

Establishment of the Committee

People with intellectual disabilities are restricted in their claiming of rights in comparison with their fellow citizens. Within this framework and after pressure from parents of people with intellectual disabilities, in 1989 a Special Law was passed **Law regarding Mentally Retarded People 117/89**. This Law renders the Committee for the Protection of People with Intellectual Disabilities as the appropriate body for the protection and promotion of rights of people with intellectual disabilities in Cyprus.

Structure of Committee

The Committee is a 10 member council, nominated by the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance, for a 4 year period. In this council 5 members are chosen by the Pancyprian Association of Parents with intellectuall disabilities of Mentally Retarded People, (private citizens) and 5 members are chosen from the public sector (government members). The government members come from the Government Departments of Labour and Social Insurance, Education and Civilization, Health and Finance. The president is one of the government members. The activities of the Committee are carried out by a 9 member staff that includes qualified Psychologists, Sociologists and secretarial staff.

Responsibilities

The main responsibilities of the Committee as covered in Article 6 of the 117/89 Law are:

- The registration of all people with intellectual disabilities and the keeping of data, with reference to the type of disability and other related information regarding the person, his family and property issues.
- Continuous monitoring of the problems faced by people with intellectual disabilities and their families and the promotion of reports and suggestions for the solutions of these problems.
- The monitoring of actions and measures taken in the public and private sectors by different services, officers, organizations and individuals in relation to people with intellectual disabilities and the overall inspection of political decisions and measures which are followed.
- Completion of programs in cooperation with the appropriate government services for the accomplishment of the proclaimed rights of people with intellectual disabilities and the determining of priorities in accordance with their seriousness and the financial expenditure entailed for their enforcement.

- Maintenance of a register of all the NGO's which deal with people who have intellectual disabilities.
- The inspection and evaluation, in cooperation with the appropriate government services of foundations and other places where people with intellectual disabilities live or are employed, and the submitting of relevant reports.
- The monitoring of their employment, education, residence and generally the welfare of people with intellectual disabilities
- The provision of advisory services to people with intellectual disabilities and to their families.
- The handling of personal and group complaints.
- Recording of statistics and other information for people with intellectual disabilities.
- Establishment of a register that consists who manage the property of people with intellectual disabilities.
- The sensitizing of the public and the fighting of prejudice.
- Offering guidance to interested parties for the provision of services for people with intellectual disabilities.

Resolution of complaints/requests

In the field of its responsibilities, the Committee receives and examines personal or in-group complaints. The complaints are usually submitted by the guardians of the people with intellectual disabilities or by the people themselves, and they refer to :

- Inadequate services for daily care units and inadequate support in the house
- Inadequate support and services for special education to children that are studying in mainstream schools
- Malfunction of administrative councils of volunteer organizations
- Serious financial problems
- Inadequate work placement and bad employment conditions
- Inadequate management of property/guardianship
- Inadequate provisions of health services
- Inadequate Security
- Exclusion/Suspension of people with intellectual disabilities from institutions
- Discontinuation of Public benefits
- Sexual Harassment
- Inadequate deinstitutionalization of people who are in Institutions
- Inadequate services in the countryside.

The Committee is looking into the vote of the proposed modification of the Law 117/89 so that there will be a greater chance for a more effective intervention, and for taking corrective measurements. In accordance with the United Nations Convention of 2007 for securing the rights of disable persons, great emphasis will be given to the issue of legal capacity and supported decision making.

Coordinating Service of Early Child Intervention

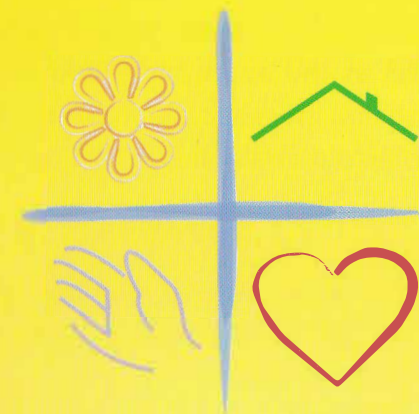
This program employs three Officers at pancyprian level that work as a connecting link between the families and the professionals offering early intervention therapies. The coordination is offered to children from infancy until 6-7 years of age that have been presented with problems or developmental disorders. Mainly this program is focused on the prevention and reduction of the level of disability or other developmental disorders, on the empowerment and on the psychological relief of the family. It also provides counseling services for empowering and supporting parents. The expectation of the Committee is this program will eventually be undertaken by a governmental authority.

Training of professionals/awareness of the public

The Committee organizes annual seminars on specific subjects that are focused on the enhancement of knowledge of professionals who provide services to people with intellectual disabilities. At the same time it organizes conferences and other events for the enlightenment of the public, with the goal of achieving the acceptance of people with intellectual disabilities as equal citizens and for the social integration of these people.

In this respect since 1996 the Committee has been supporting the employment at the open labour market. In particular technical assistance and coordination was provided to job coaches that are employed under voluntary organizations. Recently this policy has been undertaken by a new Department at the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance.

COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES



"Contributes towards the claiming of your rights as equal citizens"

28th October 10, Acropoli
P.O. Box. 23292, 1680 Nicosia , Cyprus
Tel.: 22 871333 - Fax.: 22 429544
email: cp-mental@cytanet.com.cy
website: www.cpmental.com.cy