

Funding update - this third edition of the Electronic Dynamic Voices is dedicated to the changing face of funding. No magic formulas, but some positive ideas, some questions and some possible changes!

The old CAP list

Most people know that when CAP closed there was an outstanding list of about 182 children who had been assessed but were too late for funds. It appears some of these children now have equipment, either through their LEA's or via other sources (eg charities and health).

There is also a strong rumour that the DfES has magically "found" some spare funds to try and close this list off. One wonders whether they were concerned about adverse publicity (DynaVox has been working with the BBC to try and get the plight of children without product onto "Newsnight" and it is known that "Newsnight" contacted the DfES for comment!!)?

BUT – this does nothing for the hundreds of children who remain post CAP and need equipment!

Fair Access to Care Services (FACS)

Depending upon how you read the eligibility criteria of the Fair Access to Care Services concept and how your social services interprets it, people with significant speech difficulties which affect their education, work and social interaction, COULD be considered critically at risk and therefore seek support under this proposal. Might be worth checking how YOUR local Social Services acts under these guidelines? Has anyone tried this route? With any success? Please share your success stories!

*Email david.morgan@dynavox.co.uk
with any information that may help others!*

Assessments, results and legal challenges – 3 requests!

Please keep up assessments, if that is part of your responsibility. We often hear "what's the use...when there is no funding?" but without them there can be no challenge, legal or otherwise! Secondly please let us know of funding successes so we can share them with others, and finally contact us if you need help with a legal challenge and we will put you in touch with David Ruebain – and it won't cost you anything!!

Have you tried...

At the CM conference in Leicester last month David Ruebain, perhaps the leading expert on disability rights in the UK, outlined the various avenues that he considered could be approached for funding. These included SEN (the statementing process for children in school – did you know it is apparently illegal for LEAs to refuse to review a statement or provide what is on that statement, due to "lack of funds"?); the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) for young people in further education; NHS/ICES (Integrated Community Equipment Services); the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA); the Access to Learning Fund – for higher education (Disabled Students are on the priority list); Access to Work (employers can sometimes get support when looking to employ people with a disability) and the Human Rights Act. Has anyone tried any of the less obvious ones with success? Please let us know!

Transforming Community Equipment Services

Community Equipment Services has never really worked for speech aids (with one or two notable exceptions) but there is a move to radically modify this system. At a meeting held at the DoH on Friday 13th October, the DoH representative – and this time someone with considerable business acumen and understanding – promised a complete review. David Morgan and PRI's David Weatherburn were both present and made a point of ensuring that speech aids were high on the agenda. At a follow up BHTA dinner, at the House of Commons, with the Lib Dem MP and previous Lib Dem Shadow Home Secretary, Mark Oaten, present, along with representatives from the DoH, and again attended by David Morgan, the subject of speech aids was again discussed and the DoH promised that they would get REAL consideration this time. We wait with bated breath!!