importantly, one size doesn't fit all. The team's other Adviser, John Ockenden, explains how adapting communication style makes a huge difference in how people experience their support:

“We spend quite a bit of our time watching how people are supported as it happens in front of us. I was at a service where six people live and they are very varied in their lifestyles, interests and abilities. In addition, it's always struck me that because the people concerned are so very different, staff have to be really skilful in changing their support style to suit each of them.

“So I was really thrilled when I was observing and saw all the staff changing their voice pitch and volume, their expectations, how much verbal communication they used, how quickly or slowly they took things, how much they waited and how much support they provided depending on who they were working with. It sounds so obvious but it's a rare thing as it doesn't come naturally to people to keep changing their support style.”

The team is made up of three people:

Bev Ashman is the Practice Development Co-ordinator and has been working with people with learning disabilities for more than 25 years. Her experience includes practice development, service systems and challenging behaviour.

John Ockenden and **Bob Iles** are both Practice Development Advisers with long experience of working with people with learning disabilities in a wide range of settings and roles. Bob has expertise in challenging behaviour, autism and sensory processing; John's experience includes positive behaviour support, person-centred active support and support for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities.



Become a Friend of Krumbs



Krumbs is not only a working café (see page 8) – it also provides invaluable training and development opportunities to trainees with learning disabilities who work in the café, gaining skills in catering, hospitality and customer care.

United Response recently employed a Job Coach at Krumbs to create links and build relationships with local businesses and three trainees have now found jobs. We have also invested in a Life Skills and Employment Training package which is being delivered to the trainees to help them to prepare for work outside of Krumbs. We've also been working hard with the trainees to explore and develop their friendship circles. Previously it was unusual for trainees to meet up out of work but now many of them go to the pub together, on day trips and to each others' homes for coffee and to watch DVDs – something that most of us take for granted but sadly which can be all too rare for young people with a learning disability.

By becoming a Friend of Krumbs you will help us to expand opportunities for the students and help the café become even more established in the local community. It only costs £25 a year and in return we will send you vouchers, special offers and invites to open days and tastings throughout the year, so that you can find out how we are doing and give us your menu suggestions too! But we hope that the best thing about being a Friend of Krumbs is knowing you are really helping some enthusiastic, talented young people to develop their careers and become valued members of York's workforce. Some of our students have had to battle hard against prejudice and disadvantage to get to where they are today – with your help and our support, we can help them move on to the next level.

If you would like to find out more about the Friends of Krumbs scheme or to become a member please contact Kiera Ridge on 0208 246 5202 or email her at kiera.ridge@unitedresponse.org.uk

Assisting Indep

We highlighted in the last edition of In Touch how the innovation of new technology is increasingly playing a vital role in helping the people we support to take control of their lives and have access to the same rights and opportunities as everyone else – and subsequently, living more independent lives.

We now have a new expert Assistive Technology team who work with our services around the country to identify where assistive technology would be of benefit to people in boosting their dignity and independence - and also to ensure that the equipment we use will provide the best quality support.

In some cases the individual has been able to buy the equipment they need out of their own resources, or from their benefits, but all too often the cost can become a challenge. So, our Christmas Fundraising Appeal this year is to raise money for equipment for those people who do not have the resources to buy the life changing equipment they need.

Golf Day with Sir Nick Faldo

Supporters and suppliers took to the golf course in July to compete for some fantastic prizes and raise lots of money for United Response.

The day, hosted at Richmond Golf Club, was a great success with 92 golfers and 12 extra lunch guests raising £13,000 net proceeds in support of our work. Highlights of the day included players being able to meet popular



endence Appeal

COULD YOU HELP?

A donation to our appeal could make the sort of benefits we have seen already a reality for many more of the people we support.

If you would like to give a donation to this appeal please use the donation form included with this magazine or go to:
www.unitedresponse.org.uk/appeal



broadcaster and Vice President of United Response, Steve Rider out on the course and take part in a lively post lunch Question and Answers session with special guest Sir Nick Faldo.

The day was a big success and we are already planning next year's event! If you would be interested in receiving information about next year's golf day please contact Kiera Ridge: kiera.ridge@unitedresponse.org.uk or telephone 020 8246 5202.

Assistive Technology can take many shapes and forms, from the simple to the complex and for a wide range of prices. Here are just a few examples of what your support could help buy:

Portable doorbells with loud chime sounds and flashing lights to help people with visual impairments and deafness. Prices start at around £45

Automatic floor cleaner which senses obstacles in its way to enable those with reduced mobility to Hoover their floor with minimal support. Price £160

Smoke Alarms for the deaf and hard of hearing. Once the smoke detectors detect a fire, the system is activated setting off strong strobe light flashes and the powerful vibrating pad. Prices range from £114.99 to £166.74



Semi submerging bathing apparatus for people with reduced mobility. Price: £104.50

An early warning of **flood detector** for incidents such as taps being left on. Price: £90

Natural gas leak detector providing an early warning of dangerous levels of gas where the gas supply is automatically shut off. Price: £125

Epilepsy sensor which monitors the user's vital signs including heart rate and breathing patterns to detect a range of epileptic seizures. Price: £280

Fall detector which automatically raises an alert when it detects serious falls. Price: £85

Getting it right together

We always try to ensure that we deliver the best possible support throughout all our services but acknowledge that we do not always get things right first time. However, as soon as we find out something is not going as well as it should be, we pull out all the stops to put things right, working with the person we are supporting, their family and staff. And importantly, we also make sure that these experiences are used as learning opportunities to help prevent similar problems from happening elsewhere. Here, Sue Collett tells her story.



My son Patrick is 33 and has been with United Response in a supported house in Wantage for 13 years. In the last few years and particularly this year, I have seen United Response developing a system that will put Patrick's needs at the centre, giving him a secure future, and me peace of mind.

Patrick was lucky enough to be funded to attend a forward thinking school run by the Honoramead Trust in Staffordshire. It was highly professional and they ran a very tight ship; because it was on one site the speech therapist, teachers and support workers were able to work in unison and shared the same values. The staff believed that it was essential to work in partnership with parents and families, holding regular weekends when parents and siblings were able to stay in the boarding accommodation and share in lectures and talks by teachers and therapists.

We were very proud of what Patrick achieved and hopeful that in his future life he could be encouraged to follow his own aspirations, but



“ My attendance at management meetings as a parent representative has been a revelation. ”

A close bond: Sue and Patrick enjoying a day out

- stay safe and happy. This transition time from school to supported living is a notoriously difficult time of adjustment, but in the years that followed we were often disappointed with low staff expectations, that eventually mirrored our own.

- When Tim Jones, United Response's South West Divisional Director, came to my house 14 years ago to discuss Patrick's possible placement, I could identify with the values that United Response management aspired to and felt very optimistic for my son's future. There have been many committed and imaginative individuals within United Response, who have supported and helped Patrick and there were some good times. But in the years that followed, we frequently felt on an emotional rollercoaster, as those values at times, seemed a million miles away from everyday life in Patrick's house. A 'blame' culture existed in the house, which led to bickering and low morale among the staff. Patrick's room and belongings were chaotic. Communication among staff and with parents was poor and as Patrick has very limited speech, his week was a blank canvas to me.

- The staff in those times were very defensive and we parents felt guilty and sidelined. It seemed that since I couldn't care for my son 24/7, I'd forfeited my right to have any input. I didn't want to rock the boat and make things worse for Patrick and felt that I didn't have the tools to bring about changes.

- A completely new focus came about when parents had crisis talks with Tim and Tina, our area manager. They were very open and honest and with regular meetings, perspectives were shared and the barriers came down. Many improvements came about; with a new supportive house manager, staff developed more pride and enthusiasm, there was a lower staff turnover and less agency staff, Patrick shared some of the tasks and took more pride in keeping his room tidy. Use of a Home Communication Book helped us discuss what he'd enjoyed each week. We were able to voice concerns and express praise at reviews using the format of working and not working. Our original 'crisis meetings' became a regular feature, but quickly transformed into more celebratory, sharing and decision making occasions.

- My attendance at management meetings as a parent representative has been a revelation. To see so many professional people striving on our behalf to give our sons and daughters the best future they can have is inspirational. I can see the need to pull together and for parents to share some responsibility for helping to prioritise needs particularly at a time of savage cuts. Relationships within a supported house can essentially be the fragile variable. We have a responsibility to nurture and respect a strong team.

New Registration with CQC 2010

The Health and Social Care Act 2008 requires all providers of adult social care that carry out regulated activities to be registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) from 1 October 2010.

The new system of registration requires United Response to meet new essential standards of quality and safety that are centred on the outcomes of care for people who use our services. Below, Dave Glover, our Quality Management Co-ordinator, answers questions to explain it all.



But United Response services were already registered weren't they?



Yes, all of our eligible services were registered under the Care Standards Act 2000, and were required to meet the (old) National Minimum Standards (now replaced by new standards), and were inspected and regulated by the regulatory body which preceded the CQC, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI).



So who or what is the Care Quality Commission?



The Care Quality Commission is the new health and social care regulator for England. It began operating in April 2009, taking over the duties of CSCI as well as those of the Health Care Commission and the Mental Health Act Commission.

"It marks a change from regulation primarily based on policies to regulation primarily based on outcomes."



What is registration?



Registration is at the heart of the new regulatory system. To register, providers must demonstrate they are meeting new essential standards of quality and safety across all of the regulated activities they provide.

To ensure that continued registration is appropriate, CQC will monitor whether providers continue to comply with regulations and, if necessary, use their new enforcement powers to make sure swift action is taken if providers are not compliant.



How is the new system different to the old one?



Registration now applies to all providers of regulated health and adult social care services. This includes, for the first time, NHS trusts, dental and GP practices.

Providers are now registered for each of the regulated activities they provide, rather than for their individual services/locations such as an individual care home or a hospital.



What is a regulated activity?



Regulated activities that require registration are a broad type of health or social care as defined by the Department of Health. The activities include personal care and accommodation with nursing or personal care. Providers are required to produce a statement of purpose about the services they provide within each type of registered activity (e.g. personal care), and at each location from which they carry on each of those regulated activities.



What is a location?



A location is the place where regulated activities are provided. An example of a location could be each hospital run by the same NHS trust or each 'care home' run by the same organisation.



What about the new Standards?



The new essential standards of quality and safety focus on people's experiences of care. This means that in demonstrating to CQC that they meet the required standards, providers must focus on positive outcomes for people who use their services.

After a provider has been registered, CQC will monitor them to make sure they continue to comply with the standards. If the provider is not meeting the standards, CQC will use their new wider range of enforcement powers to make sure that action is taken quickly to address this.

CQC will pay particular attention to what people say about the services they use and put greater emphasis on people's actual experiences of using services.



How will the new registration system improve health and adult social care?



People who use services can expect all registered health and adult social care providers to meet essential standards of quality and safety and to respect their dignity and rights. Wherever care is provided - in someone's home, in a community setting, in a hospital; however it is funded (private or public); and whether it is acute care or longer residential care, it will have to meet the same standards of quality and safety.

The same set of standards will apply right across the care sector, making it easier for one provider to be compared to another and for providers to work together.

It marks a change from regulation primarily based on policies to regulation primarily based on outcomes, such as what constitutes a quality experience for people who use services.

Continual monitoring and checking will make sure that potential problems are identified early and that swift action is taken where services are failing people.

CQC will make better use of the information they have about providers. They will continue to carry out inspections, which will be more frequent where providers have less data, and to follow up concerns as and when they arise.



What happens next?



CQC published the registration status of all providers on 1 October 2010.

After registering a provider, they will check and monitor its services to ensure that it continues to meet essential standards of quality and safety, focusing on areas where they believe there is a risk of standards not being met.

More detail can be found on the CQC website: www.cqc.org.uk

Oakfield Science Group scoops national award in Adult Learner's Week

A Merseyside science group for people with learning disabilities has been successful in this year's Adult Learner's Week awards. The National Group Award recognises Oakfield Science Group's commitment to learning about all things scientific, ranging from magnetism to the claims made by kitchen towel manufacturers.

The Oakfield Science Group is attended by a range of people with

learning disabilities who attend the Oakfield Day Centre run by United Response. The group was set up after a number of people who visit the service expressed a keen interest in science.

Over three years the group's 11 learners have developed a range of skills through the group's sessions. Recording the results of experiments has helped the group develop their literacy and numeracy skills. Their team working skills have also come on in leaps and bounds, with the

group now discussing and agreeing the topics they want to study.

Cathy McIvers, whose daughter Clair attends Oakfield says:

"Clair really loves going to the day centre - so much so that it's a real battle to keep her at home when she's not well. The structure of the term times and the trips and activities in the holidays really appeal to Clair. She loves science and I was very proud and happy when I heard that the team had won this prize."



Su Sayer OBE, United Response chief executive said, "We are delighted that Oakfield Science Group has been recognised in these awards and send our congratulations to the whole group. The award recognises the commitment of the group to learning and the real impact that education can have on the lives of people with learning disabilities. It's particularly exciting that this sprang directly from the group's passion for science."

CODAonline launch!

Our two year project to create a website to support people with learning disabilities to get jobs is live!

Developed with funding from the EU and in partnership with organisations from Germany, Portugal, Bulgaria and France, CODAonline is split into three sections for Jobseekers, Employers and Supporters. The Jobseekers section allows people with learning disabilities to create a resource called My CV. This lets them showcase their talents, using video and

audio as well as the traditional route of qualifications and references. The supporters section has lots of help and advice for staff who are trying to find employment for people they support, including how to arrange a work trial and how to support somebody when they are in work. Finally, the Employers section enables prospective employers to browse for a suitable candidate in their area.

Please do have a look around and let us know what you think by adding comments in the Questions tab. And if you know anyone – job seeker or employer – who you think might benefit from CODAonline, please do pass it on! **Visit www.codaonline.com**

Equality is everything

For the sixth year running, the South West division of United Response has played host to a truly inclusive event. Led by people we support, each year's event has a different theme around matters that are important to their lives. Past events have tackled bullying and inclusion. This year's topic is recruitment and equality & diversity - with the main theme being 'you can't judge whether a person would be good for the job just by their appearance'.

The event is led by an organising committee made up of people supported by United Response. Staff are involved to help with the organisation and workshops, with everyone on an equal footing. The event itself lasts for one and a half days. 70 people will be attending with 51 people staying overnight.

Participants will work in groups to look at how job descriptions are put together, choosing staff and the interview process itself. They will then interview a number of people and feedback their experiences. Each group will be run by a person we support and a member of staff. It's not all work though - having fun is a high priority! This is helped along with games throughout, a disco and a choir in the evening.

Feedback from previous years has highlighted how empowered delegates felt having been given a platform to talk about important things in their lives as well as the opportunity to enjoy themselves and make new friends.

"These events make you see what's really important about this job." Dave Oaten Wareham, Service Manager.

Favourite carols for all - a date for your diary!

Our annual celebratory carol service is being held on Wednesday, 1 December at St Peter's Church, Eaton Square, London.

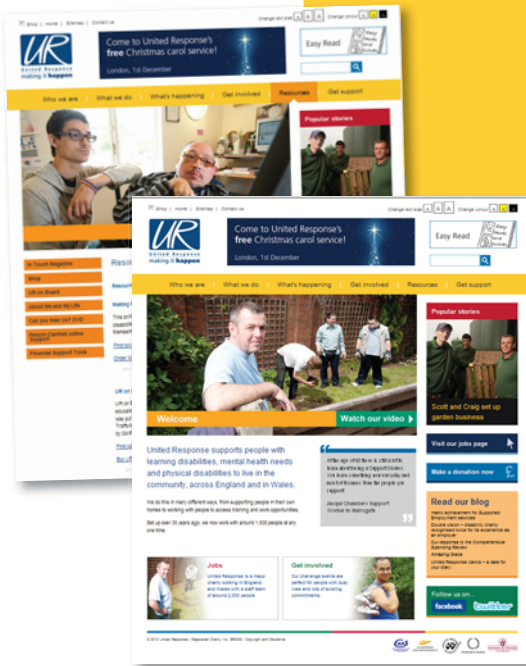
Hosted by our president, Martyn Lewis CBE, the evening will include interviews with people we support about their achievements over the last year and carols led by our deaf choir from Ipswich, Swanbank Music choir and Seaford College choir.

The service starts promptly at 6.30 pm and lasts for an hour. Refreshments are served after the service. We would be delighted if you are able to join us. Please contact Alex Dunwoody on 020 8246 5208 or email alex.dunwoody@unitedresponse.org.uk if you would like to come.

If you are unable to come along but would like to hear the concert, you can do so by telephone. All you have to do is call Community Network on 0845 619 9992 before Friday, 26 November and they will send you a programme and then will call you about 10/15 minutes before the start of the service and you can listen to it in the comfort of your own home.

Venue: St Peter's Church, 119 Eaton Square, London SW1W 9AL (near to Victoria Station)





New Website!

We have changed the look of our website to give it a more modern, dynamic and accessible feel, while remaining loyal to our branding. This follows the restructure earlier in the year of the website which made the site easier to navigate.

While the new, overall look of the site is now complete, we still have to add a greater variety of photography to the different sections, as well as – ultimately – a refresh of the website's copy. So, the process is very much ongoing.

If you have any feedback or comments on the website's new look, please do not hesitate to email our web editor, James Dodd at james.dodd@unitedresponse.org.uk.

www.unitedresponse.org.uk

Jumping for joy

A member of staff from the North West Division has been doing more than her bit for fundraising too.

When Ro Jones, a senior office administrator in our Chesterfield office realised that she was approaching two major milestones in her life - 20 years working at United Response and her 50th birthday - she decided to mark the occasion in an unusual way with a skydive! Ro jumped from 10,000 feet in a tandem skydive and raised a huge £850. Her fundraising went to Spire Voice, a group run by people we support who engage in a wide variety of activities from talks about benefits and employment to curry nights and trips to Alton Towers. Spire Voice plans to use Ro's money for their Christmas trip to London (where amongst other activities they visit United Response's popular "Favourite Carols for All" service – see page 17 for details) but also some of the money is going towards their annual Christmas ball to which everyone in the community is invited to.

The skydive wasn't just enjoyed by Ro as lots of the people we support went along to cheer her on. Now Ro looks like she's got the fundraising bug saying; "I enjoyed my skydive so much I'm already looking for a challenge for next year – possibly the three peaks challenge!"

Right: Barry all dressed up with somewhere to go at last year's Christmas Ball. *Far right:* Ro after jumping 10,000 feet

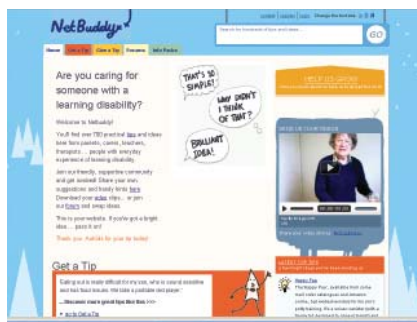
If you're interested in doing a skydive or other fundraising events for United Response contact Kiera in the fundraising team: 020 8246 5202 / kiera.ridge@unitedresponse.org.uk or go to the fundraising section of our website www.unitedresponse.org.uk



Find your net buddy

Caring for someone with a learning disability can be an isolating experience without the right support. But we've found a website where you can find tips, share stories and get information as part of an online carers community.

Net Buddy encourages parents, carers and therapists to team up and swap ideas. It uses videos and discussion forums and currently has over 700 practical tips available. These include everything from how to make getting out and about less stressful for someone you care for, using distraction techniques, to advice on benefits. Take a look today!



We're on **facebook**

We have launched a new United Response Facebook page and we'd love you to be part of it!

Once logged in to your Facebook account, simply search for 'United Response', then go onto the page and click the 'like' button, which has a little thumbs-up icon on it.

The new page will make it easier and more fun for us to share all things United Response with you. This will include the latest on all our campaigns, our various fundraising activities, as well as anything else of interest we might be up to.

We're first!

United Response has become the first employer to be awarded Recognition Status by the National Skills Academy for Social Care. The endorsement is based on an assessment of our learning and development programme.

The Academy's endorsement framework is intended to set the highest possible standard for training and development in adult social care, and provide a tool for self-evaluation and quality improvement.

The Academy's reviewers said of United Response: "The impression gained throughout the review was of an employer that makes a significant contribution to its workforce and service users. A transparent message throughout is of an employer who invests in internal training and development and has a workforce committed to maintaining high quality adult social care".

Step 1 is the Recognition status, and step 2 is the Excellence Award. We

now intend to apply to become the first employer to gain the Excellence Award.

"We do this for the simple reason that skilled, happy and motivated staff are essential if we are to give the people we support the opportunities in life they deserve. We will strive to maintain our standards and to remain one of the best social care employers in the country" said Chief Executive Su Sayer.

Families Panel

I / we would like to join the Families Panel and feed into the work that United Response does.

Name:

Address:

Email:

Tel:



What you need to know about... Hospital care for people with learning disabilities

1. What is the issue?

Almost half of doctors (46%) and a third of nurses say that people with a learning disability receive a poorer standard of healthcare than the rest of the population, according to ICM Research which was released this year.

Indeed, Mencap's *Death by indifference* (2007) campaign highlighted six cases of people with a learning disability who died unnecessarily in NHS hospitals due to poor communication and a lack of understanding of their patients' needs.

2. What has United Response done to help?

United Response believes that better training of healthcare professionals is essential when dealing with issues of misunderstanding. Consequently we have been working alongside people we support to help to train doctors in better practice principles when treating patients with learning disabilities. We

have also had input into the medical undergraduate curriculum at Bristol University to educate students in the best ways to meet the needs of a patient with learning disabilities. The hope is that this will instil an appreciation of the necessary principles of best practice from an early stage of their career.

3. What else is being done?

Mencap has recently launched their *Getting it right* campaign, as a follow up to their *Death by indifference* report. This provides a good practice *Getting it right* charter for healthcare professionals to sign which obliges them to stop indifference in hospitals and give disabled patients greater rights. Therefore, this charter not only provides a list of the duties of a doctor when treating an individual with learning disabilities, but it also informs the patient and their family/carer of the treatment that they can expect and demand in matters pertaining to healthcare. To find out more about the charter, please visit: www.mencap.org

Christmas cards for sale!

United Response Christmas Cards are now on sale!

The artwork was created by Hayley Rowland whom we support in Trafford. They cost £3.50 (including postage and packing) for ten cards.

If you would like to buy some, please contact Kiera Ridge on 0208 246 202 or email her at kiera.ridge@unitedresponse.org.uk.



Feedback form

If you would like to contribute to articles, make a suggestion for future content or tell us what you think of *In Touch* please let us know below. If you do not wish to receive this magazine, please tick here and fill in your details.

Name:

Address:

Email: Tel:

Comments:

Please return this form to Lu Large, United Response, Vantage House, 1 Weir Road, London SW19 8UX or call her on 0208 246 5120 or email lu.large@unitedresponse.org.uk