

The Laois/Offaly Leader



A monthly newsletter published by Offaly Centre for Independent
Living Ltd/

Offaly Personal Assistant Services Ltd

This newsletter is available online and in large font

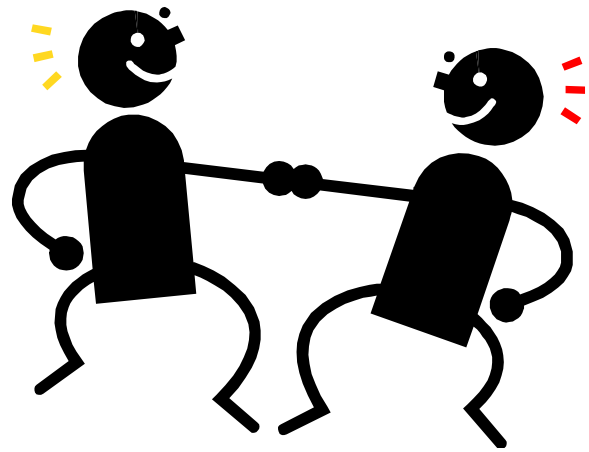
June/July 2013

A Day in the Life of ... Catherine Molloy

Catherine Molloy has been a Leader with OCIL Ltd since 2012. She has been experiencing symptoms of MS since 2006, and was provisionally diagnosed in 2007, but it wasn't until visiting a number of consultants in three different hospitals that Catherine was officially diagnosed in 2010.

Despite being a young twenty-something year old woman, Catherine found herself dependent on receiving help from her family until her father's partner told her about the Offaly Centre for Independent Living Ltd in late 2011. By early 2012, Catherine had interviewed and taken on a Personal Assistant, who didn't work out. 'It was unfortunate, but a number of situations arose where we simply could not agree to disagree' explains Catherine.

Catherine then took on another Personal Assistant (Karen) and it was only then that she began to fully appreciate the benefits of the service. Karen helps Catherine with little things that makes life easier, such as loading up the car, running errands, visiting friends and studying. She also assists Catherine in the kitchen when she is baking! The two girls work very well together and Catherine insists that there is a lot of trust between them. 'Karen is very caring and considerate, and I can talk to her about anything that is troubling me. I think this is as important as the physical assistance that Karen provides.'



As well as pursuing her ECDL FETAC Level 4 with the National Learning Network, Catherine is also an active member of the Offaly Leader Forum. Karen also assists her during these meetings. Catherine particularly enjoys meeting with other people and sharing experiences. 'The group, with all our different personalities, works very well together', she muses. 'The Offaly Leader Forum has great potential to raise awareness of disability in our

community, to liaise with other support groups and to provide more social opportunities for Leaders across Laois and Offaly.'

What does the future hold for this bright young woman? Catherine isn't exactly sure, but she would love to move out of home and find her own place, which is proving challenging in Tullamore. She would also love to do a parachute jump for charity in the summer of 2014. 'We'll have to wait and see!' she laughs.

Coming to terms with such a life changing disability has undoubtedly been a rollercoaster journey for Catherine. 'It's not an easy diagnosis to accept, but don't forget to be kind to yourself. The MS Society is a great source of support, and in time, you will learn to live with it. Stay positive and don't give up!'

A note from the editor:

Welcome to the June/July edition of the Laois/Offaly Leader! I hope that you enjoy it and that you find some of the information useful.

As you can see, things have been very busy for us during the last two months. As you will read, the Offaly Leader Forum is very busy indeed and the members are hoping to hold a fashion show in October/November to try and raise awareness of OCIL/OPAS Ltd and the work we do.



In this special summer edition of the 'Laois/Offaly Leader', we hear from Catherine Molloy, Leader and Offaly Leader Forum member., as well as the usual updates on what has been happening within the organisation.

As always, we are collecting articles and information for future editions of the newsletter, so please feel free to send in any articles, suggestions or snippets of info to sarah@ocil.ie.

Take care,

Sarah Fitzgerald

Researcher/PRO OCIL Ltd

'SafeTALK' Suicide Alertness

Programme:

'SafeTALK' is a four hour suicide alertness programme that prepares participants to identify persons with thoughts of suicide and connect them with suicide First Aid resources. These specific skills are called 'suicide alertness' and are taught with the expectation that the learners will use these skills to help save lives.



The workshop will be held on the 5th September 2013 in the OCIL Ltd/OPAS Ltd offices in Clonminch from 10am-2pm. Invitations to attend the 'SafeTALK' suicide alertness workshop will be posted shortly. Please phone Dee Martin or Sean Rickard on 05793 22832 before 22nd August 2013 to confirm attendance.

Update on Mobility Allowance:

"An historic development for disability rights in Ireland" is how Michael McCabe, Chairman of the Center for Independent Living (Dublin) described the proposed enshrining in legislation of a new scheme for the replacement of the mobility allowance.



"Obviously we await the detail of the new scheme and are cautious about commenting on its substance before we see it. However the key significance of (this) announcement is that, for the first time, we will have legislative protection for a rights based payment," Michael pointed out.

Participants Wanted for the
Department of Social Protection (DSP)
Scheme:

Do you know someone who would be eligible for the DSP scheme (previously known as the FAS Scheme)? If so, why not encourage them to look out for vacancies advertised by Offaly Personal Assistant Services Ltd? Positions are regularly advertised on the FAS website, www.fas.ie, and the Department of Social Protection website, www.welfare.ie.

Participants would be provided with full training, including a FETAC Level 5 course in Healthcare Support. For further information please contact Aoife Fox on 057 322832 or email aoife@ocil.ie.



Stay Connected with OCIL Ltd/OPAS Ltd!

For all the latest news on what's happening within the organisation, as well as job vacancies, check out our website, www.offalycil.ie. You can also become friends with us on Facebook—simply search for 'Offaly CIL OCIL' and we'll add you as a friend.



Update on Leader Forum Activities:

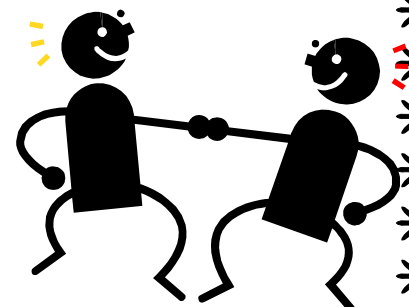


The Offaly Leader Forum continues to grow from strength to strength, and we would like to congratulate the hardworking Leader Forum committee on their dedication to the forum and their commitment in attending and contributing to the meetings.

Members of the Forum have expressed disappointment with the poor attendance at the last coffee morning and are anxious to hear feedback from other Leaders as to what would deter them from attending such events. Please feel free to email any feedback to sarah@ocil.ie or contact Sarah on 057 9322832.



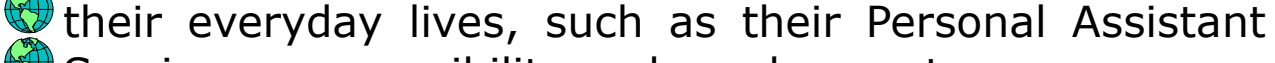

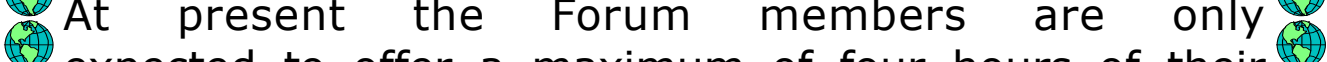
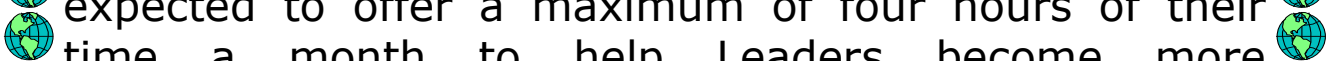


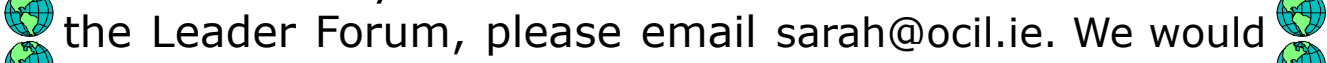






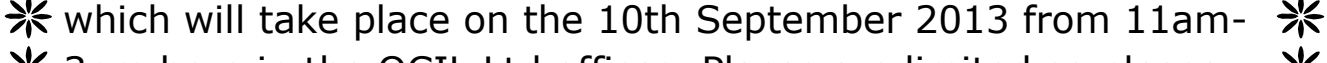
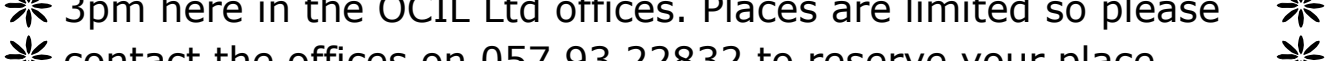
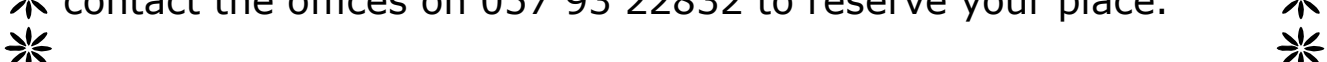



At present, the Forum is very busy coming up with ideas on what activities should take place in the coming months. Suggestions have included a Stress Management Course, Day Trips and a Fashion Show. Watch this space for more information! Any info will also be available on our Facebook page and on our website, www.offalycil.ie.

The primary purpose of the Offaly Leader Forum is to ensure that Leaders have a say in the day-to-day running of their service and to give Leaders an opportunity to address any issues such as access and employment that exist in the wider community. The Forum also provides a platform for Leaders to meet up with each other and share opinions and experiences that may be of benefit to all Leaders of OCIL Ltd/OPAS Ltd.



* The Forum is supported by Mick Nestor (Manager OCIL *
* Ltd/OPAS Ltd/Clochan House), Sean Rickard (Leader Co- *
* ordinator) and Sarah Fitzgerald (Researcher/PRO), and *
* its members are Emmet Grogan, Catherine Molloy, Tom *
* Milne, Sharon Tracey, Sinead Flanagan, Paul Hickey *
* (Leaders), and Noeleen O'Rourke, Karen Daly, *
* Bernadette Clavin and Catherine Moran (Personal *
* Assistants). *


Interested in Becoming A Member of
the Offaly Leader Forum?

The Offaly Leader Forum is a group of Leaders who get together once a month to discuss issues which affect their everyday lives, such as their Personal Assistant Service, accessibility and employment.

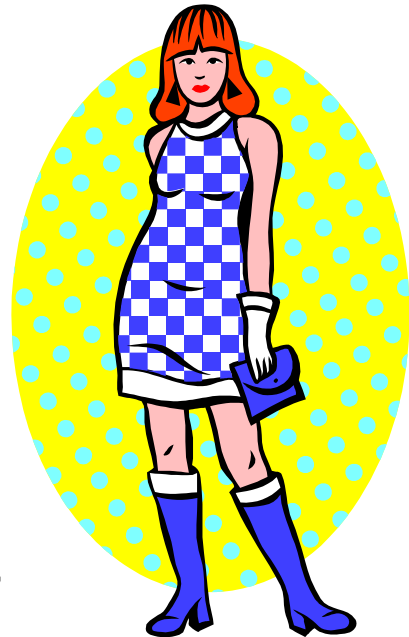
At present the Forum members are only expected to offer a maximum of four hours of their time a month to help Leaders become more involved in the Laois/Offaly Independent Living Movement. If you would like to become a member of the Leader Forum, please email sarah@ocil.ie. We would love to hear from you.

Relaxation Workshop:

* The Offaly Leader Forum has organised a Relaxation workshop *
* which will take place on the 10th September 2013 from 11am- *
* 3pm here in the OCIL Ltd offices. Places are limited so please *
* contact the offices on 057 93 22832 to reserve your place. *

Are You Interested in Strutting Your Stuff?

The Offaly Leader Forum Committee are currently organising a fashion show which they hope will be held on the 14th November in the Tullamore Court Hotel. If you are interested in modelling please let us know. We are looking for both Leaders and Personal Assistants to participate. It should be great fun and hopefully a successful event, so don't be shy and get in contact with Sarah on 057 93 22832 or sarah@ocil.ie for more information.



Offaly Centre for Independent Living (OCIL) Ltd/Offaly Personal Assistant Services (OPAS) Ltd

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Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com & search for Offaly CIL OCIL Ltd

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