



MINISTER MARKS DAY OF DISABILITY WITH APASENTH

December 2010, Issue— 11

EXCITING

- Changes that affect your benefit
- Graduation Ceremony
- Lord Mayor Show



From

APASENTH

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People with disability of Tower Hamlets praised the wide range of support and work opportunities available from the community support group APASENTH when Minister for Disabled People Maria Miller (Works and Pensions Minister) visited the organisation on Wednesday 1st of December 2010. She visited the organisation ahead of International Day of Disability on Friday 3rd of December.



Maria Miller was received at APASENTH main office at Brady Centre, Hanbury Street in east London by its chairperson Amir Hussain, general secretary Toboris Ali, Treasurer Shorful Nessa and director Mahmud Hasan MBE. She had an informative meeting there with the members of the management committee. Amir Hussain apprised her about the history of the organisation that began its expedition twenty-six years ago. He also illustrated the actions and activities of APASENTH for the wellbeing of the learners and their parents, families and carers. Mahmud Hasan focused on some pressing issues including the importance of creating more employment opportunities for the people with learning disabilities. He informed the minister that APASENTH is prepared to devise an explicit plan and put it into action in cooperation with local governments in the interest of generating more employments provided the local governments are willing to devote a part of the resources they receive under Section 106 and Planning Gain. He pointed out to the minister that APASENTH has already agreed on principle to a proposal from its learners to set up a co-operative enterprise in near future that would create some employments for its learners.

Later the minister went to visit Opportunity Zone APASENTH and Home and Community Services based in Montefiore Centre. She talked with the learners attending different activities at the centre. Maria Miller met the organisation's part-time sports and project support assistant Juber Ahmed Chowdhury. He was employed by APASENTH after taking up training opportunities and developing his skills at its day centre.

The minister said: "It was great hearing from Juber about how APASENTH has helped him reach his potential. Organisation like APASENTH help people with disability build up their skills and confidence so they can gain more independence and get into work."



"For disabled people to truly achieve equality and independence they have to get the right help to find work and stay in those jobs. The Coalition Government is introducing the Work Programme to give personalised and flexible support and Work Choice will ensure people facing the biggest barriers get the intensive support they need to get into work."

APASENTH director Mahmud Hasan said: "I am pleased that the minister visited APASENTH which shows recognition of the services we provide to support to people with disability in our community. Juber is kind and respectful to others, hardworking and a valuable member of staff and it is important that we continue to help people with disability to fulfil their potential."





GRADUATION CEREMONY



APASENTH's Children & Family Zone project once again teamed up with LBTH Support for Learning Service (SLS) to co host 'Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities' Parents programme. The Facilitators Nasima Begum Ali; Special Needs Support Officer of APASENTH and Humayun Kabir; Manager of SFSC of the Behaviour Team jointly facilitated the 13 week programme with 14 parents from across the Borough.

The Graduation Ceremony to mark the achievements and journey of the parents was held at the PAC on Wednesday 15th December with Chief Guest Speaker Councillor Abdul Asad, who commended the course curriculum and its benefits not only to the parents but the wider community. Mahmud Hasan Director of APASENTH and Kerrigen Mariner Head of Behaviour Team stressed the importance of the two organisations working together to meet the needs of the community in these difficult times of budget cuts.

The Parents were presented with their certificates by the guest panel, Jamil; a participating parent reflected on his experience with the audience; *"At first, I was very reluctant to come; I even missed the first session. a facilitator then did a home visit to further support and encourage me to attend.*

I have gained so much from this programme and now am sad that it has ended. I have made great friends, who will be an everlasting support network for me. We have already planned our next gathering in the new year!"

The group has appointed two parent officers who will plan meetings every quarter with the facilitators as ongoing support and follow up work. APASENTH is passionate about continuing this valuable partnership the Support for Learning, Behaviour Team to further meet the needs of the community.

If you would like to take part/ refer parents for future programmes please contact Nasima via email: nasima@apasenth.org.uk or Tel: 020 7375 0554 ext 207

OPPORTUNITY ZONE

Lord Mayor Show

The Lord Mayor's Show is one of the longest established and best known annual events in London which dates back to 1535. The Lord Mayor in question is that of the City of London, the historic centre of London that is now the metropolis's financial district, informally known as the Square Mile. A new Lord Mayor is appointed every year and the public parade that is made of his inauguration reflects the fact that this was once one of the most prominent offices in England. APASENTH OZ learners and staff participated to the big event Loard Mayor Show on 13 November 2010 with Spitalfields City Farm. They march throughout three miles with the crowds of thousands of people in line on the streets of central London.



Eye Champion Training

It was a great opportunities for Learners, Opportunity Zone to take part in Eye Champion training on 19 October 2010 organised by Tower Hamlets Community Learning Disabilities Team. All participants learners has received certificate.

SLSL football

OZ learners participated on South London Special League (SLSL) tournament in November 2010 competition and wins trophy. Individual player performed excellent and Jubayar Ahmed Choudhury (coach APASENTH UNITED) given special thanks to his team.

PATs Training

PATS (Passenger Assistant Trainer) -

is designed for anyone who has care or supervision of passengers travelling by road - in cars, taxis, minicabs, minibuses or large buses



is relevant to volunteers as well as paid staff

covers legal, practical and safety issues

aims to improve passenger safety by providing the skills and information for passenger assistants to understand and meet the needs of their passengers

APASENTH secured 6 qualified Passenger Assistant Trainer and training for another 7 staff are in process.

Thoughts

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less, we buy more, but enjoy less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness.



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CHANGES THAT AFFECT YOUR BENEFIT

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE (DLA)

- The government will introduce the use of 'objective medical assessments' for all DLA claimants from 2013/2014

BENEFIT AND CHILDREN



- The health in pregnancy grant will be abolished from January 2011
- From April 2011 the government will restrict eligibility to the sure start maternity grant for the first child (or children where the first is a multiple birth)
- child benefit will be frozen for three years from April 2011
- From October 2011, lone parents whose youngest child are aged 5 or above will be eligible for jobseeker's allowance rather than income support, and existing claimants will be transferred from income support to jobseeker's allowance from April 2012

Benefits for older people

- State pension will be uprated by a 'triple guarantee' of earnings, prices or 2.5 percent, whichever is the highest, from April 2011 but the basic state pensions will increase by at least the equivalent of the retail price index
- The standard minimum income guarantee of pension credit will increase in April 2011 by the cash rise in a full basic state pension and
- The government will review the age at which the state pension age will rise to 66, and will consult shortly on how it will quickly phase out the Default Retirement Age from April 2011

Housing costs and housing benefit

- From October 2010, the standard interest rate used to calculate support for mortgage interest payments will be set at a level equal to the Bank of England's published monthly Average Mortgage Rate
- Deductions for non-dependents will be uprated in April 2011 on the basis of prices, reversing the freeze in these rates since 2001/2002
- From April 2011, housing benefit claimants with a disability and a non-resident carer will be entitled to funding for an extra bedroom
- From April 2011, local housing allowance rates will be capped at £250 per week for a one bedroom property, £290 per week for a two bedroom property, £340 per week for a three bedroom property and £400 per

week for four bedrooms or more

The government contribution to discretionary housing payments will be increased by £10 million in 2011/2012 and £40 million in each year from 2012/2013

From October 2011, local housing allowance rates will be set at the 30th percentile of local rents

From April 2013, housing entitlements for working age people in the social sector will reflect family size

From April 2013, housing benefit awards will be reduced to 90 per cent of the initial award after 12 months for claimants receiving jobseeker's allowance

From 2013/2014, local housing allowance rates will be uprated in line with the CPI

TAX CREDIT

From April 2011, the second income threshold for the family element of child tax credit will reduce from £50,000 to £40,000 and, from April 2012, the family element of child tax credit will be withdrawn immediately after the child element

From April 2011, the first and second withdrawal rates for tax credits will increase to 41 per cent

From April 2011, the baby element will be removed from child tax credit and, from April 2012, the 50 plus element will be removed from working tax credit

In April 2011, the child element of child tax credit will increase by £150 above CPI indexation and, in April 2012, it will increase by £60 above indexation

From April 2011, the level of in-year rises of income that will be disregarded from calculations of tax credit entitlement will decrease from £25,000 to £10,000 and, from April 2013, will be reduced further to £5,000

From April 2011, people aged over 60 will qualify for working tax credit if they work at least 16 hours a week, rather than 30 as now

The government will not introduce the £4 supplement in child tax credit for each child aged one and two from April 2012, which was announced in the March 2010 Budget and

From April 2012, the period for which a tax credit claim and certain changes of circumstances can be backdated will be reduced from three months to one month



PARENTS WEEK — 2010

APASENTH has celebrated "Parents Week-2010" on 19th of October with the slogan of "knowing Families: How well do you know yours?". Over 100 parents/Carers attended the event and shared their views on/about the services they receive from APASENTH and the council. Guest speaker from LBTH and Parents Advice Centre delivered useful information about parenting and rights for parents/carers. The whole day event was successfully ended with cultural programme presented by APASENTH's Opportunity Zone Service Users.





TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES CORNER

Training and employment Opportunities project is continuing its work with learners to develop their employment and self employment skills. The projects CAFÉ TEO, Catering, Real, Horticulture are carrying on with learners full participation. Learners are learning various skills and enjoying what they do and learn. Specifically learners are running Café with great pleasure and they enjoy selling items as they can see the tangible benefits of working. Because they handle real money. Catering projects supplies 20 people's lunch every Wednesday. Although learners are not invoicing it yet but this is helping opportunity Zone service users to enjoy their own cooked fresh food.

Our Art stock is increasing and we managed to add few more art work recently. Some of them are used in display during honorable minister's visit. Maria Miller, minister for disabled people receives a finest art from employment and training project.

Training and Opportunities corner would like to thank every one who are buying their lunch and refreshment on Fridays' from our Café TEO to encourage our learners. Also would like to invite others who did not visit us yet to join in to encourage our learners what ever way you can e.g. by advising, visiting them, suggesting or ever buying your lunch from them every Friday.



Croydon Joins In The East End Eid Festival

Learners of APASENTH Croydon Opportunity Zone (COZ) had enjoyed a different kind of Eid celebration this time along with their friends who attends the organisation's central Day Centre provision based at east London. On occasion of celebrating Eid-ul-Fitr an Eid party was organised for the learners of our all day centres on Wednesday 22nd of September (2010) at an east London restaurant. There was an air of joy and happiness everywhere and everyone present was in a good mood. And certainly there were stacks of delicious food! Learners from Croydon seemed happy to taste the culinary of the fa-

mous east end! But the last word of the party was not food, it was something different and something special. APASENTH general secretary Toboris Ali and the treasurer Shorful Nessa took to the centre stage towards the end of the event and pleasingly surprised all the learners by presenting gift packs to each of them. A good food and a gift pack – a seamless celebration of an Eid festival indeed!

COZ Training Gain

Staffs of APASENTH Croydon Opportunity Zone (COZ) have attended a number of training courses successfully in recent months. Rofi Ahmed Chowdhury, Nurul Gaffar and Monowara Aktar have so far attended courses on First Aid, Epilepsy

and Passenger Assistance Training Course (PATS).

A Pleasing Eat-Out!

Learners of APASENTH Croydon Opportunity Zone (COZ) went for an eat-out at a local pizza hut on Thursday 11th of November. Sisters Saiqa Ali and Saima Ali made the move first. They declared that they love pizza so much and would like to have an eat-out at a pizza hut before going on holiday the next week with their parents. All agreed to please them and went for it. And everyone loved the delicious food along with Saiqa and Saima! There might be another eating out as soon as they come back (and wish to)!

APASENTH

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Turning challenges into opportunities



APASENTH is one of the leading BAME organisations, working for people with learning & multiple disabilities, their carers and parents, in Tower Hamlets and Greater London since 1984.

www.apasenth.org.uk