

Brent Health Action Project

Final report

December 2011



We know that in the UK, people with learning disabilities have more health problems than other people.



We also know that they do not get the healthcare from doctors and hospitals that they need.

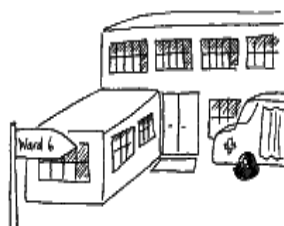


In Brent, people with learning disabilities told us that some people get a good service from their doctors and from hospitals.



“Anti inflammatory
....decongestant”

Other people say that the doctors use difficult words, don't give them a chance to ask questions and treat them differently.



Some people feel that hospitals do not understand their needs, and do not always treat them with respect.



Brent Mencap was given some money to do a project about this. The money came from Brent Learning Disability Development Fund.

1.



The project had 4 things to do.

1. Train people who work in hospitals, in the community and Doctors' surgeries about understanding learning disabilities.

2.



2. Talk to people about what they thought about their healthcare

3.



3. Put on information stalls, giving out leaflets and talking to health workers about learning disability

4.



4. Visit hospitals as 'mystery patients' to look at how easy it was to find their way around and how they were treated.



8 people with learning disabilities were paid as ‘consumer trainers’ to do this work together with Claudia Feldner and Ann O’Neill.



The results:

80 people who work in Doctors’ surgeries have had training about learning disabilities.



115 people who work in hospitals and in the community have had training about learning disabilities.



People liked the training and found it helpful.



People said that they knew more about people with learning disabilities at the end of the training.



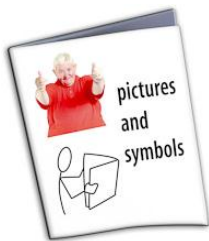
People talked about things they would do differently now, to make things better for people with learning disabilities.



We telephoned them to ask what they had changed because of the training.



Some people had put up the 'Getting It Right' charter on the wall in the hospital.



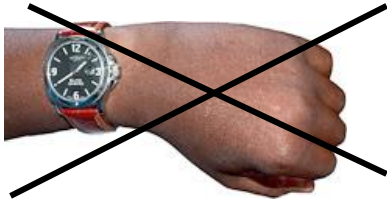
Some people had looked for easy-read information to give out to people.



Some managers had made sure that their staff went on the learning disability training.



A lot of people talked about trying to communicate better with people with learning disabilities.



Some people said that they had not had time to change things.



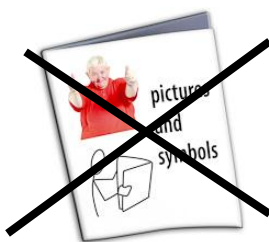
Next, we visited Central Middlesex and Northwick Park hospitals with people with learning disabilities ('mystery patients') to see for ourselves what has changed.



We found the signs very confusing, with not many pictures or symbols.



We got lost!



We asked for easy read information or leaflets about staying in hospital and about having a blood test- but there weren't any at the hospital.



PALS - Patient Advice and Liaison Service

NWP – Northwick Park Hospital

BUT-

- We found the PALS officer helpful and friendly,
- We were given easy-read information about cancer from the Macmillan Centre (NWP)
- We found the volunteer helpers at reception at NWP very helpful and friendly.

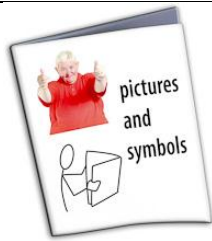


We had problems in getting people who work in health services to come along to the training. We need health services to help to change this.



What needs to be different?

- More people need to do the training so that they can understand people with learning disabilities better.
- Health workers need to be given time by their managers to make changes happen.



- Hospitals and other healthcare places need to make their signs easier to understand using pictures or symbols.



- Easy-read information needs to be available in all areas - not just cancer care.



- Health staff need to use the hospital passport.



If you want the full report



telephone Brent Mencap on:
020 8451 5278



or email:

claudia@brentmencap.org.uk

With thanks to Photosymbols and Change Picture Bank for the pictures.