

PBR and 'efficiency savings' may increase disability poverty

'Tackling Disability Poverty' manifesto launched to coincide with Pre-Budget Report

On 9th December 2009 Disability Alliance, with 15 national partners, is launching 'Tackling Disability Poverty' – a manifesto of recommended routes out of poverty for disabled people and their families.

Timed to coincide with the PBR and to highlight the need for consistent action, rather than reductions in support to disabled and older people, the manifesto highlights that:

- **Disabled people are twice as likely to live in poverty as other citizens¹**
- **Roughly a third of all disabled people live in poverty – especially disabled people not accessing disability benefits:**
 - **29% of disabled children live in poverty²**
 - **A third of working-age disabled adults live in poverty³**
 - **29% of disabled pensioners live in poverty in households not accessing disability benefits⁴**

We and our partners believe this is avoidable and unacceptable. We hope our Manifesto will influence the main UK political parties as we approach 2010; the year of the next general election and the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.

Vanessa Stanislas, Disability Alliance Chief Executive, says:

'Our evidence reveals the persistent poverty which blights disabled people's lives from childhood to older age. We need the main UK political parties to commit to ensuring 'efficiency savings' and other spending plans do not mean cuts to support for disabled people and their families.'

'Tackling Disability Poverty' calls for disability poverty to be measured – and for a cross-government campaign to raise awareness of disability benefits. Stephen Burke, Counsel and Care Chief Executive, says:

'We believe it is vital to support disabled people, especially older disabled people, to access entitlements. Over £5 billion is currently not claimed by older people which could tackle poverty⁵.'

The manifesto also highlights routes out of poverty which, if followed, could be worth over £40 billion in savings to the Government.

Organisations supporting the manifesto include: Disability Alliance, Leonard Cheshire Disability, RNIB, Carers UK, Counsel and Care, DebRA, Action for ME, Prospect, CPAG,

Radar, Mencap, NCIL, Allfie, the Get Fair Coalition, Sense and the Spinal Injuries Association.

Notes to editors:

Disability Alliance is a UK charity which aims to break the link between disability and poverty.

Further information is available from Neil Coyle, Disability Alliance Director of Policy on 020 7247 8776 or at ncoyle@disabilityalliance.org

¹ Leonard Cheshire Disability estimate that 30% of disabled people live in a household with income of less than 60% of median national income, compared to around 16% of other citizens. *Disability Poverty in the UK 2008*.

² IPPR and Disability Rights Commission (DRC) *Disability 2020 2007*.

³ DRC *Ending poverty and widening employment opportunity 2007*.

⁴ Joseph Rowntree Foundation and Disability Alliance *Disabled people's costs of living 2004*.

⁵ Get Fair coalition, 2009 based on Help the Aged research.