

TAKING CARE

UPDATE



Trainers' Course Graduation and Celebration

28 Volunteers celebrated the successful completion of the Taking Care Accredited Trainers' Course. See all the photos and info inside...



Other Stories Inside...

**Introducing the
new Council
for Social Witness**

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**Access NI make
substantial changes**



Foundation Training events:

This training for NEW leaders or those who have not attended Taking Care training before, has been organised for slightly later in the year than usual. This is because of the changes in Access NI and to allow for the Information Seminars.

Monaghan - 1st Monaghan

7 May @ 7.30pm

Derry - Glendermott

28 April @ 7.30pm

Coleraine - New Row

27 April @ 7.30pm

Down - Downpatrick

28 April @ 7.30pm

Iveagh - Bannside

23 April @ 7.30pm

Enniskillen - 1st Enniskillen

27 April @ 7.30pm

Cookstown - 1st Magherafelt

27 April @ 7.45pm

Antrim - High Street Antrim

18 May @ 7:30pm (t.b.c)

Lisburn - Hillhall

t.b.c

For t.b.c please see website or check with the office

There is no need to register in advance for these training sessions.

Editors' Welcome

(27th Edition)

Welcome to the Taking Care Update, the first from the new Council for Social Witness.

The New Year has brought new structures for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland which means changes in the way that the church makes decisions and gets work done. The new structure also means changes for the offices and staff within Assembly Buildings. You can read below what the implications of the new structures has been for Taking Care. This year has brought other changes for us in terms of Access NI and staffing.

This spring brings a significant change for the way that forms are processed for new leaders in Northern Ireland as Access NI are moving to a new online system as of 1st April 2015. This means that leaders will have to complete their police check form online. Please read about how this will work and see if you can attend any of the Information Seminars which have been organised. Garda Vetting forms have not yet moved to an online system.



At the office we welcome Cathy Mullin who is covering for Amanda's maternity leave. You can email Cathy to arrange training or with any enquiry regarding an Access NI or Garda Vetting form on takingcare@presbyterianireland.org.

We wish Amanda and Mark every blessing as they prepare for the arrival of their first baby.

It has been of personal assurance to me that while all things may change around us, our great certainty and hope is that our God will never change, for "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Take Care,
Deborah (Taking Care Programme Co-ordinator)

Council for Social Witness

Now that the New Year has begun we are working within the new structures as agreed by the General Assembly.

Structure changes for Taking Care have meant that the Advisory Group has been replaced by a Taking Care General Assembly Committee and so we have welcomed a new convenor, Dr. Pamela Marshall and new committee members, some of whom were on the previous advisory group.

Another change under the new structures has been that the Training element of Taking Care is now under the Council for Congregational Life and Witness. What this means in reality is still to be worked out but the Taking Care Training will continue, under Deborah's co-ordination with the same trainers involved.





Points for Prayer

- **Give thanks for the Trainers' graduation event in December**, a time of celebration and affirmation for the trainers and everyone involved in the Taking Care Programme. Pray for the trainers as they deliver the next training courses.

- **Pray for the new Taking Care Committee**, for our new convenor, Dr Pamela Marshall as she leads and for all of the members that they will have wisdom and clarity in all the decisions that are made.

- **Pray for Amanda and Mark and the safe arrival of their first baby.** Pray also for Cathy as she covers the post in Amanda's absence.



Taking Care Accredited Trainers' Course Graduation and Celebration

On 9th December the Taking Care Graduation and Celebration was held at Union College, Belfast. 28 Volunteers celebrated the successful completion of the Taking Care Accredited Trainers' Course.

The trainers were praised for their hard work and commitment in completing the course by George Clarke, Head of Public protection for the PSNI. Rev. Stafford Carson, Principal of the Union College, presented the certificates and within the context of Matthew 18:1-5, stressed the importance of ministry to little ones and the training that their leaders are given.

During 2014, approximately 160 Taking Care training sessions were delivered by our volunteer trainers. By completing the Accredited Training the Trainers course, trainers have increased confidence in the knowledge that they have, the materials that they are using and our denomination can be assured that the training is of a high quality and of a professional standard.

George Clarke described the Taking Care programme as "a sound, logical, pragmatic and proportionate policy

response to keeping children safe". George Clarke's role as Head of Public Protection is to lead those officers who investigate child abuse, domestic violence and the abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people.

Without the trainers and their work our church would not be able to adequately fulfil the aim of Taking Care which is, 'to create a safe environment for children, young people, leaders and staff'.

If there has not been Taking Care Training for the leaders in your congregation within the last three years or if you are working with children or young people in your congregation and have not attended a Taking Care training session recently, then please contact Cathy at the Office and a training session can be arranged for you.

Access NI online

Access NI are making substantial changes as of 1st April 2015. All Designated Persons, Office Administrators or other Church representatives who send in forms to us need to be aware of these changes (N.I)

The main changes and how this will affect your congregation are explained below. Short information seminars with plenty of time for questions have also been organised at the following venues and dates. These will be held once the online system has gone 'live' and after the Easter holidays:

1st Omagh Presbyterian Church

Mon 13th Apr 7:30pm – 8:30pm

Wellington Presbyterian Church,

Ballymena Tues 14th Apr 7:30pm – 8:30pm

Assembly Buildings, Belfast

Wed 15th Apr 10:30am – 11:30am

Kilfennan Presbyterian Church,

Londonderry Tues 21st Apr 7:30pm – 8:30pm

Craigavon Presbyterian Church,

Wed 22nd Apr 7:30pm – 8:30pm

THERE IS NO NEED TO REGISTER FOR THESE EVENTS.

What are the main changes?

From the 1st of April 'Non-recordable' offences will no longer appear on certificates e.g. not paying a TV licence and some minor driving offences.

As a Registered Body, we will be able to track forms at the office using the online system so we will be better informed about the whereabouts of forms.

MOST SIGNIFICANTLY FOR CONGREGATIONS, APPLICANTS CAN COMPLETE THEIR ACCESS NI FORM ONLINE.

This will mean everyone who completes a form must have access to a computer and the likelihood of mistakes will be reduced significantly.

How will the online forms work?

There will be a new PCI Application form for leaders which will be available to print off from the PCI website. This will look similar to the current PCI cover sheet but will not include the Access NI form. It will include a PIN number and web address for the NI Direct website.

Once the form is complete (including Interview and Reference sections), applicants must visit the NI Direct website and complete an online Access NI form. On completion, they will be given a reference number which they must write on their PCI Application form.

Applicants will then take the PCI Application form along with their I.D to their DP or Minister who will check their I.D, sign the form and take a copy before posting it to the Taking Care Office. Only when the PCI Application Form is received by the Taking Care Office will the applicant's online form be sent electronically to Access NI.

Will the current form still be accepted?

The current form will **NOT** be accepted by the Taking Care Office after 24th April 2015.

When will the new forms be available?

The new PCI Application form and the online Access NI form will be available at the start of April 2015.

What if an applicant has no access to the Internet?

Designated Persons/Ministers may want to consider bringing a laptop to church premises to help facilitate the form filling, although remember you will need to be connected to the Internet.

Does this mean that an Access NI certificate can be transferred to another organisation?

No, this does not make certificates portable. Applicants still need to complete another form if they want to volunteer/work in another organisation.

Will both the applicant and the Presbyterian Church still receive a certificate?

A copy will still be sent to the Taking Care Office. This is expected to change in the Autumn of 2015.

Is there a cost implication?

There is no change to the cost of this process. Volunteers remain free of charge and the cost for paid posts is £33.