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**CHILDREN
IN NEED**

Dear Shine Parent Member,

We want to raise awareness of the importance of good bladder and bowel care. The difference that can be made to our members' health and well-being by having their bladder and bowel-care needs understood and met, can be life-changing. For example, inadequate bowel care can lead to urinary tract infections and bladder leakage, as well as bowel leakage.

We are pleased to enclose a letter about Shine's Children's Continence Service, which we invite you to share with your GP or any other healthcare professional you choose. Much can be done to promote bladder and bowel continence, which contributes to children and young people becoming confident young adults.

Our service works to support the advice and programmes you've been given by your child's specialists, to give an extra layer of support for you both, so do share with those professionals in your family's life.

Yours faithfully



Gill Yaz

Head of Health at Shine

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**CHILDREN
IN NEED**

Dear Healthcare Professional,

Shine is proud to share news on our Children's continence service, which is now supported by BBC Children in Need.

Many people with spina bifida experience varying degrees of neuropathic bladder and bowel – when damage to the nerves interferes with normal bladder and bowel working.

Shine continually promotes good continence care, from infancy through to adulthood, and recognises the importance of this for long-term health.

Shine's Health Team supports our members with information and advice around bladder and bowel care, including Clean Intermittent Catheterisation and Transanal Irrigation as well as practical advice around toileting both at home, in the community and in education settings.

Our advice and support aims to improve children and young peoples':

- Knowledge and understanding of continence so that they understand the 'how and why' of managing this.
- Acceptance and ownership of their continence so that it ceases to be a source of distress and becomes something they can manage independently.
- Confidence and ability to manage their own continence care, thus promoting greater independence.
- Sense of community and connection, so they feel they are not alone despite geographical limitations and have the support of others with similar experiences.

We offer support for children, young people, their parents and care givers, both on a one-to-one basis, and, where appropriate, as part of an online group.

Please consider joining us as a professional member of Shine, where we have FREE online learning modules that are accredited for continuous professional development (CPD).

Shine's professional membership is FREE.

Join today: www.shinecharity.org.uk/professionalmember

We would be grateful if you would share this with colleagues, who are also welcome to join. You can refer anyone you support whose lives are affected by spina bifida and/or hydrocephalus to Shine for additional support, advice and information.

Yours sincerely
Gill Yaz



Registered General Nurse
Head of Health at Shine