



# Rehab NEWS

Summer 2003



## Sharing the Feeling



## Your Bumper Special Olympics 2003 issue



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**Minority inmates 'unfairly treated'**

A survey conducted by NTDI at Wexford Prison has found that as many as 80% of prisoners here now believe that minority groups receive unfair treatment. The survey was conducted by the Irish Prison Service. The research was conducted by NTDI in conjunction with the Prison Service. The survey was conducted by NTDI in conjunction with the Prison Service. The survey was conducted by NTDI in conjunction with the Prison Service.

**Further honours for the Mill.**

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20-page Rehab supplement including timetable and interviews with athletes

Special Olympics

**'Let the Games Begin'**



20-page Rehab supplement including timetable and interviews with athletes

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UK News

**'I'm getting my life back'**

People with mental health difficulties and disabilities often face problems when they wish to break out of their routines and move forward in their lives. A new service, launched by Momentum in Glasgow is working to change this pattern.

**UK News**

**'I feel like I'm getting my life back again. I'm achieving new things and trying new things after not having done anything new for years. I can feel myself opening up.'**

When Niall McEneaney, 56, was diagnosed with mental health difficulties in 2014, he was feeling at a loss. He was struggling to get on with his life. He was struggling to get on with his life. He was struggling to get on with his life.

**UK News**

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**Bulletin Board**

**The Eagle has landed**

The Eagle has landed! The Rehab News has some exciting news to share. The Eagle, NTDI Tallaght's very own newsletter, was launched last February and has already proven very popular with staff and trainees at the centre. The full colour newsletter includes interesting articles on everything from current affairs and local NTDI Tallaght news, to music, film and sporting events. The magazine is edited and scripted by Kenneth Jackson, a business coach and business administration programme, and includes contributions from NTDI Tallaght trainees. Well done to everyone involved!

**Volunteers for Respite**

Following the success of last summer's respite holiday at Monaghan, the Rehab Foundation are again looking for volunteers to help out at the centre's respite facility, which will take place in Caran town from the 20th of July to the 31st of August.

The Caran holiday will cater for 10 adults with a disability and promises to be a memorable and fun experience for holiday makers and volunteers alike. A packed programme of events and activities is already being planned.

**NTDI business Claire Long and James Coffey help to hang photographs for the Expressions 1 & 2 art exhibitions at the Town Hall, Galway.**

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**Further honour has been bestowed on the The Mill Gandon Logistics in Mountmellick, which has been voted one of the best companies to work for in Europe.**

The Mill Gandon Logistics has been named as one of the top 100 companies to work for anywhere in the European Union.

The Mountmellick-based firm, which employs 96 people, was honoured alongside multinational giants including McDonald's, American Express, Bacardi-Martini, Diageo and the Ferrari Maserati Group at a high profile awards ceremony in Brussels hosted by Anna Diamantopoulou, European Commissioner for Employment and Social Affairs in April.

The extraordinary accolade came just weeks after the Mill, which is one of the nine businesses that make up Gandon Enterprises, was named among Ireland's elite employers at an awards ceremony hosted by Tanaiste, Mary Harney.

In February the company, which provides contract assembly, labelling and packaging for the healthcare industry, emerged in fourth place in a nationwide competition to find the Best Companies to Work for in Ireland, sponsored by the Irish Independent in association with FAS.

This made the Mill eligible to enter an EU-wide version of the event supported by the European Commission, which appointed an expert jury to select Europe's 100 Best Workplaces.

Said Gandon Enterprises chief execu-



## Happy at the Mill!

tive, Ashley Balbirnie: "For a company of the Mill's size to receive this award alongside some of Europe's biggest and best resourced businesses is an incredible tribute to the professionalism and the dedication of the workers and management at the Mill.

"Their achievement also has a wider importance in demonstrating to other employers that people with disabilities can make a real contribution to firms that operate in the most competitive markets.

Hopefully it will encourage companies that don't yet have a track record of employing people with disabilities to acquaint themselves with the benefits of doing so."

The Mill received its award at the end of a detailed assessment of the quality of its workplace environment, as determined by a survey process analysing both corporate policies and the views of employees on their own organisations. The competition particularly emphasised the areas



**Left: Manager Deirdre Rogers and fellow staff members from The Mill Gandon Logistics receive their Best Companies To Work For In Ireland award from Fergal Quinn.**

**Below: workers from the Mill who provide contract assembly, labelling and packaging for the healthcare industry.**

counts. Each person's abilities are measured against the job requirements and expected tasks."

There are eight other businesses in the Gandon Enterprises group, which has become Ireland's biggest single employer of people with disabilities. They are engaged in activities ranging from recycling to logistics management in plants

of diversity, gender equality and provision for lifelong learning.

The company was among 1,000 finalists, which had emerged from national 'best workplace' competitions and included private and public companies, Government agencies and NGOs. A total of approximately 210,000 employees in all 15 member states participated in the survey process. Of these, 124,196 employees completed questionnaires.

The road to national and European recognition for the Mill began in 2001 when the company embarked on the process of gaining the FAS Excellence Through People accreditation – a feat they achieved last autumn with a 90 per cent rating – one of the highest achieved by any Irish company in 2002.

Says The Mill's general manager, Deirdre Rogers: "I think what makes the



Mill such a great place to work is the mutual respect and camaraderie which exists here. Every worker is treated as an individual, a lot of importance is placed on keeping people informed of important issues and employees' opinions are highly valued. We also recognise that it's people's ability, not their disability that

located around the country.

Gandon is the world's first group of businesses which provide integrated employment opportunities for people with disabilities. This means that within its plant, people with disabilities and non-disabled employees work side by side in an equal working environment.

A survey conducted by NTDI has revealed a high proportion of prisoners witnessing unfair treatment of inmates from minority groups.



# Minority inmates

A survey conducted by NTDI at Dublin's Wheatfield Prison has found that as many as 80% of prisoners have seen inmates who belong to minority groups treated unfairly in jail. The survey also found that eight out of ten offenders were unwilling to report such incidents.

The findings of the survey were published in a report commissioned by the Irish Prison Service. The research was conducted by NTDI in conjunction with Fitzpatrick Associates.

NTDI delivered the action research and training project involving both prisoners and prison officers at Wheatfield, while Fitzpatrick Associates provided an independent evaluation of the project and recommendations for future action.

The research found that 40% of prisoners thought people from different cul-

tures got on badly in prison, and 10% of prison officers thought the same. Almost a third of prison staff (30%) said offenders from minority groups were treated unfairly in prison.

Among offenders who have seen unfair treatment:

- 74% had witnessed name-calling
- 53% had seen offenders being ignored
- 53% had witnessed unfair physical treatment
- 56% had noticed the person being treated differently

While 21% of prisoners said they would report such incidents, the vast majority said they wouldn't. Referring to prison staff, the report noted that only 69% said they would report such inci-

dents. The responses of offenders and staff were compiled following intercultural awareness training delivered by Orbis – Human Resources Development Limited, a joint venture between NTDI and the commercial and management consultancy firm, Optimum Limited.

The cultural awareness training consisted of one-day workshops for offenders and two-day workshops for members of staff.

The report recorded considerable improvements among both prisoners and staff in awareness following the programme.

“Feedback from this pilot programme has been very positive. As a first step, the research has proven worthwhile, particularly in highlighting the need for further staff training and development in the area of intercultural awareness and



The cultural awareness training consisted of one-day workshops for offenders and two-day workshops for members of staff.

# 'unfairly treated'

racial equality,” said Jane Forman, NTDI general manager, Dublin West, North and North East.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Mr Sean Aylward, director general of the Prison Service, acknowledged that minority groups in prison have always required special care and attention to protect them from harassment and discrimination.

“Recent demographic developments in Ireland have created a new ethnic diversity, not just in the broader population but also in the prisons where several hundred people of non-Irish backgrounds are now committed every year,” he said.

According to Mr Aylward, the Irish Prison Service intends “to respond positively to the new reality that is ethnic diversity in Irish prison life. Our policy



will be to investigate all complaints, to train our staff in expected behaviours and to develop a supportive environment for vulnerable prisoners from diverse ethnic backgrounds.”

**Sean Aylward, director general of the Prison Service: minority groups have always required special care and attention.**

**A powerful coalition of disability organisations has called for the introduction of rights based disability legislation with effective means of enforcement.**

Representatives of eight of the country's biggest disability organisations have called on the Government to ensure that any new disability legislation contains legally enforceable rights.

In a report published at the end of an 11 month consultation process, the Disability Legislation Consultation Group (DLCG) also urged the appointment of a Minister for Disabilities with cross-departmental responsibilities.

The Group insisted that the 2001 Disability Bill faltered because of underlying inadequacies in the area of enforceable rights, advocacy and implementation, particularly in relation to the five to 13 year timescale for the delivery of some of the Bill's provisions. The Group said it is vital that any new legislation does not repeat these difficulties.

It also maintained that comprehensive disability legislation is now essential to remove the barriers to participation that face people with disabilities.



## Give new laws teeth!

Specifically, the Group said that effective legislation must combine the following:

- Positive rights to accessible services, needs assessment and advocacy that can be enforceable by individuals
- Duties and requirements placed on public and private bodies that are providing services to the public

aimed at removing barriers to full participation by people with disabilities

Members of the DLCG include representatives from: the Disability Federation of Ireland; the Forum of People with Disabilities; Mental Health Ireland; the National Association of Mental Handicap Ireland; the National Parents and Siblings Alliance; the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies;



NDA chairperson  
Angela Kerins  
pictured with Frank  
Flannery and other  
members of the  
DLCG.

the Not for Profit Business Association (NfPBA); and People with Disabilities Ireland.

Commenting on its deliberations, Rehab Group chief executive Frank Flannery, who is also chairman of the NfPBA, said: "This is an important document and in some ways an historic one. It is the first time that such a broad representative grouping of the Irish disability sector has come together to establish a common position on an issue of national importance for people with disabilities."

DLCG chairperson, Angela Kerins, who brought the Group together at the request of the Government, said it was proposing legislation that will embody specific values and rights which are necessary to enable people with disabilities to participate as equal citizens in society.

This would be achieved through:

- Independent and comprehensive needs assessment leading to a statement of need and co-ordination of resources where required. The assessment should cover all areas of need including accommodation, advocacy, education, income, independent living, employment, health, leisure, training and social activities.
- A Disability Support Service to be responsible for needs assessment and co-ordination of services.
- An independent advocacy agency to provide advocacy, training and support and monitoring of advocacy services.
- A statutory basis for mainstreaming and disability proofing to

ensure that public bodies promote equal participation.

- A commitment to accessible public services.
- Disability equality awareness training for staff in all public and private bodies providing services to the public.
- More robust mechanisms to strengthen the enforcement of the 3 per cent quota in the recruitment of people with disabilities into the civil and public services.

"Rights based legislation requires effective means of enforcement," said Ms Kerins. "We want to see the Government bridge the gaps that presently exist for people with disabilities."

She added that in addition to a Minister for Disabilities, new legislation should provide effective and accessible complaints systems covering all service provision. People should have access to redress through the courts and a failure to comply with the provisions of the legislation should be construed as discrimination under the Equal Status Act.