

## Question 1

Do the things in the easy read consultation report reflect your views and opinions about services for people with learning disabilities?

(Please tick your answer)



Yes



No

You can put any comments about this question here.

We have used the information in the consultation report as a basis for our discussions, it was very useful.

This Feedback is from the ENABLE Scotland, Elgin ACE, Inverness ACE and Elgin Go For It Group.

## Question 2

What do you think has worked well over the last 10 years for people with learning disabilities and family carers?

This could be changes in your local community or all over Scotland.

Please write your answer here.

A greater choice of activities, not restricted to those provided by day centers.

The new opportunities available to people with learning disabilities – working in shops, café's, recycling projects, nursing homes, gardening projects, factories etc.

Training work placements, such as those offered by social enterprise's and voluntary work – great for building self-esteem, skills and community involvement, although most trainees have not moved onto paid work.

We feel some promises were made and these have not been fulfilled, staff shortages have contributed to some decreases to our access to social activities.





### Question 3

What do you think still needs to be done by the Government to make the lives of people with learning disabilities and family carers better?

Please write your answer here.

More disability awareness training is needed, for people living and working in our local communities. Often people don't seem to understand when we need help or are unwilling to help, when we struggle to do something we are sometimes met with rudeness and impatience. We believe equipped with disability awareness training, a higher proportion of people will treat us with dignity and respect.

We think personal plans are important, these help the people supporting us and better understand our needs. Although, a small minority of people feel their privacy is being breached through the availability of detailed written records about their lives, these individuals would rather verbally inform support staff about their needs.

Greater consideration needs to be given towards the provision of accessible information, in formats such Easy Read, CD's/DVD'. Web site designers should ensure larger text, pictures and straight forward navigation is available. TV/Radio public information announcements and campaigns should be delivered in clear straightforward manner, taking into consideration the needs of people with learning disabilities. We should be consulted when information is being produced, so we can advise on how it can be simplified and made easier to understand.



Advocacy or one to one support should be more widely available to people with learning disabilities. On the occasions we are not happy with our services or our experiences out in the community, we need someone to turn to for an independent and unbiased opinion. We also find group advocacy helpful, we think it is important that we are given the opportunity to work together, to increase the awareness of service providers, such as local councils, educational establishments, transport providers and care agencies to better inform them of our needs and advise them on measures they could take to help us improve the quality of our lives.

New support staff should always receive sufficient training to work with us and understand our needs. It is important staff consult us about decisions which affect our lives and have our choices followed through.

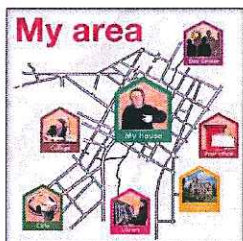


**Question 4 - (this question is for organisations only)**

- What have you done in your organisation to improve services for people with learning disabilities in your local area?
- What have you done in your organisation to improve access to services for people with learning disabilities in your local area?

Please write your answer here.

This question is answered through the response to question 5



## Question 5

What have you done to make things better in your local area for people with learning disabilities and family carers?

We feel that it is essential the viewpoints of people with learning disabilities are represented within our communities, we aim to equip local and national decision makers, with detailed information about the viewpoints of people with learning disabilities.

One of our group members is working with our local council to help them better understand how we would like our services to be run. She is providing a link between our group and the learning disability partnership board.

Group members frequently attend local and sometimes national consultation events.

We regularly respond to written consultations about public services.

Group members attend our local Equality and Disability forums.

We work closely with our local councils Equal Opportunities Officer and Public Involvement Officer on issues to advise on issues which affect the lives of people with learning disabilities.

We have worked on producing easy read documents to help people with learning disabilities better understand their rights and obtain information.

When we consider an issue to be of utmost importance we contact service providers, government officials and local politicians to ensure they are aware of our concerns.

We have invited and spoke with local MP's and MSP's at our meetings. We have also written to MP's and MSP's about our concerns over proposed changes to DLA and the need for increased availability of work schemes and for the provision for independent advocacy to be included in the Self Directed Support Bill.

We have worked with Scotrail and the British Transport Police to raise awareness of some of the anxieties and problems experienced by people with learning disabilities traveling on trains. We appealed for tighter control for alcohol on trains and asked for extra protection for vulnerable people whilst traveling.

We are working with organizations such as Historic Scotland on community projects.

We deliver disability awareness/anti-bullying workshops in schools.





## Question 6

What do you think needs to be done to help people with learning disabilities get access to good healthcare?

Keeping Healthy is our number one priority, on a daily basis we are faced with a number of challenges which sometimes prohibit us from being as healthy as we would like to be.

We feel it is important that when in contact with a health professional they speak to us directly, rather than the person supporting us. We need them to speak clearly and slowly, using simple everyday language, explaining information relating to our health and giving us basic details about our proposed treatment. We feel that health professionals should be specifically trained on how to best approach and advise someone with a learning disability.

We feel medical professionals should listen more carefully to people with learning disabilities and take their complaints seriously, rather than dismissing them (individuals gave accounts of occasions where they have been told by medical professionals, there is nothing wrong, later to find out, they have a valid medical condition which was not diagnosed or treated appropriately).

We should be offered regular health checks and advice, to help us and those supporting us, to best meet our needs for an optimum level of health, in areas such as fitness, weight and nutrition.

Our Support staff should receive training in areas such as the promotion of physical activity, nutrition, weight management, recognizing symptoms of common diseases, medication and



helping us manage conditions like diabetes. We need them to work with us to help us maintain and improve our health, we want this process to be fun and enjoyable, we do not want to feel we are being forced into activities and programs we gain no enjoyment from.

Healthcare not only includes access to GP's, hospital's and other healthcare professionals.

Leisure Centers and other agencies, can help us maintain good levels of health through the provision of activities which can potentially contribute to increased levels of physical fitness and mental wellbeing/life satisfaction. For this to be possible funding needs to be available and more stringent guidance given to service providers on how best to meet the needs of people with disabilities. In the case of physical activity, agencies/service providers should work with us to better understand and identifying, common barriers to our engagement , we hope armed with this knowledge we will be provided with a diverse choice of accessible and enjoyable activities.

We gain great benefit from for one to one time, friendship, social activities and the occasional holiday and trip away. In recent years, cuts to staffing budgets have meant these opportunities are becoming less frequent.

Our emotional and mental wellbeing relies on the opportunity for us to express ourselves and have contact with other people. Consideration to these needs should be made when calculating the amount of support we require. It is not all about direct support to enable us to carry out everyday activities such as cooking and cleaning, we need to support to be fully involved in the community and engage in social activities.

## Question 7

What do you think needs to be done to improve access to better education and learning for people with learning disabilities?



We believe people with learning disabilities should have more input into course design and more choice over which course to study. Training does not only have to be provided by colleges, other organisations with skills and expertise could either visit us in college or provide us with training on different premises. Training could be offered in subjects such as bike maintenance, photography, cookery and child care.

We think there should be more qualifications available, specifically developed for people with learning disabilities, rather than expecting us to complete a standard qualification such as a HNC (sometimes the support we have been during studying for standard course had not been enough for us to manage the work load or achieve a qualification). More focus needs to be put into assessing our practical skills and verbal knowledge rather than our written work.

Those who deliver training to us should use techniques to enhance our learning experience, multimedia presentations (film, music, pictures), drama, interactive workshops and group discussions all help us learn.

We think it is important during training courses, discipline is maintained, martial arts academies or the military might be able to help skill up trainers/teachers in techniques where discipline is

maintained in a fair and respectful way.

We believe education and training are not all about providing an academic environment in which to learn, our need for additional support to manage difficult emotions and certain health issues should be acknowledged.





## Question 8

What do you think needs to be done to help people with learning disabilities live more independent lives?

The courses at college should be equip us with independent living skills. School and college syllabus's, should include subjects like household budgeting, using a bank account, avoiding debt, protecting ourselves from scams and criminal behavior, household and personal shopping, using the internet, housekeeping i.e. washing dishes, washing clothes, cleaning.

Training should not end when we leave college, we should be offered training opportunities throughout our lives. We might forget some of what we are taught at college, we would welcome the opportunity to update our skills.

Safe and supportive environments are needed, such as community centers and safe pubs, so we can sometimes meet our friends without direct staff supervision.

Bus passes are important to enable us to access services/facilities within the community.

We need to know we will have enough money to live on if we can't find a paid job



## Question 9

What do you think needs to be done to help people with learning disabilities get jobs?

We need more specialist employment projects or Social Enterprise's.

We need a more people to work with employers to encourage them to employ a greater number of people with learning disabilities.

It would help if the government develop legislation, placing a duty on larger employers to recruit a certain number/percentage of people with disabilities.

We need more people to support is us in searching for a job, making an application and attending an interview.

We need to be made more aware of job vacancies for which we could apply, employers could advertise through the media we have access to, i.e. poster boards are our training work placements, through magazines/newsletters we read.

More employers could visit us whilst we are at college or at our work placements and speak to us about job opportunities.

It would help, if employers consulted us on the best way to recruit us into their workplaces.

We need employers to be more understanding of both our needs and our skills, tasks need to be broken down and we need to be

trained gradually. A delegated person/support worker should be available in the workplace to help and advise us.

Our placements should not end early because we are not progressing as quickly as the employer would like, we time to learn and should be given this during work placements. Ideally, the employer should be creative in delegating us tasks, to make the best use our skills. If for any reason a work placement or job is at risk of breaking down, we should be fully consulted about any issues and given the chance to rectify any problems. A work placement should never end without us being given a full explanation of the circumstances which led to the decision.

Colleges or other training organizations could provide us with specialist courses designed by the employer to equip us with the skills required by the employer.

Specialist employment schemes such as the one offered by Ikea in Edinburgh should be replicated by other employers.

The Helping People Back to Work – The role of employers - Report for Scottish Business in the Community - Employability Leadership Group – by Colin Lindsay and Professor Ronald McQuaid at the Employment Research Institute, Napier University Business School, Edinburgh, makes recommendations on how to open up employment opportunities to a wide range of people, including people like us with learning disabilities.





### Question 10

What do you think are the things we need to do in the future to make the lives of people with learning disabilities better?

Please write the most important things first.

Please write your answers here.

1. Help us keep healthy – we have made plenty of suggestions on how this might be possible.
2. Living in a safe area, surrounded by people we can trust not to take advantage of us.
3. Keeping my benefits or making sure we have work which pays sufficiently to help us live an active life.
4. Disability awareness training delivered to bus drivers, shop keepers, those providing us with work or voluntary placements and any other people we meet in the community.
5. Current legislation strengthened to ensure landlords focus on making buildings accessible to wheelchairs and to people with mobility problems.
6. Increase the number of training placements and employment opportunities.
7. Having more say in the decisions made about my life.
8. Buses redesigned to make it easier to travel with a wheelchair, at present there is conflict over space, especially between wheelchairs and pushchairs.

9. Having a greater amount of easy to understand information available.