

DISC DIVERSITY



SPORT & FITNESS special

>> pages 5-7



Comment

Welcome to the autumn edition of *Discovery*, we hope you had a good summer, and what a strange old summer it's been.

Whilst we're guessing that few, if any of our readers were directly affected by the News International antics, we know the riots were a lot closer to home and hope our readers all came through unscathed.

In the long run though it is the world economic crisis that we should probably be most wary of. Disabled people have already felt the effects with attacks on benefits, increases in care charges and a general atmosphere of cuts.

In this issue we look at the recommendations of the Dilnot Commission, which argues strongly that young disabled adults should not be charged for care. It is a recommendation we wholeheartedly support, and we hope that those in power will take heed of it.

However the main thrust of this issue is not about cuts, charges or crisis but about questions that are important to us all; health, fitness and fun. We give over the central section of *Discovery* to aspects of fitness and sport that have been designed to include disabled people.

For so long gyms seemed to be places that were inaccessible and unsuitable for disabled people, and sporting activities whether competitive or otherwise the property of a tiny handful of Disabled athletes.

Here we run articles that show that there are accessible and user friendly fitness opportunities, and that with the great success of the Paralympics, and the fast growing success of the Special Olympics the chance to participate rather than just spectate are growing all the time.

We hope you find our fitness and sport special fun and informative.

Contents

Editorial	2
Get Lucky	3
Making Care Fare	4
Sport & fitness special	5-7
Access This	8-9
Bits & Bobs	10-11
Contact DISC	12

Editorial board

Jill Aeppli
Emma Catlow
Katrín McEntee
Pat Stack
Mike Steel

Contact

Editorial
DISC Peckwater Centre
6 Peckwater Street
London NW5 2TX
phone **020 3317 5099**
email **discovery@discnwl.org.uk**

Distribution

Marcia Burton
020 7387 0700

Design

Ruth
Pallesen-Mustikay
rpm@netaxis.co.uk



Get Lucky

It don't come EASy!

We have been contacted by a reader, Ms P, who has received a Limited Capability for Work Questionnaire (ESA50). She is currently in receipt of Incapacity Benefit (IB)

Ms P had an assessment on her ability to work 18 months ago but she thinks this form is very different. She has read the newspaper stories on "sickness benefits" being cut except for those considered most "needy".

She said that her illness had not changed in the last 18 months and that her GP said she was not able to work at the moment. She is very worried that the changes might affect her benefits.

We advised Ms P that the new assessment is a radical departure from the previous IB assessment she had 18 months ago. Everyone who is in receipt of IB or Income Support because they are incapable of work will eventually receive the new ESA50. If they satisfy the new assessment they will be transferred onto Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

The ESA50 has fewer questions. Gone are the questions on walking, bending and kneeling, walking up and down stairs and the question on sitting and standing has been combined into a single question. There has been a considerable reduction in the number of questions in the mental health section, which is likely to impact on a lot of claimants. Each question carries a fixed number of points and Ms P will need 15 points to satisfy the assessment. The changes mean that it will be harder to get 15 points.

After she has returned the ESA50 Ms P will be called to a medical assessment carried out by ATOS Healthcare. (We have written in previous issues of *Discovery*

about our misgivings as to how ATOS Healthcare carries out the assessments). If you have to attend a medical assessment you can call our advice line and we can advise you on how to approach it.

If Ms P fails to gain the required 15 points she will have one month, from the date of the decision, in which to submit an appeal. If she has grounds for the appeal we would advise her to pursue an appeal. Whilst waiting for the hearing date Ms P would be entitled to the basic rate of ESA which is currently £67.50. However there

• *Everyone who is in receipt of IB or Income Support because they are incapable of work will eventually receive the ESA50* •

is a considerable backlog in the number of ESA appeals waiting to be heard. She could be waiting up to 12 months.

If her appeal is successful she will be placed in either the Work Related Activity Component or the Support Component. She would also receive backdating of ESA. Less than 10% of ESA claimants are placed in the Support Group. The remainder in the Work Related Activity Component will be subject to "back to work" guidance and interviews by specialist agencies.

If like Ms P you have received an ESA50 or failed to satisfy the medical assessment and need advice or help to complete the questionnaire or appeal please contact DISC on 020 7387 1466.

Making Care Fair?

The Dilnot Commission's report in early July headed by economist Andrew Dilnot, hit the headlines for its recommendations with regards to social care for Elderly people, but the commission also had important things to say about young disabled adults. *Discovery* looks at what it had to say

Perhaps one of the most unfair features of the debate about people living longer and the cost implications that has, has been the way in which care for young disabled adults has been thrown into the mix.

There is no evidence to suggest that there are more young disabled adults than there were 30, 20 or 10 years ago. In that time the care of disabled people has been transformed for the better beyond all recognition.

Those advances however have become increasingly threatened by the way in which the cost of providing care has been merged into the debate of the costs of people growing older.

Many authorities, including Camden will now only provide care to those whose needs are "critical" or "substantial".

In addition in most local authorities many of those who do receive care have to pay towards that care. As we know from our own experiences at DISC this is often the cause of much hardship, and in some cases results in people refusing care that is badly needed.

It is against this background that Dilnot must be seen. The commission found the current system to be "confusing, unfair and unsustainable". Dilnot stated that the commission was absolutely clear that all those that enter adulthood with a care and support need should be eligible for free state support without having to go

through any means tests.

Dilnot also recognised the huge financial upheavals that the onset of disability can bring and therefore proposes that no one who becomes disabled before the age of 40 should have to pay towards their care.

"We do not think that people younger than 40 can, in general, realistically be expected to have planned for having a care and support need, nor will they have accumulated significant assets," its report read.

• *The commission found the current system to be 'confusing, unfair and unsustainable'*

• *Discovery has long argued that charging for care is profoundly unfair and therefore warmly welcomes Dilnot's recommendations around the charging issue.*

However before we all get very excited about a new fairer system it is important to note that these are only recommendations to government. Given that Dilnot is clear that for his recommendations to work "additional resources" from government will be needed, and that the current government's priority is to cut the deficit by cutting public expenditure we are still some way away from being able to celebrate.

Hopefully though, the government, both local and national will take this commission's findings seriously.



Fresh air and fitness

We all know that regular exercise or physically activity is good for our bodies. It helps us make our heart, lungs and bones stronger, and achieve a healthy weight.

However, another important benefit of being physically active is the way it can improve our mental wellbeing. Being active makes our bodies release 'feel good' hormones, lifting mood, reducing stress, improving confidence and aiding sleep. Research has shown that supervised exercise can even be as effective as antidepressants in treating mild to moderate depression.

So the message is: if you want to feel better in mind and body, start exercising. Simple right? But what, if like many people, the idea of going to a gym or fitness classes is a bit

scary, or just not your kind of thing? Well, one new option that just might fit the bill is 'green exercise'.

Green exercise, put simply, means being active outdoors in a natural place; for example gardening, walking and conservation. Recently Mind, the mental health charity, did some research into the benefits of 'green exercise' as part of their 'Ecominds' project. Those taking part said they felt less depressed, less stressed and more motivated, in fact 94% said it improved their mental health. **To find out more go to Mind's website: www.mind.org.uk/help/ecominds**

Luckily for disabled residents of Camden, there are plenty of accessible outdoor activities. And the really good news is that they are free!

Camden Green Gym

Run by British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)

The Green Gym is made up of volunteers, including many people with a range of disabilities. By joining you can discover, conserve and look after local green spaces and nature reserves. Plus you could learn new skills and get a free workout in a friendly place.

For full details see www.btcv.org/camden or call 020 7278 4294 to book your place

Supervised outdoor gym sessions

No need to book, just turn up!

Canteloves Park: Monday 5.30-6.30

Lismore Circus: Monday & Wednesday 9-10

Polygon Open Space: Wednesday 9.30-10.30

Kilburn Grange Park: Thursday 11-12

For more information go to www.camden.gov.uk/active-health or call 020 7974 1542

Outdoor Gyms

Outdoor gyms are a new way to get into fitness. They are suitable for people of all ages, all fitness levels and there's no fees to pay.

Argyle Square Open Space

Canteloves Gardens

Cumberland Market open space

Kilburn Grange Park

Lismore Circus

Maygrove Peace Park

Polygon open space

Swiss Cottage



Get active, get qualified, get involved...

Most of us know we should be more active, but for many people with disabilities the idea of going to local health or fitness club can seem daunting. Even if we do venture in to the local gym, it is unlikely that we will meet many other disabled people.

The idea of finding a disabled person actually working there seems even more remote.

So with this in mind, a new project has been set up by YMCA Fitness Industry Training (YMCAfit) based here in Camden and Aspire, a national charity supporting people with spinal cord injuries.

The Instructability project, which is unique in the UK, offers recognised fitness instructor training specifically for disabled people. Once qualified, participants are given support to find work in the fitness

industry. In fact half of the students on the pilot course are now in employment.

One of the main aims of the project is to challenge the barriers and prejudice faced by



Fran Brown

disabled people looking to work in the fitness industry.

By providing role models and changing attitudes it is also hoped that Instructability will encourage more disabled people to take part in physical activity themselves.

The project has been so successful that it has recently been granted the Inspire mark by the London 2012 Inspire programme.

Lord Seb Coe, Chair of the London

Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games said:

“Instructability is encouraging disabled people to fulfil their potential. I am proud that with the help of partners such as Aspire & YMCAfit, we are delivering our vision to use the power of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games to boost participation in fitness.”

One of the Instructability project’s most recent success stories, Fran Brown agrees.

“I often feel self conscious in the gym environment, and this isn’t helped in many gyms which don’t have the correct equipment or staff who are willing to help. The Instructability scheme is a great initiative – it is giving me the skills and experience to secure an entry level job in the industry.”

The next Instructability course starts on 9 September at the Aspire National Training Centre in Stanmore. If you are over 16, use a gym and have a disability, contact Aspire for further information on 020 8420 6716 or email: info@aspire.org.uk

... and win medals!!!

The 13th Special Olympics World Games took place from the 25 June-4 July in Athens, Greece. *Discovery* looks at the development of the games

Special Olympics is an organisation which was set up in 1963 by Eunice Kennedy Shriver. The main aim of the organisation was to provide places for people with learning disabilities to exercise and take part in sport while socialising and making friends.

Special Olympics originated in the US and has spread to nearly 200 countries, with 200 million athletes worldwide. In recent times the organisation has been working hard on changing public's attitudes towards people with disabilities

Britain joined in 1978 when Special Olympics GB was formed, it currently organises over 8,000 athletes who participate throughout the year in 24 sports, as well as unified football and alpine skiing. There are 2,800 volunteers who currently run the 135 Special Olympics clubs throughout the UK.

Like the Olympics, the Special Olympics World Games take place every four years. This year's event kicked off with a massive opening ceremony to welcome the 170 countries and 7,000 athletes from all over the world who were taking part.

With performances from Stevie



The Special Olympics opening ceremony



Eon Millar, centre, won gold in 800m

Wonder and actress Vanessa Williams it was a spectacular show.

Team GB sent 151 athletes to the games with 53 volunteer coaches. The athletes competed in 17 different sports including aquatics, athletics, basketball, football and unified football, judo, kayaking and sailing. There was great success throughout Team GB with an amazing 187 medals won, 72

being gold, 63 silver and 52 bronze, with many of the athletes breaking records and competing for the first time in foreign games. On top of the medals, all the athletes got ribbons for participation in each sport so no one went home empty handed.

The closing ceremony was again highly entertaining and as fun as the games themselves. Britain's Shain Lewis, a tennis player, got chosen to say a few words to thank the organisers, volunteers and fellow athletes for making the games so memorable. There were performances from Aerika, a band which all the members have disability, Greek dancers and singers and Heather Small from M People. There were also Korean dancers and performers to represent the Winter Games taking place

in Pyeong Chang in 2013, who brought the games and a great week to a spectacular end.

The Disability Sports Team currently runs the Special Olympics Camden programme. The programme includes training and competitive opportunities for participants with Learning disabilities. For more info contact Anthony.Doherty@camden.gov.uk

Access This

SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY special

Exercise Referral in Camden

If you have a health issue (e.g. heart and lung problems, osteoporosis, obesity, mental health) you can be referred by your doctor or another health practitioner for an eight week free specialist activity programme. You are offered an initial consultation with an exercise specialist and then follow on support and motivation. Once you complete the eight weeks then there is a range of options available for continuing to exercise at a subsidised rate to prolong active lifestyle changes.

How do I access the scheme? To access this scheme you must speak to your doctor to find out if you are suitable for the scheme.

Swimming

Camden have launched a try swimming programme for the over 40s and disabled people allowing them to engage in fun opportunities to exercise and learn to be more confident within the water. They run a varied range of aqua and swimming lessons across the borough. Sessions are low cost and held throughout the year. They run specialist sessions to suit all needs e.g. specialist session (cognitive) or mobility.

For more information contact Camden.gov.uk/activehealth or telephone 020 7974 2985.

Wheelchair Football

Wednesday 10am - 11am

Talacre Sports Centre; Dalby Street, off Prince Of Wales Rd, NW5.

Competition opportunities throughout the year.

Contact Camden Sports development team: 020 7974 8753 or 020 7974 8754

STEP FC (Beginners)

STEP is a charity devoted to giving adults with learning disabilities opportunities to play football. As well as running weekly training sessions for players of all abilities we run monthly leagues for teams across London.

Cost - Free

Venue - Royal Free Recreation Centre

Day - Sundays; Time - 2-4pm

Contact: STEPfootball@hotmail.com

Camden DFC (Advanced / Intermediate)

Camden DFC also play in the STEP Football League at Talacre once a month. Who can attend? **Camden DFC is for Adults and Young people 16+ with a Disability.**

Cost - Free

Venue - Talacre Sports Centre, Dalby St, NW5

Day - Thursday; Time - 5-6pm

For more info contact Ben.Dorsett@camden.gov.uk

Greenwood Dance Group

An inclusive dance session for adults with learning disabilities at Greenwood Place, Kentish Town

Free of charge

Session One: 10.30-12noon, Tuesday, An introduction to dance and movement

Session Two: 12.15-1.15pm, Tuesday, Artistic Development, Use what you have learnt in session in a performance

If watching sport interests you more don't forget to apply for London 2012 Paralympic tickets. You can apply between 9-26 September 2011. **For the latest tickets news and information:** <http://www.tickets.london2012.com/>

Now RNIB have a sister company National Talking Newspapers and Magazines who distribute over 200 national newspapers and magazines in various formats with prices starting from as little as £7 per annum. Magazines are in accessible formats. **For more information and a catalogue contact direct on 01435 866102 or email: info@tnauk.org.uk or visit www.tnauk.org.uk.**

Did you know that Camden and Islington Wheelchair Service has a wheelchair user group open to all clients of the service?

The Wheelchair User Group acts as a forum for communication and discussion between wheelchair users, the Wheelchair Service and other community groups and services. The user group meets regularly at the Peckwater Centre and, if you are interested in becoming a member of the user group & require more information, or would like to attend the next meeting, please contact the Wheelchair Service on:
tel. 020 3317 5040
email: candi.wheelchairsevice@nhs.net

Disabled People Against Cuts (DPAC)

DPAC is a campaigning organisation made up of disabled people and their allies. DPAC oppose all cuts to public services and the welfare state as well as the privatisation of public services. The cuts are wide ranging and DPAC believes we can stop them by working together.

If you want to know more about London based events please email: londondpac@gmail.com, www.dpac.uk.net

SPECIAL CARER AND FAMILY EVENT

Thursday 29 September; 10am-2pm
Argenta House, 1 Aspern Grove,
Haverstock Hill, NW3 2AF

There is a new way of getting the support you and your family need to live well and independently - it is known as "Personalisation". This gives people more choice in the way they are supported and in who provides that support. However, it can seem like a maze when you start to look for new providers. **Where do you start? Who can help? What is available? Can it really work well?**

So many questions - perhaps there are some answers!

On offer at this Special Event will be the following:

Examples of new success stories - carers getting together and setting up a new service with and for those they care for - **How did they do it?**

Some small and medium sized providers who are already offering a good service and choice - **What's on offer?**

One or two success stories - people who are already making it work for them - How do they manage? What help have they accessed to support them? What are the real pros and cons? How does it feel to have more choice and control?

Support and advice on managing a direct payment or personal budget.

Information on the Better Care Choices process - How does it work? Who is eligible? Where can I find out more?

Information on how to do it yourself, as a carer or someone in need of care - Can I set up a service myself - on my own or with a group of like-minded people? What are the possibilities?

This special event is being run jointly with Camden Carers Centre and London Borough of Camden Micro Enterprise Support Programme.

Value for money?

A disabled woman has won an out of court settlement after she claimed she was charged more to use an accessible taxi than a non-disabled person.

Nicola Nesbit, who has cerebral palsy, claimed that Belfast taxi firm Value Cabs charged her an £8 call-out fee in addition to fare-and-a-half on a taxi journey taking her to hospital during her pregnancy.

The taxi firm paid Mrs Nesbit £2,000 without admission of liability and the case was supported by the Equality Commission.

Mrs Nesbit, who has been a wheelchair user since birth, said she was delighted with the outcome.

“I was outraged, as I felt that I was being treated differently because I am disabled.

“I think it is important that all disabled people are aware that it is not fair to charge a disabled person more than an able-bodied person for the same journey in the same vehicle, and that is why I decided to take this to court,” she said.

The south Belfast woman normally travels by bus, but had to take a taxi to travel to hospital appointments.



Nicola Nesbit

Anne McKernan, director of legal services with the Equality Commission, said the law did not allow transport providers to charge disabled customers a higher price for the same journey in the same vehicle

Top Gear – two faces or two faced?

Praise was recently given by Disabled Motoring UK and others for a recent episode of BBC show Top Gear. Richard Hammond met a team of disabled soldiers from the Race2Recovery campaign as they took part in a cross-country 4x4 race. The soldiers were prepar-

ing for a rally in Dakar to raise awareness of the issues faced by disabled service personnel.

However, in the same episode presenters Jeremy Clarkson and James May managed to cause outrage. Many viewers were shocked to see the pair trying out electric cars only to park them in spaces clearly marked as reserved for disabled drivers. A spokesperson for Disabled Motoring UK, claimed that ‘Clarkson ‘wouldn’t have cared’ about parking up in a disabled bay. The abuse of non-disabled people parking in disabled bays is rife, and with people like Clarkson and May doing this other motorists will just think they can just park wherever they like.’

Following the complaints, the show’s producers issued an apology, explaining that the presenters had been concerned but were assured that the parking had been approved by the owner of the spaces.

Go Get Em Oscar!

Oscar Pistorius will become the first amputee athlete to compete at the able-bodied World Championships, after being named in South Africa’s squad.

The 24-year-old double-amputee, who competes on carbon fibre legs, will race in the 400m and 4x400m relay

The event begins in Daegu, South Korea on 27 August.

Pistorius said: “I have dreamt for such a long time of competing in a major championships and this is a very proud moment in my life.

“It will be a great day for me when I set out on the track in Daegu and I hope to do my country proud.

“This will be the highest-profile and most prestigious able-bodied event which I have ever competed in, and I will face the highest-calibre of athletes from across the planet.”

An International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) ban was overturned in 2008, allowing Pistorius to compete against able-bodied athletes.

The IAAF’s ruling that his “blades” gave him an unfair advantage was overturned by the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Pistorius clocked a personal best time of 45.07 seconds in Italy last month to qualify just inside the cut-off time.

“If I manage to make it through the heats, I would be thrilled,” he added.

A cut that hurts

The BBC has made the decision to close the very popular message board of Ouch! – the BBC’s disability related blog. This was made as part of the BBC’s review of their social media strategy and the board was closed at the beginning of July.

The Ouch! message-board was extremely popular amongst many disabled people and had developed a strong

online community. The BBC’s decision to close the board was therefore met with dismay by the majority of its users. Many people wrote letters of complaint to the BBC and created online petitions to try to stop the decision.

In an article by Disability Now one user said “Whenever I have disability related question I want my peers to answer, the Ouch! messageboard is always my first port of call...It’s also somewhere I can go to answer other people’s questions, and it’s good for one’s self-esteem to be

able to impart helpful information”.

The BBC acknowledged that many people are sad to see the messageboard go but went ahead with its decision to close the board. The BBC argued that there are now many social networking sites that people can use to stay in touch and discuss issues

relevant to them. In the Ouch Blog the editor Damien Rose wrote: “The web and BBC Online have changed a lot

over the last decade and we believe it is now time to close the Ouch! Messageboard”.

Many people do not agree with the BBC’s view and before the board was closed there were a huge number of posts in which people made their anger at the closure clear. One user wrote that the BBC were “removing a valuable and scarce resource from a group of people who are under-represented”.

Ouch! has now moved over to BBC news but its long term future remains unclear.



ACCESS TO EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT & VOLUNTEERING

The Peckwater Centre, 6 Peckwater Street, London NW5 2TX

Tel: 020 3317 5072 **Fax:** 020 7424 9996

Mobile: 07532 460420 **Email:** projects@discnwl.org.uk

ADVICE AND INFORMATION SERVICE

Based at 58 Phoenix Road, London NW1 1ES

Advice Line: 020 7387 1466. Open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 10am – 4pm

Fax: 020 7383 4775 **Email:** advice@discnwl.org.uk

ADVOCACY SERVICE

The Peckwater Centre, 6 Peckwater Street, London NW5 2TX

Tel: 020 3317 5071 **Fax:** 020 7424 9996 **Email:** advocacy@discnwl.org.uk

CAMDEN DEAF (BSL) USERS SUPPORT SERVICE

Based at 58 Phoenix Road, London NW1 1ES

Tel/minicom: 020 7255 9739 **Fax:** 020 7383 4775

SMS: 07930 699020 **Email:** advice@discnwl.org.uk

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Peckwater Centre, 6 Peckwater Street, London NW5 2TX

General Management → **Finance** → **New Projects**

Tel/minicom: 020 3317 5099 **Fax:** 020 7424 9996 **Email:** info@discnwl.org.uk

SELF DIRECTED SUPPORT SERVICE

The Peckwater Centre, 6 Peckwater Street, London NW5 2TX

Tel: 020 3317 5070 **Fax:** 020 7424 9996 **Email:** sds@discnwl.org.uk

DISCOVERY DISTRIBUTION

Based at 58 Phoenix Road, London NW1 1ES

Tel: 020 7387 0700 **Email:** discovery@discnwl.org.uk

ISLINGTON DEAF (BSL) USERS SUPPORT SERVICE

Based at 23-26 St Albans Place (off Upper Street) N1 ONX

Minicom: 020 7527 3282 **Fax:** 020 7527 3279 **Tel:** 020 7527 3345

SMS: 07919 047146

