Welcome to the 4th edition of the Learner Support Partnership Team Update, which aims to tell you more about the work of the LSC’s Learner Support team, including the latest on policy developments; and how you can help deliver this support to learners.

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**Update on the Learner Support Service**

We are pleased to announce that on Wednesday 18th March, we signed our Strategic Partnership Agreement with Capita, which ensures that Capita will deliver the administration of a range of Learner Support schemes for the academic years 2009/10 to 2012/13. This means that we will be able to provide a consistent and reliable service in the coming years.

The Learner Support Service is currently processing applications within a day and is completing applications within 2 weeks. The learner and Learning Provider helplines are answering all calls effectively with a less than 1% abandonment rate.

Please reassure Providers that there will not be delays to the processing of learners’ applications.

However, we are aware that some Providers experienced problems with the Interim Learning Provider Portal (ILPP), particularly when trying to make payment decisions for learners.
We have made a number of changes to this system, which include:

- Improving the speed at which screens refresh.
- Improving the ability to filter groups of learners.
- Making sure that the system does not crash at busy times, particularly on a Monday and a Tuesday.

We have received a large number of reports from individual Learning Providers, telling us that they have seen significant improvements and reduced times to input attendance data following these changes. As such Providers should find no further difficulty with this system.

If Learning Providers do continue to experience problems, please direct them to the helpline: 0845 600 7979

Learner Support Policy Updates

Care to Learn (C2L)

Care to Learn helps teenage parents stay in learning by contributing to the costs of their childcare and associated travel while they learn.

We are making some changes to the scheme, some of which will be effective immediately and some that will take effect in the 2009/10 academic year. These changes affect Childcare Providers, applications and eligibility, and fees and payments. We have produced a briefing note to explain these changes, which you can view on the Care to Learn website: http://caretolearn.lsc.gov.uk

This note is for the attention of Childcare Providers, Learning Providers, Connexions advisers, Teenage Pregnancy Support Workers and other advisers involved in delivering Care to Learn to young parents.

ACTION:
- If you have any contact with any of the above stakeholders, please make them aware of the briefing.
- Encourage learners to apply for Care to Learn; they can find more information on the Care to Learn website.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

The EMA campaign for the 2009/10 academic year is scheduled to begin in early April. This will firstly be teacher and learner activity and will include television, radio and online adverts to raise awareness of EMA with both these audiences. The theme of the walking hands will be the same as last year, so they should be
easily recognisable. Keep a look out for this advertising and encourage learners to apply for the scheme.

The EMA DVD has won a gold International Visual Communications Association (IVCA) award! The awards ceremony took place on Friday 27th March in London, and a representative from the LSC was present. Please see www.ivca.org for more information about the awards and you can use this information when promoting EMA.

ACTION:

- Encourage Learning Providers to order the Teacher’s Resource Pack (LSC-P-NAT-080120), which contains a copy of the DVD.
- Encourage Providers to promote EMA to learners.
- Visit the EMA website for details of marketing and resource materials, and encourage Providers to order materials for the 09/10 academic year.

**Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work**

The Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work scheme launches nationally this month.

This is a new scheme that will support adults (aged 20 years and over) by paying for childcare and travel costs while they are undertaking learning leading to work. The aim of the scheme is to encourage the non-working parent within a family to participate in learning or training that will help them into sustainable employment.

Application packs for this scheme are available to order (see Materials to help you section for more details).

Guidance for Learning and Childcare Providers is also available to download from the website. The guidance sets out what Providers should do to operate the scheme in their organisation and get the best from it. Please make sure that Providers are aware of this document as this should answer a number of questions that they might have about the administration of the scheme.

Our monthly e-newsletter gives more information on this scheme. You can view this on the website. Details of how to subscribe to this update are available in the Materials to help you section later in this Update.

From May 2009, this e-newsletter will give information on all the LSC’s childcare support schemes, including Care to Learn. If you would be interested in receiving this, please send an email to Childcare-news@lsc.gov.uk

ACTION:
• Disseminate this information to Learning and Childcare Providers.
• Encourage learners and Providers to order application packs for this scheme and to apply for support.
• Sign up to the Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work monthly e-newsletter.

Websites Updated

You will find up-to-date information on all the Learner Support schemes on their individual websites. These can all be found through the LSC Money to Learn website.

These websites should be your first port of call for information. If you have any further queries, please call the helpline on 0845 600 7979.

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Field Force

In the first issue of this Partnership Team Update we gave you contact details of the Field Force. With this issue, we would like to reintroduce them. Each region has a Field Force representative allocated to them, and these are as follows:

Bryan Walsh
North West (all areas) and West Midlands (Staffordshire, Shropshire)
Email: Bryan.Walsh@capita.co.uk
Tel: 07976 468 256

Kathy Betteridge
North East (all areas), Yorkshire and Humber (all areas) and East Midlands (Derbyshire)
Email: Kathy.Betteridge@capita.co.uk
Tel: 07909 934 601

Rachael Norman
Eastern (all areas), East Midlands (Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire and Rutland) and South East (Thames Valley, Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Bucks)
Email: Rachael.Norman@capita.co.uk
Tel: 07989 693 788

Bill Rogers
London (all areas) and South East (Berkshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent and Medway, Hampshire and Isle of Wight)
Email: Bill.Rogers@capita.co.uk
Tel: 07989 693 717
Vicky Bush  
South West (all areas) and West Midlands (Herefordshire and Worcestershire, Coventry and Warwickshire, Birmingham and Solihull, The Black Country)  
Email: Victoria.Bush@capita.co.uk  
Tel: 07500 917 351

For the 2009 year, the Field Force aim to: capture feedback from the field and identify resolutions, communicating between the LSC and Capita; provide intelligence to the LSC and Capita on the delivery of the Learner Support schemes; promote and support change through the effective engagement of stakeholders throughout the regions, and; drive innovation through knowledge and experience of the Provider base.

More specifically, their objectives for March to May 2009 are as follows:

- Communicate to Providers on the Interim Learning Provider Portal (ILPP), the applications process and the EMA guarantee.
- Visit Providers to support the current operation of the system and get customer feedback to communicate to the LSC and Capita.
- Ensuring that Providers are aware of key arrangements for the EMA guarantee and e2e.
- Prepare the content of the new system, which will replace the ILPP from summer 09, and deliver training solutions and products.
- Attend regional networks of LSC and wider stakeholders.

If you need support in delivering any of the above, or with your engagement with Providers and stakeholders, then please get in touch with your local Field Force member.

Materials to help you

We have a number of materials available that may be useful to you in promoting Learner Support. These include marketing materials and information materials.

Marketing materials

A number of marketing materials have been updated for the 09/10 year and are available to either order or to pre-order. These are as follows:

- **2009/10 ALG application forms** are available to pre-order. Each pack contains an application form and guidance notes
for learners to help them apply for the 2009/10 academic year. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090014.

- **Care to Learn 2009/10 leaflet.** This leaflet gives information on the Care to Learn scheme for the learner and how to apply. This is available to download from the website and you can pre-order printed copies. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090005.

- **2009/10 EMA application forms** are now available to pre-order. Each pack contains an EMA application form and guidance notes for learners to help them to apply for the 2009/10 academic year. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090013.

- **EMA My Choice DVD.** This DVD explains the benefit of EMA and includes case studies of how this has helped 5 young people stay on in learning. Reference LSC-P-NAT-080004.

- **EMA A5 GCSE Envelopes.** This contains a leaflet that explains about options and choices after young people get their GCSE results, including advice about Apprenticeships, A Levels and Diplomas, as well as a brief description about EMA. Reference LSC-P-NAT-080005.

- **EMA Resource pack** is available to pre-order. This is designed to support teachers in classroom-based learning and highlight post-16 options to learners. The pack includes a copy of the DVD, but more copies of this can be ordered separately. Reference LSC-P-NAT-080120.

- **Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work application packs** can now be ordered for the 2008/09 academic year. The packs contain an application pack and guidance notes to help learners to fill in the form. Reference LSC-P-NAT-080223. Application packs for the 2009/10 academic year will be available at a later date.

To order any of the above materials, call **0845 602 2260** or email lsc@prolog.uk.com. Please remember to quote the relevant reference number to make sure that you receive the correct materials.

More marketing materials will be updated soon. This includes those for Adult Learning Grant (ALG). Please look out for messages around this, and check the websites for more details.

**Information materials**

We also have other reference documents that give information on our schemes that you might find useful. Recently updated materials include:

- **Care to Learn 2008/09 guidance for Providers.** This document gives information for Childcare and Learning Providers on how to administer the scheme within their organisation. This is available to download from the website.

- **A guide to EMA Providers working with young people.** This gives information to assist Providers with advising young people and their families on the support provided by
EMA. Reference LSC-P-NAT-090006. Copies of this can be ordered in the same way as above.

- **Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work 2008/09 guidance for Providers.** This document gives information for Providers on how to administer the scheme within their organisation. This is available to download from the website.
- Learner Support’s **Money to Learn website** is regularly updated and houses information about Learner Support for Providers.

**ACTION**

- Encourage Providers to order updated marketing materials for the 2009/10 academic year to promote Learner Support schemes.
- Inform Providers that the updated guidance is available. Encourage them to use the most up-to-date version so that they have the correct policy information.
- Encourage Providers to visit the website for information before ringing the helpline.

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**Sign up for more information**

We produce a number of regular bulletins that give more information on Learner Support stakeholders. Please sign up to receive these and encourage Providers to request to be added to the distribution lists for these documents so that they automatically receive the most up-to-date information about Learner Support.

The **Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work e-newsletter** is produced monthly. To be added to the distribution list for this, please email us at freechildcare-adults@lsc.gov.uk. If you would like to receive the subsequent e-newsletter, which gives information on all the childcare schemes, please email us at Childcare-news@lsc.gov.uk.

The **Learner Support Service Stakeholder e-bulletin** is produced monthly. To be added to the distribution list, please email us, stating the name of the relevant publication in the subject of the email, at learnersupportupdate@lsc.gov.uk.

If you have received this **Partnership Team Update** but are not signed up to receive this regularly, please email us at learnersupportupdate@lsc.gov.uk to be added to the distribution list. State the name of the relevant publication on the subject of the email. You can also email this inbox to give feedback on this publication.

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