

Lanarkshire Ace
14 Pankhurst Place
The Village
East Kilbride
G74 4BH

Scottish Government
'Same as You' Consultation Focus Group
Village Centre, East Kilbride, 19th September 2012

Our group consisted of eight members of Lanarkshire Ace.

Who Attended: John Dallas, Robert Daly, Michael Docherty, Colin Nicholson,
Colin Greenhill, Gary McIntyre, Alison Moir, Walter Colchlin

Facilitators: Maria Hose and Catherine Carson

We have attached photographs of pictorial evidence from on the day
Together with completed information sheets of each individual.

Summary of the responses to each question:

Question 1

School and Education: Yes: Most people felt that they either didn't get an opportunity to attend school or were limited in their support and choices whilst in education.

Most who attended discussed at length the lack of support from teachers, staff and those involved with their education. Some attendees talked about bullying due to being isolated within segregated unit within the education establishment. Felt discriminated against because they were not given the opportunity to sit exams, choose coursework, be involved in opportunities for work experience and vocational qualifications.

Many attendees believed that had Advocacy been available to them at an earlier stage things might have been better.

Question 2

Most believed that living within their community worked better than living in institutions.

One member, who had been institutionalised for more than 30 years, sadly felt that the lack of support within the community currently led him to believe that, despite all the horrific experiences that he had endured within long stay

hospital, such as abuse at the hands of staff, lack of any formal education, poor living conditions etc etc. if the hospitals were to re-open he would gladly return to be with his friends once again and the security of not having to worry about being on his own and coping with finances and general day to day living.

One member in particular believed that since his mother passed and he moved to independence within his own home, with magnificent support from advocacy and other services he believed his life had greatly improved.

Generally there was great concern over changes to benefits for people with learning disability and the lack of knowledge around the availability of advocacy.

Question 3

The Government need to ensure that advocacy support is available to more people, not enough people know what it is and how to get it. Also, more help and advice about independent living, too often attendees felt that they were left isolated and without supports. Greater support is needed for carers and plans put in place for when they are no longer able to offer care and support. Secure benefits for people diagnosed with a learning disability. Better understanding and diagnosis of learning disability; greater choices for education courses; ongoing help with communication skills; better preparation for leaving school and gaining real employment; create more voluntary positions to raise skill set, confidence, self esteem, interpersonal skills and socialising with mainstream. See Graffiti Wall!!

Question 4/5

Established collective advocacy group (Lanarkshire Ace) during closure of local long stay hospital. Over the years the group have completed a number of pieces of work including: A bus poster campaign which focussed on vandalism on buses; produced a criminal justice dvd ('what happens next') explaining the processes and additional help available to people with learning disability if they found themselves involved in the criminal justice system; worked with NHS on creating DVDs about various conditions and hospital procedures; worked in partnership with NHS to develop easy-read leaflets to be used in hospitals and local surgeries; represent people with learning disability on local PPF and help raise awareness of issues faced when in hospital. Petitioned parliament with respect to changes in DLA for people with a lifelong condition, this petition gathered more than 3000 signatories and was presented to Ian Duncan Smith. Worked within local schools and colleges to highlight

advocacy; rights and responsibilities; bullying; developed and delivered workshops on topics such as alcohol awareness; healthy eating; financial inclusion; relationships and sexual awareness. Working in partnership with South Lanarkshire council on the best value review of day services involved with interviewing potential providers during the tendering process for support providers. Working closely with the Learning Disability Alliance Scotland, including producing a booklet on what people wanted in terms of day opportunities.

Question 6

Continued and increased partnership work with NHS, PPF, local surgeries throughout Scotland leading to more accessible information; better trained staff on issues concerning people with disability; more awareness about availability of advocacy and their role; greater funding for advocacy to widen availability and ensure it's available to all.

Question 7

Increased and improved training for staff working with learning disability students. A wider variety of course choices (real) made available to students. Better planning for transition between primary and secondary schools, secondary school to further education and finally, into the workplace. Ask people what they want don't tell them what they can do and, **DON'T** see the disability first and underestimated our ability! People with learning disabilities have talents and strengths that, in the main, the group felt are not being recognised. Again, see Graffiti wall.

Question 8/9

To allow people with learning disabilities to live independent lives, the group felt that in the main the following areas had to be improved: Wider availability of advocacy support and other support services. There needs to be a better understanding of disability within the wider community. Generally the group felt that there needed to be better facilities within the home and community to meet the needs of the individual. More groups/social facilities created to offer a wider choice of social activity. More accessible transport service, the group highlighted the abilities displayed by physically disabled people at the paralympics, however, these same people were unlikely to be able to travel freely on public transport without help due to the current lack of facilities available. Better support for families and carers to understand abilities and desire for independence. More courses in schools that would make us employable; more college places available. A better understanding about the use of language used on letters

from government and health bodies (not everyone understands 24 hour clock for example). Smaller groups in schools and colleges; more opportunity and advice on integration; better awareness raising in mainstream schools / colleges about ability of us with a learning disability. See Graffiti Wall.

Question 10

1. See us as an individual before you see our disability
2. Ask us what we want, don't tell us. Listen to us.
3. We must be involved in every bit of planning for our lives.
4. Make transport more accessible for all.

Photographs





Future Ideas

1. See us as individual but seeing disability
2. Ask us what we want, don't tell us. Listen to us!
3. We must be involved in every bit of planning for our lives.
4. Make transport more accessible for all.

Feedback

- helped lots because hear other peoples experiences
- Good environment to share because we feel safe.
- Increased confidence
- Helped to learn from others
- Met new people
- Can share our learning
- ~~Not~~ comfortable to accessing info
Not yet
- All wanting to take part



Who's here?

Date: 19th September 2012

Facilitator is: MARIA / CATHERINE

2000
2012

What worked well?

What have you done to improve services?

What have you done to make things better in your area?

Better Support in Schools

Advocacy

CIVIC Hospitals

Partnership work with other groups

Bullying poster campaign in schools

Alcohol in other workplaces in schools & colleges

Campaign

Criminal Justice diva

Petition to parliament

Partnership

Making D.V.D.s for NHS

Petition Parliament + Local MPs

Work with Advocacy

Representing L.D. on PPF

Professionals who coming to our group for advice

Financial workshop

What happens next D.V.D.

NHS Partnership work

Working to get NHS to talk to people with LD

Work in Schools

Talking to MIA about being members for weekdays

Representing L.D. on PPF

Working to get easy read letters