



CENTRE FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING (CIL)

PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION 2011

The Centre for Independent Living (CIL) is a nationwide grassroots organisation that strives to empower and enable people with disabilities to achieve Independent Living as a human right.

CIL continually advocates for the rights of people with disabilities with many CILs delivering high quality Personal Assistance Services (PAS). These PAS are built on the cornerstones of Independent Living: Options, Rights, Independence and Empowerment. They are people centred and tailored to match the individual's needs in a cost-effective manner. Service providers have emerged with a competitive mentality based entirely on financial gain however CIL has remained true to its origins delivering productive individual personalised services developed by Leaders for Leaders.

The CIL Network understands that the Government must take firm corrective action to stabilise the Irish economy. However doing so at the expense of the most vulnerable people in our society cannot be tolerated. Much media hype has surrounded the notion of Ireland's return to a 'recessionary state' however many people with disabilities have always lived in recessionary conditions. The Government had accepted this fact and we ask that given growing monetary pressures they do not now relinquish their disability priorities. CIL calls on the Government to protect the people in our society most susceptible to further income and service cuts. Specifically:

1. Protect the Income of People with Disabilities

It is vital that the Government protect the income streams of those people with disabilities already struggling in our society. Budget 2010's 4.1% cut to disability income support, when combined with the 2% cut through the abolishment of the Christmas bonus, has had serious consequences for people with disabilities.

Research commissioned by the NDA as far back as 2006 has shown that living with a disability in Ireland costs more than living without a disability. Services such as transport, accessible housing, heating and other utilities and amenities that meet the needs of the person with a disability may be marginally different than standard and therefore cost more. Current disability legislation and National policy actively promotes and describes the mainstreaming of service for people with disabilities. In acknowledgment of these facts it is time to remove this financial barrier to the integration of people with a disability in society by introducing a 'cost of disability' payment as a right.

In addition to the cuts to disability specific allowances people with disabilities have been affected by the range of mainstream cuts implemented in the Supplementary Budget 2009 and Budget 2010. Cuts to child benefit, the prescription levy, dental budgets and cuts to the mainstream health budget have all had detrimental impacts on the lives of people with disabilities.

We call on the Government to ensure that no further cuts are made to the incomes of people with disabilities and that the cost of disability in Ireland is examined and progressed without delay.

CIL Carmichael House
North Brunswick Street,
Dublin 7
Michael McCabe

Carlow CIL

Room 8,
St. Fiach's Leisure Centre,
Craigucullen,
Carlow
Patricia Rafferty

Blanchardstown CIL

Base Enterprise Centre,
Unit 7, Block B,
Damastown Road,
Dublin 15.
Michael McCabe

Gorey CIL

33 Esmonde Gardens,
Gorey,
Wexford
Kenneth Kilduff

Wexford CIL

Wexford Disability
Development,
Westlands Community Centre,
St. John's Drive,
Wexford
Declan Denny

Kilkenny CIL

5A Upper New Street,
Kilkenny
Marie Fogarty

Waterford CIL

Unit 2, Aylesbury Manor,
Johnstown,
Waterford.
John McDonald

Cork CIL

20 Commons Road,
Blackpool,
Cork
Nicola Meacle

South Tipperary CIL

Unit 3C, Shannon Development,
Stradavoher, Thurles,
Co. Tipperary
Kathleen Blake

North Tipperary CIL

Old Church,
Mill Street,
Borrisokane,
Co. Tipperary
Patricia Carroll

West Limerick

Independent Living
NCW Enterprise Centre,
Sheehan's Road,
Newcastlewest,
Limerick
Gerard O'Connor

North East CIL

Clare,
Crosserlough,
Cavan
Damien O'Reilly



2. Protect Access to Disability Specific Services

The Government has repeatedly spoken of their commitment to people with disabilities through the National Disability Strategy. However these priorities have been sidelined through a series of cuts to the incomes of organisations that provide services to people with physical and sensory disabilities. Many of these cuts were made without consultation and organisations are now struggling to minimise overheads to facilitate the continuation of service provision.

At present it costs in excess of €1,000 to keep a person in rehabilitative care for one day. The cost to the State of providing a Personal Assistance Service (PAS) to that person for one year averages €47,000. However due to continuing cuts waiting lists are now spiralling.

In a recent survey carried out by CIL on the impact of the Budget cuts on the CIL Network it was found that over 86% of CILs had experienced funding cuts within the last two years. However this reduction in funding was not met with a reduction in the number of Leaders requesting services with over 77% of respondents reporting an increase in waiting lists.

In addition any attempt by the Government to deter people from remaining on Community Employment (CE) schemes instead of returning to mainstream employment will further negatively impact on CILs and the people with disabilities it represents. Over 83% of CILs who employ CE personnel do so to provide direct PAS.

CIL call on Government to implement a policy context which would enable people with disabilities to access a direct payment for the purposes of employing personal assistance. A Personal Assistance Act which would set out how such assistance is to be organised, including by means of direct payment, would ensure that those people with disabilities who are most vulnerable could participate in direct payments. Given the pressing need to implement cost saving measures CIL believes that direct payments must now be considered as they are a proven and cost effective means of delivering personal assistance.

Any attempt by the Government to implement further cuts to voluntary organisations will not only impact on the direct services they provide but also on the ability of people with disabilities to access mainstream services. Advocacy, peer support and transport services are all essential to link people with disabilities to the mainstream. The Governments assertion that no disability frontline services are being cut is negated by continued cuts to non-frontline services, which are having a serious impact on the provision of services to the end user.

We call on the Government to ensure the commitment to people with disabilities, as demonstrated by the NDS, is honoured and that no further cuts to either direct or indirect disability services are made.

In conclusion CIL requests that the Government consider these issues. CIL appreciates the difficult decisions that the Government must now face however it is vital that cost savings are not be made at the expense of the often forgotten people of our society.

Disabled People of Clare,
Unit 11,
Cleanroad Business Park,
Ennis,
Co. Clare

Thomas King

Galway CIL

Unit 10,
Town Park Centre,
Tuam Road,
Galway

Sean Healy

Roscommon CIL

Resource Centre,
Derrane,
Co. Roscommon

Mary Ganley

Mayo CIL

The Parish Centre,
Chapel Street,
Castlebar,
Co. Mayo

Deirdre Fahy

Sligo CIL

Units 1 & 2,
Business Centre,
Market Yard,
Sligo

*Melanie Plesker Sheerin,
Tamara Gormley*

Leitrim Association of People with Disabilities

Action Ability Centre,
Station Road,
Mohill,
Co. Leitrim

Isolde Carmody

Donegal CIL

Unit 7,
McCaul House,
Pearse Road,
Letterkenny,
Co. Donegal

Rosaleen Bradley

CIL Monaghan

Catholic Hall,
Carrickmacross,
Co. Monaghan

Fiona Hoey

Longford CIL

CMC House,
1 Ballinalee Road,
Longford

Valarie Moran

Westmeath CIL

15 Bonn Darie,
Boreen Bradach,
Kinnegad,
Co. Westmeath

Mary Mooney

Offaly CIL

Clonminch Road,
Tullamore,
Co. Offaly

Michael Nestor