

The Laois/Offaly Leader



*A bimonthly newsletter published by Offaly
Centre for Independent Living Ltd/Offaly Personal
Assistant Services Ltd*

This newsletter is available online and in large font

March/April 2015

Offaly CIL Ltd Personal Assistants to do Mini Marathon in aid of DEBRA Ireland:

Staff and PAs from OCIL Ltd will be walking the VHI Women's Mini Marathon on 1 June next. They have chosen to support DEBRA Ireland this year. DEBRA Ireland provides services and support to people who suffer from the painful and debilitating skin condition, EB. EB is often referred to as the 'butterfly syndrome' as the skin is so delicate it can tear with the slightest touch. For more information about EB, please visit www.debraireland.ie.



Emma Fogarty, who is a Leader with OCIL Ltd, has EB and is currently an ambassador for DEBRA Ireland.

If you would like to make a donation, you can contact
Noirin Chalouche on 057 93 22832. Alternatively,
you can donate online by following this link: As
always, thank you for your help and support.



Update on the Offaly Leader Forum:

The Offaly Leader Forum are busy indeed. Members of the forum took part in two workshops in March entitled 'Time for Me'. These workshops were delivered by Mary who, by all accounts, was an accommodating facilitator who put everyone at ease.



At present, the Offaly Leader Forum group are working on two separate projects. The group will present the findings of a comprehensive Access Audit to local politicians, engineers and policy makers in Tullamore Library on 27 May 2015, from 6-8pm. All Leaders and PAs are invited to come to discuss any access issues that they may have encountered.

Each member of the group will discuss the findings of the audit that they personally conducted. It is hoped that the event will highlight the need to review the accessibility in Tullamore on a regular basis to ensure that the town is accessible for all.



The second event in the pipeline for the group is a celebration of Independent Living, which is due to take place in September. OCIL Ltd is twenty years in existence this year and has achieved many great things as an

organisation. This event will recount the history and achievements of the organisation, as well as acknowledging the achievements of the Leaders themselves. Further details of this event will be available in due course.

If you would like to help out with either project, or if you are interested in becoming involved with the Offaly Leader Forum, please contact Sarah Fitzgerald on 057 93 22832 or email offalyleaderforum@hotmail.com.

Holiday Accommodation for all people with disabilities in MDI

Muscular Dystrophy Ireland (MDI) is a voluntary organisation that aims to provide information and support to people in Ireland with muscular dystrophy and allied neuromuscular conditions, and their families through a range of support services.

The MDI 'Home from Home' Apartment is located in a new purpose built, fully accessible building in Dublin. It is a self contained fully wheelchair accessible apartment which is available for short term stays for people with a physical disability and their friends and family. The apartment consists of 4 bedrooms, a kitchen and a lounge area and can accommodate groups of one to six people. Guests are asked to make a voluntary contribution of €25 per room, per night to stay in the apartment.



MDI do have a limited number of available rooms throughout the year but we are more than happy to accommodate anyone with a disability and their friend and family. The Home From Home has been used by people going to concerts, international visitors, accommodation during or awaiting a hospital appointments and people who wish get experience of Independent Living.

MDI provide information about how to use equipment within the apartment and other necessary information to help you to make the most of your stay. MDI also provide you with information about services available in the local community, places to visit while you are in Dublin and details about local public transport and other ways to get around Dublin.

As part of our service we can also offer a fully adapted self drive Volkswagen Transporter van which can be booked at a rate of €25.00 per day (subject to availability)

To book the "Home from Home" Apartment please contact Muscular Dystrophy Ireland on +353 (0)1 6236414 (from 9am-5pm) or email info owen.collumb@mdi.ie . Further

details about the apartment and Muscular Dystrophy Ireland can be found on www.mdi.ie.

Award given to Aoife McNicholl

The staff of OCIL Ltd and OPAS Ltd would like to extend warm congratulations to Aoife McNicholl, who was awarded the Laois Young Person of the Year Award. Aoife McNicholl plays a sport called Powersoccer, which is a type of soccer that can be played by power/electric chair users, meaning that those with severe physical disabilities can play. Powersoccer was first introduced to Ireland in 2003 by Muscular Dystrophy Ireland and since then, powersoccer teams have emerged across the country, As well as representing Ireland, Aoife also plays for a regional team, 'Midlands United'.



Powersoccer is a competitive sport and is played by attaching metal guards to the front of a standard powerchair, which is then used to 'kick' the ball from player to player. The ball is slightly bigger than an average football (insert length here). Players are not allowed to tackle each other.



Aoife McNicholl is a strong player. This past year, she played for Ireland at the EPFA Nations Cup in Limerick, where she was named Ireland's Player of the Match in the game against Belgium in a game that saw Ireland finish fourth overall. She also scored the first goal for Ireland in the competition's opener against Switzerland.

Well done Aoife!

For more information about Powersoccer, please visit www.aipf.ie.

What would YOU Like to see in Clochan House?

Hi to all of our loyal 'Laois/Offaly Leader' readers!

OCIL Ltd are excited to announce that Clochan House Respite Centre will reopen under new management later this year! To ensure that Leaders have an enjoyable and satisfying break in their 'home away from home', we would greatly appreciate your thoughts, ideas and opinions on the service.

Your participation and opinions as Leaders and users of the service will ensure that we 'we get it right' in how we put systems in place to ensure a safe and satisfying experience for the service users and the employed personal assistants who will work there!

What we want you to do is picture your ideal holiday and imagine what you would fancy if you had a magic wand for the week? What would you like to experience?

I'm afraid we can't alter the weather forecast (unfortunately). However, have you ideas on trips or days out that you would like to avail of? Are there any particular sports you would like to take part in during you stay (for example Boccia, swimming, *Bridge* or other card games). Just let us know!

Or perhaps you would like to participate in about education classes in areas such as cooking, wine tasting, art, guitar or keyboard lessons? You might also suggest health and beauty options like a visiting hairdresser or having your nails done during your stay?



If you have never used the respite unit service before but would like to consider availing of it or have you name placed on the admission list, please let us know!

Any ideas are welcome and we are open to each and every suggestion, no matter how small, as we aim to provide a service that meets your needs!

If you have questions or comments in relation to Clochan House, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Fitzgerald on sarah@ocil.ie or on 057 93 22832.

Job Opportunities:

OPAS Ltd are recruiting Personal Assistants for our Community Employment scheme in the following areas : Portarlinton , Geashill, Daingean, Stradbally, Kilcormac and Ferbane. If you



require any further information please contact Aoife Fox DSP CE Supervisor on 087 2505998.

We have also added a new vacancies section to our website for positions that may arise within OCIL Ltd. Visit www.offalycil.ie for further information.

**Offaly Centre for Independent Living (OCIL) Ltd/
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