Notes : Disability Rights UK UNCRPD ( Zoom) consultation meeting Wednesday 17th November 2021 6-8pm

Group 2

Experience of the impact of the Convention 2006-2016

**Access to Work**

**Barriers: Unclear and narrow criteria; lack of understanding and support through process; lack of staff awareness & discrimination at work / college; communication – lack of potential beneficiaries awareness; application time delays, equipment delays, bureaucracy, stressful process which undermines confidence and affects health.**

**Need to legally challenge the A2W system**

**Positives: Excellent when the system works – there is good practice but it is ad hoc and inconsistent; Access to Work has great potential .**

**founder SWCD**

☹“It is ironic that the system and process implemented to support and accommodate disabled people into work is unsupportive”

“Need to challenge the system – maybe the only way is the legal way”

Funding application process : applied in October 2020 for a wheelchair and a year lapsed before the funding was secured.

***Learning Disability Nurse***

Staff member she managed found the Access to work process

“mortifying and difficult, with significant barriers including time delays, bureaucracy , unclear expectations on the sourcing and delivery of equipment”

Many people Rosie has spoken to are unaware of the scheme .

😊With the correct support , accessible process and awareness the scheme has good potential

***Individual Disabled person***

☹Advised two years consecutively that she was overqualified ( has a degree) – would have qualified for ACW for shop floor work. There seem to be specific roles disabled people.

“ You have to fight for it – lots of people have quit ; many people don’t have the support mechanisms or resources - very damaging ( to health), **it’s better than nothing”**

***Individual***

Worked with DWP ten years ago on behalf of 2 deaf employees of a Norwich based disability charity – process was challenging as described by other attendees today.

On a personal level – the forms and tribunal process “nearly broke me”

PIP process 2019 – little better than the ESA.

**Disability Discrimination .**

**Disability discrimination persists – among institutions : the government , housing, DWP, local authorities, universities; among students.**

**Isolation is a key issue – support is not holistic, but compartmentalized. Lack of accessible and consistent geographical support eg Centres For Independent Living.**

**DD also persists in prison – all disabled people need access to support and human rights.**

**There are positive experiences but these are ad hoc and inconsistent – the standard experience is negative rather than positive.**

**Lived experience & driving thing forward : People with lived experience need to be employed in all aspects of services for disabled people**

**The UNCPRD need to be tested for its effectiveness – pessimistic outlook.**

***Individual Disabled person***

“What unsettles me is that we have a government who would gladly drop to help those, us , who are disabled while they are in power, all our current efforts can be lost”

***Disability Officer for a local political party (Disabled person)***

😊 Worked for the NHS for 12 years – became unwell and had a supportive team.

☹However, a new manager questioned her ability to travel for the role – Laura resigned and has been unable to work after COVID. Advised by trade union to challenge the disability discrimination. Feels that people are allowed to get away with disability discrimination.

***Individual Disabled person***

**☹Housing:** there are still problems with accessible housing – still battling with the Local Authority who are unhelpful about damp, and “the process to the tribunal feel like being criminalized” .

The process has exacerbated current health conditions and M developed rheumatoid arthritis.

“The DWP process has not got better”

***Individual Disabled person***

☹ “ People get away with disability discrimination”

***Individual Disabled person - University experience***

**😊** Received support for studying

☹Experienced discrimination by other students regarding the support she received ; no mentoring support or at home so became isolated.:)

☹😊Centres for Independent Living are a positive , but are sparse – not in every area.

***Individual Disabled person – University experience***

Discriminatory university official – told S she would be unable to become a teacher and undertake the workload . S left due to the (unsupported) workload and did teach. Also experienced other students who expressed S would “not be pulling her weight”. This was left unchallenged by the tutor.

😊Great support currently including with adaptations .

**COVID: “**The injections may kill you” labelling of disabled people as “malingerers”. No injections mean she cannot access campus

***Individual Disabled person* - volunteers for 6 charities**

😊Employment for young carers – right framework

**☹ COVID:** issue of communication and awareness of disabled peoples needs , plus communication needs among teams . Need to train and educate NHS staff to understand the needs of disabled people and their carers.

😊☹ There are many good pilots and projects and pilots these are inconsistent “supporters and carers of disabled people need to be heard”.

Need to be inclusive of disabled people : openness, honesty, transparency ( adherence to public service principles and values).

**Need to train/ educate the next / younger generation to be part of the solution.**

SP : 2016 Rehabilitation International World Congress – disabled prisoners also need support.

**Access to benefits**

**A focus on finance; system benchmarking against unsuitable countries; no progress since 2016/17. Lack of trust and concerns about discontinuing PIP.**

***Individual Disabled person***

Has 30 health related conditions and also helps people with forms . An individual she assisted resulted in eleven errors of law with the assessment.

ESA: the process “Sanctions fear among people with fluctuating conditions”.

DWP forms can be misleading so appeals are overruled. SP has concerns about linking ESA and DWP.

Media – people on benefits labelled as “Malingerers”

The Individual Budget – Had to be an employer and had to refuse this as she could have been considered as an employer and therefore a business , affecting her benefit income.

**COVID** : Had to alter how her budget was used ( help had to be outside) and lost her benefit.

***Individual Disabled person***

Attended the Green Paper consultation on the **DWP –** lack of trust in them; there is a focus on the need to be in work. PIP payments ceasing an issue. UK govt benchmarking is in relation to countries with unsuitable disability systems.

There is still a focus on finance – no lessons learnt since 2016/17

**Social care providers**

No progress since the Winterborn View scandal 2011 ( abuse of residents with LD) <https://navigator.health.org.uk/theme/winterbourne-view-scandal-and-government-response>.

***Individual Disabled person***

**Oliver McGowan report** : - mandatory training of staff in LD and autism. :)

😊 A pilot in South Gloustershire was well produced . Example of good practice .

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Independent-Review-into-Thomas-Oliver-McGowans-LeDeR-Process-phase-two-easy-read-version_October-2020.pdf->

**Isolation** is a key issue – lack of social networks and **COVID** made it worse.

***Individual Disabled person***

**– volunteer for disability organisations plus relatives with LD**

The Government need to investigate the Health and Social care system which is a “Demand avoidant system – many disabled people are at the end of the queue”

**COVID-** Disabled people are adversely affected – the cost is their quality of life ; despite Laws, not much has been done.

***Individual Disabled person***

The government is cutting back on disabled peoples needs in relation to the Law. Courts and Magistrates; **COVID –** people are worn out and ceasing to work; this is a deliberate process – easy contracts to rich people .

**KEY ISSUES**

**Disability Discrimination in the UK – at an individual and institutional continues to persist for most disabled people despite the UNCRPD. Good practice exists but is the exception rather than the norm.**

1. **Health and Social Care**

* **Deteriorated – few improvements since 2016.**
* **Financial cuts – disabled people are disproportionately affected**
* **Not being listened to**
* **Delays in accessing support – a constant battle**
* **Isolation is prevalent**
* **Need to legally challenge**
* **COVID has exacerbated difficulties**
* **Challenges experienced with most public services providers – local to national .**

**Good practice exists but is ad hoc**

1. **Access to Work & benefits**

* **Challenging and Unsupportive process**
* **Hard to access – ironic**
* **Narrow criteria**
* **Confusing**
* **COVID has exacerbated challenges**
* **Focus is on work , not individual need**
* **Concerns over cuts to benefits**

**Good practice exists but again, inconsistent**