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## Policy E-Bulletins

We send out a regular e-bulletin covering policy developments around disability, employment and independent living. Past copies can be accessed from this page. You can sign up to receive this bulletin by filling in the 'Sign up for e-news' box at the bottom of the main homepage. Our latest bulletin came out on 22nd November 2011.

An article from our latest policy bulletin is below (22.11.11). The full bulletin can be found at: [Issue 55 E-Bulletin](#) (Rich text). Our older bulletins are at the bottom of this page.

### Rethinking Disability Policy

This is a think piece by Jenny Morris, a summary of which has now been published on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation website. Our Chief Executive, Lorraine Gradwell MBE was a member of an Expert Group who provided advice to Jenny Morris on this work.

"There are concerns that reductions in benefits and public services will significantly and disproportionately affect disabled people. What progress has been made in disability policy in the last 20 years? Is it time to revisit underlying concepts and engage in wider social and economic debates?"

Her key findings include:

- There have been some key improvements in both the socio-economic experiences of disabled people in the last 20 years, and in related government policies. Nevertheless, few disabled people are optimistic about what the future holds.
- Some aspects of the arguments made by disability organisations have been capitalised on by the politics and ideology driving recent and current policies in ways which disadvantage disabled people. In particular this has happened with the social model of disability and concepts of 'independent living', 'user involvement' and 'co-production'.
- In engaging with dominant policy agendas, we may risk losing touch with more fundamental issues concerning the welfare state. This may unintentionally contribute to the undermining of collective responsibility and redistribution.
- In campaigning for policies to tackle disabling barriers and enable equal access, we need to explicitly and vigorously promote the welfare state and the concept of social security in its broadest sense. People of all ages who experience impairment and/or illness are at a disadvantage in a society and an economy where the market is the sole arbiter of opportunities and life chances.
- In order to experience equal access to full citizenship, disabled people require some kind of collective and redistributive mechanism. Such redistribution needs to be in the context of a value system which values diversity and in which disabled people are treated as belonging and contributing to the communities in which they live.
- There is little room for making progress within the ideological framework driving current disability policies. We need to develop more radical challenges to the current disability policy agenda and engage in wider debates, particularly those which question the continuing pursuit of economic growth regardless of the damage done to the environment, to values and to humanity.

To access the 21 page summary, visit:

[Rethinking Disability Policy](#) (requires Acrobat Reader to open).

(All Bulletins are in Rich Text format)

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