

Annual Report

2018-2019



Kingston Centre for
Independent Living





CEO HIGHLIGHTS



KCIL has a 50 year history of fighting for a fairer, more inclusive society. During the past year, we have continued this fight, through our day to day work on Direct Payments to our other larger events and activities highlighting the rights of disabled people. KCIL's mission to 'empower disabled people to have a voice' has been at the heart of our work.

Access is an area that was highlighted during the past year. Huge strides were made by disabled people in the 80s and 90s to put accessibility on the local agenda, but local disabled people feel that Kingston has now taken a backward step. Even with equality legislation in place, increased awareness and advances in technology, local older and disabled people continue to see a lack of consideration for accessibility in buildings, infrastructure and services.

KCIL decided to focus on Access issues at our annual 'Living with Disability' Conference this year. The theme was 'Access All Areas' and we had speakers and workshops on numerous topics including access to the built environment, tourism, public transport, live music, and communication. Our keynote speaker was Steve Brown, broadcaster and Paralympian, who inspired people with his story and his experiences as a disabled presenter.

Our new Access Committee started in March 2018. It has been working to re-enliven Kingston's access agenda and has captured the attention of professionals and local councillors over the past year.

KCIL continues to provide on-going support to Direct Payment users, providing outreach support, drop ins, training and quarterly drop-in groups. We provide specialist Direct Payment support for the Royal Borough of Kingston's Adult Social Care, Kingston Clinical Commissioning Group and Achieving for Children.

The environment for small local charities is challenging at the moment and we have been working hard to make sure we are supporting members with the issues that are important to them. Thank you to all our staff, volunteers, trustees and members for all their contributions over the past year.

Lisa Ehlers

CHAIRS' REPORTS

Nigel Tarrant

Although I will be staying on as a Board member for a period to ensure a smooth handover, this will be my last Report to you as Chair. So, this is an opportunity to reflect on where KCIL stands at the end of our 50th year, on what has been achieved and on what we now need to do.

The things we have done in my nine years as Chair have been immensely rewarding. We have operated under tight financial restrictions but still managed to maintain reserves to enable us to grow the services we offer. I am particularly keen on our Conferences and the success of our Annual General Meetings. We have been well supported and had some great speakers over the years.

We have continued with our Holiday, Equipment and Education Grants even when the Local Authority funding was withdrawn. Our website has improved dramatically and we have continued to produce one of the best local charity magazines and superb guides. We have lots of ideas about how we will provide information to our members in the future using podcasts and social media. I am filled with pride every time I watch the discussion between Baroness Jane Campbell and our Patron, Ann McFarlane OBE, which says more about

how and why KCIL was formed and the challenges of the early days better than I ever

could. We are lucky that Ann is still an active member and her wise counsel is valued by everyone on our Board.



The video made as part of the “Fighting for our Rights’ project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, is essential watching for all who want to know what KCIL is about and can be found on our website. KCIL started as a campaign for independence for disabled people in Kingston and now supports people to take control of their own care and support through direct payments and our information, support and advice.

We are half way through a three year contract with Kingston Council but this is already under pressure with Local Authority funding likely to become more restricted. KCIL will need to fight hard to maintain its position as a key Local Authority partner. We are already consulting about the services our members want, and how we can best meet those needs so that we can set our strategy for the next 50 years. KCIL will need to deal with the issues facing our members but I feel confident that we will rise to the challenge and know there are some great ideas being looked at to shape our future.

None of the work KCIL does would be possible without the dedicated support of our staff. Over the years the team has changed a lot but Robert Reilly has been a constant source of information and his knowledge of KCIL and our members has kept me on track. I have learned more from being involved in staff issues at KCIL than anywhere else in my career.

KCIL's Trustees have also changed regularly. I have enjoyed working with many interesting people through my role as Chair. Only Lawrie Lee has outlived me on the Board and he has been responsible for guiding KCIL through some tough times and keeping us financially stable.

KCIL is well led by our CEO, Lisa Ehlers and the new trustees joining our Board give me cause for much optimism. We do realise that after 50 years we need to do more to engage better with younger disabled people. This means developing our ongoing relationships with young adults as they reach the age of 18 and take their first steps towards independence.

I have not given up on my idea that KCIL will be a hub where disabled people and their carers feel that they can meet, learn, and get help to achieve what they want in their lives, and campaign if necessary. We will continue to concentrate on the Kingston area where I am always impressed by how wide and supportive our connections are in the political and social care areas as well as with other charities.

We need to look at those connections with other local charities and use our resources to help others who are already doing things that we want to do so that results are achieved more quickly. John Hatherley has now taken over as KCIL Chair and as a carer himself he has a unique understanding of the concerns of Members and Service Users and I wish him well.

John Hatherley

Hello! I became Chair in January this year when Nigel decided to step down as Chair after many years of service.



I am a carer for my disabled wife and attend our service user meetings where I meet with other people to listen to their concerns. This provides me with a unique awareness of people's concerns and what we as a board of Trustees need to do to address them.

Ensuring we have a happy and committed team who are able to deliver a high level of service to disabled people in Kingston and the surrounding areas is also a priority. I am excited to face this new challenge and hope that KCIL can become the "Go to" organisation for supporting disabled people in Kingston.

DIRECT PAYMENTS

Adults

KCIL has supported over 200 adults using Direct Payments in the Royal Borough of Kingston over the past year, with numbers fluctuating as some people drop off the scheme or pass away and others joining. We also provided support to 10 adults in receipt of Personal Health Budgets on behalf of the Clinical Commissioning group.

Better PA recruitment

Our Personal Assistant (PA) recruitment support has increased its pool of available PAs from last year by over 300%. This was the result of a recruitment drive which used more targeted advertisements on different on-line recruitment platforms. KCIL not only supports new people to the scheme, but also supports people who are currently on the scheme to find new PAs when theirs leave. Current users accessing our recruitment and support has increased by 3% from last year according to our annual review.

Service user story

SS receives Direct Payments to encourage him to live as independently as possible and encourage more social interaction. FK has encouraged and supported SS to try new activities. As he is a keen cook, SS has subsequently spent many happy

hours cooking (and eating) new dishes from around the world. FK has also supported him to try yoga for the first time which he also enjoyed.

DP user Meetings

The quarterly user groups provide an opportunity for service users to gain support from other users and to ask questions about changes to the service. Some of the topics discussed this year included a talk by Mark Bates Insurance on Employment Law, discussions on social care reviews and assessments, discussions on disability related expenses, and changes to contributions and clawbacks from the Council.

Why people enjoy the meetings



- Meeting others and having a secure environment to ask questions
- Being kept up to date about the changes to the system
- Being able to meet other service users and KCIL staff
- Getting information on training PAs and how to get support from other organisations in Kingston





Annual Review

Our annual review provided us with insight in to what is important for Direct Payment users.

There were more diverse respondents this year with long term users and new users all responding to the survey and people with various disabilities replying.

There was an increase in the numbers of people with learning disabilities and mental health difficulties who responded either on the phone, via Survey Monkey, or through printed copies.

People's reasons for choosing a Direct Payment include:



- To give my sister choice rather than a boring day centre every day.
- It's a more flexible way of getting support when I need it.
- To have control and more input into the help I need. Not to be limited by agency care policies.
- It helps my wife to be cared for. It helps my quality of life. 

What people liked about KCIL's support service:



- Giving confidence and not being on my own when dealing with recruitment. Meeting other members.
- The genuine care and hard work everyone does to make a service users' life easier. You help users to understand how direct payments work because it gets very overwhelming at times.
- The help with the paperwork. They organise everything for you and help if something goes wrong.
- Thank you so much, you have made me feel so much better. I don't feel alone in this anymore. It has been so nice to talk to somebody who understands. Thank you.

86% of respondents agree or strongly agree with the statement "I can get the advice and support I need about direct payments when I need it."

Children and Families

KCIL delivered Direct Payment Support to an average of 114 children and families in Richmond and Kingston on behalf of Achieving for Children over the past financial year. This service involves supporting parents to be good employers and includes support with recruitment, paperwork and payroll.



I came to see Maria last November as my son's direct payments had got into a complete muddle Maria very kindly went through it all with me and managed to sort it all out which was a great relief.

Training for PAs

KCIL and Surrey Independent Living Council worked together to deliver training for personal assistants working for Direct Payment users from Kingston and Richmond. The topics this year covered dementia awareness, Emergency First Aid at Work, autism awareness and medication awareness.



I attended the First Aid course for PAs on 18th February 2019. I must say that the course was fantastic. The trainer provided information I hadn't heard before that drove home the reasons for carrying out certain procedures, which I will now always remember. LH, Personal Assistant.

SEND SUPPORT BROKERAGE

KCIL works with Achieving for Children (AfC) and Kingston and Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to ensure that children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND), or complex medical conditions, are offered a personalised approach to their educational, health and social care needs through Personal Budgets.

Over the past year, 18 children, young people and their families have received support through KCIL's SEND Brokerage service.

This includes providing information and advice as well as writing support plans and assistance with monitoring finances.

Of the 18 families, 11 were from Kingston and 7 were from Richmond. Four families accessed a Personal Health Budget funded through the CCG as they qualified for Continuing Health Care.

The remaining 14 families received support relating to education needs, with 9 having Personal Budgets approved by Achieving for Children.



The Personal Budgets have been used to fund personal assistants, specialist equipment, Learning Support Assistants, tutors, Speech and Language therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and specialist activities.



Supporting Solomon

Our SEND Brokerage service has supported Solomon and his family with accessing and monitoring a Personal Health Budget.

Solomon has complex health needs and it is very important to him and to his family that he has the right support from someone that knows him very well and that he likes. We supported Solomon's family in writing a personalised support plan, which included when support would be needed but also what is important to Solomon. This plan was then approved by the CCG and KCIL helped with setting up the initial financial requirements and also provide ongoing support with monitoring the budget expenditure.

Jeom, Solomon's mum, says:



I found Sarah and KCIL very helpful and supportive with application of the Personal Health Budget. I was encouraged to add my input to write up the support plan so the plan actually reflects his needs. The support plan is very important to get right as it is the basis of how to organise right type of care and support.



Sarah has also included training costs for PA's. All we needed to do was to send PAs for the courses. KCIL also arranged insurance and the link with the payroll company.

Each month we send the time sheets to Paypacket, the payroll service, and they arrange how much the PA's are to be paid.

KCIL can also support you with employing personal assistants. Employing the right person can make the whole family's life much easier.

We have been using a Personal Health Budget since August 2018 and we feel we are in control of our lives again.



INFORMATION & ADVICE

Our information and advice service for disabled people includes support with Personal Independence Payments (PIP), in particular support to fill in forms. Our Senior Independent Living Advisor also supports people with filling in forms for housing benefit, taxi card, blue badge and freedom pass applications.

KCIL also provides general information about disability issues and informs people about the services that are available and refers them to other organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureau and Kingston Carers' Network.



“ You guys are unbelievable and I can't believe how underrated you guys are. You have changed my life. If it wasn't for you I would not have even gotten the lower rate of PIP. ”

Dale and Anna were extremely happy with the help and assistance provided for the PIP application form:

“ Thank you very much, honestly you have helped me so much. I couldn't have done it if not for you. ”



When I had to give up working to care full time for my partner after a major stroke, they visited us at home to guide us on the help and support available, especially as we now had no income.

They also sourced groups/clubs that might be of interest for my partner to attend. Their help was invaluable, and I am so grateful to them. ”

2018 CONFERENCE

Steve Brown, broadcaster and Paralympian, opened the day with his personal story.

Suzanne Bull from Attitude is Everything told us about how her charity works to make live music more accessible for Deaf and disabled people.

Ana Crome from Tourism for All gave a presentation on the work they do to inform disabled people about accessible holidays and travel. They also advise the tourism industry on how to be more inclusive.

Amy Edgar from Transport for London discussed updates on the travel network and answered questions from the audience. We also had 4 workshops from Access Able, the YMCA, Involve and KCIL's Access and Mobility Committee.

Thank you to the staff and trustees for all their hard work helping to organise the event and help on the day.

KCIL's Access Committee is taking forward suggestions from the day to try and improve access in the local area.



A good range of topics and knowledgeable speakers. Easy to access. Good lighting and pleasant surroundings. Comfortable seating. Excellent catering and good service from hotel staff. Full marks to KCIL organisers.



A really inspiring conference, it was good to network and it was very useful to have speakers from different organisations. I learnt a lot of useful information.



Steve Brown with KCIL members

IDDP

In early December, KCIL and the Royal Borough of Kingston hosted an International Day of Disabled Persons (IDDP) event.

This year's theme was music and we were treated to some amazing performances by Kingston Mencap and Dramatize following a talk and video from a local music therapist, Na Won Kim, on the piano.



ACCESS COMMITTEE

KCIL formed an Access and Mobility Committee in March 2018. We wanted to amplify the voices of people with disabilities in our community and work to make Kingston an accessible and inclusive place without barriers.

Accessibility in the borough has regressed since the huge strides made by disabled people over 20 years ago. Even with advances in technology and public awareness of a range of disabilities and impairments, we are still seeing a lack of consideration for accessibility in buildings, infrastructure and services.

KCIL's access committee has already initiated positive changes. We made a positive presentation to the Council's Environment and Sustainable Transport

committee. The committee agreed that the Council would give consideration to access issues when accepting new schemes into the Borough.

Councillor Hilary Gander, Chair of the committee, said: "To get the best results, it's important for us to involve local people. At the committee on Thursday we were glad to receive representation from KCIL which asked that full and proper consideration is given to access and mobility issues during the design and implementation of all future schemes. This received the committee's full support."

We are not going to stop there. We recognise that it is early days and there are many facets of accessibility that need to be addressed.

CAMPAIGNING

One aspect of KCIL's work for our disabled members includes campaigning for equal rights. Over the last year, KCIL's major campaign was about the introduction of full car parking charges for Blue Badge holders at Kingston Hospital. This policy was implemented on 22 January 2018.

These charges were introduced without proper consultation regarding the impact of charging on disabled people and without an equality impact assessment. Lisa Ehlers, KCIL CEO, said:



The proposed charges are unfair and unjustified and will provide additional barriers to healthcare for people with disabilities and long-term conditions who need to attend regular appointments. Attending an appointment at the hospital is a necessity, not a luxury disabled people can choose to miss should they not have the funds to pay for parking that month.



The car parking charges policy was paused while a review by Kingston Hospital took place following our campaign and the efforts of other local individuals and disability groups. Questions were raised by KCIL and some of our members at a meeting of Kingston Hospital's governors in January 2018 and at the Health Overview Panel on the 11 October 2018.



A survey of Blue Badge holders was then undertaken by the hospital and a review panel was formed, although KCIL was not asked to join this panel despite stating an interest in participating at the HOP.

From January 2019, Kingston Hospital decided to alter their charging policy for Blue Badge holders to a flat rate charge of £2.00 per visit, regardless of how long someone's visit to the hospital is.

This is the hourly rate for all other car park users. This is a concession following our campaign, although it did not produce our desired result which was to not to charge Blue Badge holders at all.

KOREAN VISITORS

KCIL had a visit from a South Korean delegation in November who wanted to learn more about Independent Living and how it developed in Kingston.

KCIL staff (including Lisa Ehlers, John Morris, Robert Reilly and Elizabeth Olarewaju) along with KCIL's patron, Ann Macfarlane gave a talk on the history of direct payments and discussed current issues affecting disabled people in the UK.

Supported by an interpreter, we were able to share experiences and discuss what was happening in South Korea,



where the voice of disabled people is gaining momentum.

KCIL GRANTS

Since Kingston Council stopped giving a grant to KCIL for the Holiday Grant Scheme, we have self-funded our own grants scheme from our reserves. KCIL's Grants Scheme not only covers holidays but also disability-related equipment and education or training courses.

Our Grants assisted disabled people who otherwise would not be able to afford to fully fund a holiday for themselves, obtain essential equipment for daily living or undertake training or an educational course.

In 2018/19 we received 61 applications and awarded 61 grants from a budget of £11,374 (£10,000 plus £1,374 carried forward from 2017/18). The majority of the awards went to support people to take a holiday (98%) with the remaining (2%) going to support people to buy disability-related equipment.

The numbers of applications received in 2018/19 were up by a third on 2017/18 (44 applications, 42 being successful). 44 Holiday Grant applications were awarded the maximum amount of £200. We were pleased to help part-fund a wheelchair for one member who could not get one through the usual statutory bodies. ▶

◀ Just over 50% of grants applicants took their holiday in Britain. The adventurous travelled to a variety of countries such as Portugal, Cuba, Turkey, Cyprus, South Africa, Spain, the Republic of Ireland, and Poland.

Applications were supported by Kingston iCope Therapies, Balance, the Community Mental Health Team, GP's, Community Outreach, a Community Support worker, St Ann's Lodge, Hestia, the Kingston Resettlement Team and Social Workers.



KCIL helped my husband by donating half of the finance for fitting a car hoist so that we can take my husband's electric wheelchair with us travelling to the continent. ””



Thank you for the holiday grant. We enjoyed our time in the caravan and being able to take my mum to the Isle of Wight. ””

VI PARLIAMENT

Kingston's Visual Impairment (VI) Parliament and their coordinator, Sophie Camara, were based at KCIL's offices over the past year. The VI Parliament holds quarterly public meetings where speakers come along to inform people with visual impairments about various opportunities in the community.

KCIL and the VI Parliament worked on similar campaigns over the past year such as Blue Badge parking at Kingston Hospital and access issues around the town centre of Kingston.

The VI Parliament also had an outing to Kew Gardens in Summer 2018 and joined KCIL for our Christmas celebrations at the North Star, Chessington in December.



HEALTHWATCH EVENT

KCIL received £750 grassroots engagement funding from Healthwatch Kingston to run a “Finding your Voice” workshop facilitated by Story Aid. People participated in a workshop in July 2018 where they were encouraged to use their voice to tell their own story, followed by a session with Healthwatch where they were given the opportunity to share their issues.

Issues raised included: hospital accessibility, continuing healthcare assessments, monitoring of providers who are commissioned by the Clinical Commissioning Group, poor communication within the NHS, and the importance of person centred care.



SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Many of our members experience periods of isolation and, with the right support, value opportunities to get out and about to meet other people. KCIL organised social events for our members over the past year including our annual Christmas Party and a cruise with the ‘River Thames Boat Project’.



Andrew and myself had a great time. It was lovely to see the river from eye level and also the River Wey. The crew were very friendly and funny. The food was also great and the company was perfect. Also, the staff from KCIL were excellent as usual.



FUNDRAISING

Our CEO, Lisa, completed the Charity Walk for Peace on the 29th April 2018 raising £575.00 for KCIL. We also received a donation from Waitrose in Surbiton for £243 in March 2019. Thank you to all our individual donors who kindly give us donations throughout the year.



RIGHTS WORKSHOP

Svetlana Kotova from Inclusion London facilitated a workshop for KCIL members on 'Knowing Your Rights' in regards to assessments, reviews and Direct Payments in March 2019.

KCIL decided to run the workshop following feedback from a number of members who felt they were not being listened to when their support package was being reviewed or re-assessed.

Members felt empowered to speak up following the session and KCIL will be putting together a short guide on what people's rights are under the Care Act when it comes to assessments, reviews and paying for care and support.



FINANCES

Once again our target for the year ended 31st March 2019 has been to manage our resources carefully so that we maintain our reserves at a level which would enable us to survive the difficult times all small charities now have to operate in.

Our core income has been under severe pressure as a result of Council cut backs and loss of other grants, particularly the Heritage Lottery Funding. Overall, our income dropped in the financial year by over £50,000. We have managed this by keeping our wage bill under tight control without compromising our main events or services to members. With good housekeeping, we have reduced our overall expenditure in line with the reduction in income and thus achieved a loss of only £15,892. This loss is covered by our reserves.

We are developing our strategy for the future so that we can use part of our undesignated reserves to invest in projects which will help to generate income and safeguard our future. We are consulting with members and funders to ensure that we move in a direction that is supported by everyone involved with KCIL. The wishes and needs of our members are central to our new strategy and we will continue to fund our successful programme of events and meetings. We will also look to increase our income as well as

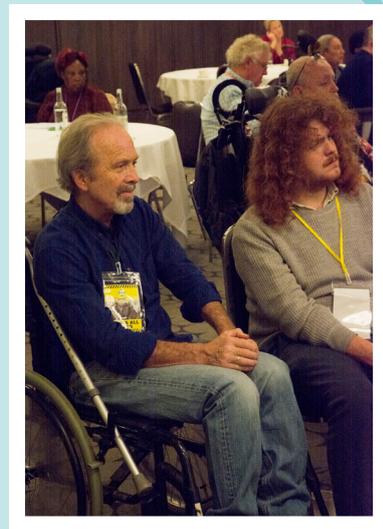
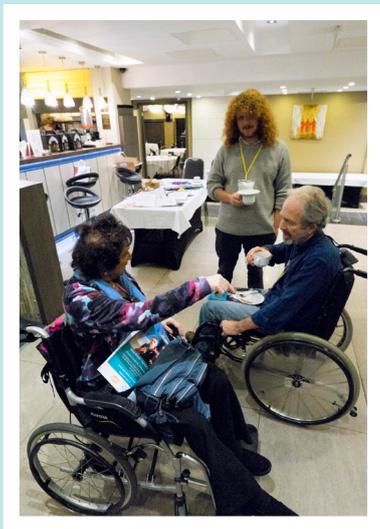
promoting ourselves locally and looking for alternative funding.

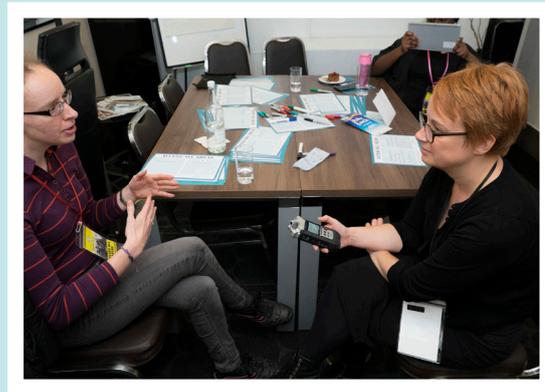
Nigel Tarrant

Chair of Finance Committee

Income	2019	2018
	£	£
Donations	1257	2667
Investment income	129	543
Access work	500	5025
Achieving for Children	76,049	81,049
Heritage Lottery Grant		34,996
Service fees	198,363	201,139
Subscriptions/ other income	8956	11,253
TOTAL	285,254	336,672
Expenditure	2019	2018
Staff	200,125	221,804
Rent and Rates	33,466	28,887
Office expenses	23,613	60,949
Meetings and Events	12,455	10,798
Website, Newsletter, Marketing	3394	8568
Grants and Other	28,093	31,008
TOTAL	301,146	362,014
Profit (Loss)	(15,892)	(25,342)

2018 CONFERENCE & AGM PHOTOS





MEET THE KCIL TEAM

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Kingston Centre for Independent Living

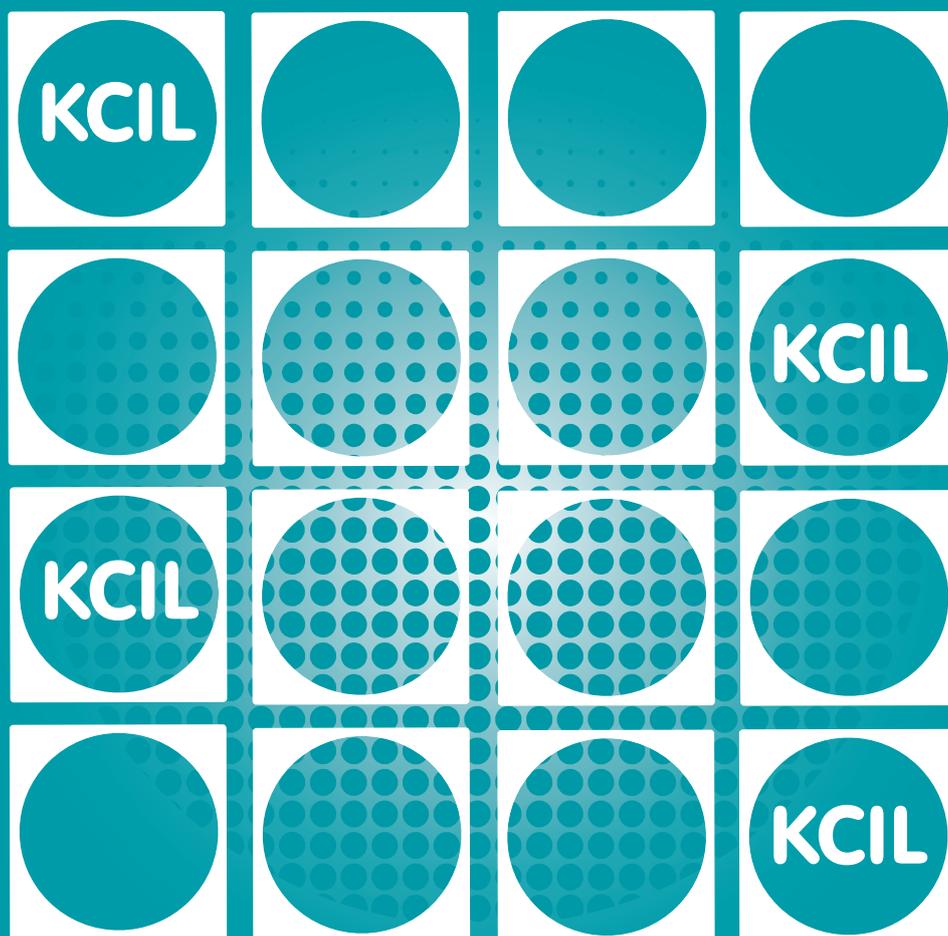
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