

Independence and Wellbeing Plan

Public meeting at Dysart School with Kingston Mencap

2nd April 2008

Question/comment: Why has the Plan taken so long to be published when the eligibility criteria consultation finished in August 2007 – It should have come out in October 2007?

Answer/response: We apologise for this delay but the Plan has taken us longer to prepare than expected and also the resources to produce it have only recently become available.

Question/comment: It's very hard for disabled people to find out what help and support is available without the help of a Care Manager/Social Worker or parent, carer or guardian. And if you haven't got someone to help you speak up, you've no chance of getting help. The Social Care Team for people with learning disabilities in Kingston falls way short of what is required!

Answer/response: Yes it can be very hard for people to find out about what help is available but through our Plan we hope to make it easier for people. We know that whatever we do will not be perfect but we want to make sure we support people as best we can in a way that suits them.

Question/comment: How will people with lower level needs find out about what is available? Social Workers don't have the time to signpost people to services and sometimes they do it badly – someone I know was given a 'Kingclean' leaflet only to discover that the company had gone bust! Also, not everyone has access to the internet or wants to use it! Maybe voluntary organisations could help or if you had dedicated information officers!?

Answer/response: Actually, we think Social Workers are well able to signpost people, given access to the right information, even though they may make mistakes sometimes. We are looking at developing local centres where people could go to get help to access information and advice but thank you for your helpful suggestion.

Question/comment: The voluntary sector has an important role in providing information and advice, working in partnership with the local authority and others.

Answer/response: Yes thank you, we certainly need to work together on these issues. Information systems are never perfect. We need to keep checking to see if what we are doing is effective. We need to keep trying different approaches and making sure people can get the information they need when and how they need it.

Question/comment: We need to promote our services amongst, employers, doctors, chemists and other people who are in touch with people in need. What plans do you have for keeping in touch with people who don't use our services but who may need to use them?

Answer/response: We totally agree and getting communication right is one of our first and continuing priorities. People tend not to access information until they need it. Our job is to make sure that it is as widespread as possible. When we come to setting up commissioning and contract management arrangements with existing and new providers we will make sure we involve service users in monitoring activities so we can benefit from their experience and expertise.