Impact Statement

9th November 2021

**Re: Simon Smith**

I am writing this letter, as an observer to the impact, specific areas of Simon’s care, has had on his physical and mental wellbeing, his relationships, his quality of life and his potential for progress towards work.

Simon has always had the impression that obtaining a diagnosis for his dual diagnosis of Autism and ADHD, would be a gateway to obtaining the support he needed to enable him to manage his life and have the opportunities that other people have.

Unfortunately, Simon has experienced that this is not the case and he has spent many years, since diagnosis, trying to manage, trying to co-ordinate his own care, trying to communicate his needs and fighting for the system of Health and Social Care to meet his assessed needs.

Due to his diagnosis and due to the above fight to have his needs met, Simon has also experienced that much of, private and public sector organisations, are not structured or aware of how to support a person with neuro-diverse conditions such as his.

To enable him to fight and campaign for change towards a better, over-arching support mechanism, Simon has needed specialist advocacy and legal support. Unfortunately, Simon has found that this is not available at the level he now needs and therefore he tries to do so, for the majority of the time, with very limited support.

It may appear to the outside view that Simon complains about many issues. Simon does not do so without justification, he puts in a complaint when he finds that a system does not work for him, due to his needs or when there is a failing in a system. Unfortunately, this has meant that Simon has accrued many ongoing complaints and he does not always have the capacity to choose which ones to pursue, or how to just ‘let them go’, due to what the consequence of ‘just letting it go’ might be.

The above combination of fighting for his needs being met and for organisations to support and communicate appropriately with him has taken over much of his life. It has also taken a severe toll on his mental and physical wellbeing.

Simon regularly becomes overwhelmed by his fight to achieve awareness, support and reasonable adjustment from the different organisations he tries to communicate with, which can regularly lead to use of crisis services, that have involved 111, police and ambulance services to ensure that he is safe. The stress Simon experiences also carries over into his relationships with his fiancée, his family and his wider support network.

Below is a list of some of the areas that Simon has expressed to me, that needs to be looked at a local and national level, to ensure that services are commissioned for people with neuro-diverse conditions, so that he and other people do not continue to experience these deficits.

* Lack of commissioned services for neuro-diverse disabilities
* Lack of appropriate Advocacy
* Lack of continuity from services
* Lack of reasonably adjusted charging policies by local council.
* Lack of a system that overarches Health and Social care
* Lack of structured care co-ordination
* Lack of neuro-diverse aware staff
* Lack of access to mental health services due to dual diagnosis
* Lack of reasonable adjustment and adaptation for communication
* Lack of regulation for organisation’s supporting people with disability
* Lack of support to enable progression for people with a neuro-diverse or mental health condition

Simon is an intelligent and caring man, with many skills and much potential that is not being utilised. He can feel that life is passing him by whilst he fights towards making people aware of the issues and to campaign for change. Simon needs a person with local and national influence to support him to ensure steps are taken to look at these issues.

CG - Counsellor