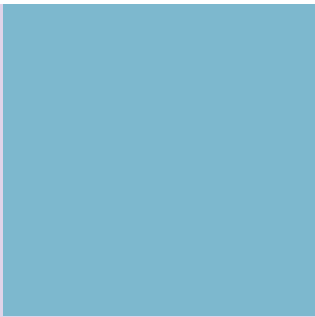


Valuing People Now: a new three year strategy for people with learning disabilities

Making it happen for everyone



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Making it happen for everyone

Easy read version

Message from the National Forum for People with Learning Difficulties

As Co-Chair of the National Forum for People with Learning Difficulties and someone who uses learning disability services, I have been fully involved in updating Valuing People (2001) to Valuing People Now (2009). I have learnt a lot through this and met many people with a learning difficulty that had a story to tell, good or bad. My belief is that, with the launch of Valuing People Now, those good stories will become more and more.

The Valuing People Now Easy Read version tells us how the Government plans to make services and the lives of people with a learning difficulty better over the next 3 years. Both I, and the National Forum for People with Learning Difficulties, have made a commitment to make sure Valuing People Now happens for everyone.

I feel this document will be very useful to you. Please take the time to read it and share the information with your friends, family, staff and anyone else you come into contact with.

Richard Blake, Co-Chair National Forum for People with Learning Difficulties

Message from the National Valuing Families Forum

Valuing People Now is an opportunity to help get better lives for all people with learning disabilities and their families, including those with complex needs, and from black and minority ethnic communities.

Families are important to us all: it is a *human right* to have a family life. We welcome the commitment in Valuing People Now to work with all families as valued partners.

Many people with learning disabilities live with their families and value their long term love and support. Valuing People Now recognises that we need to get better at providing information and support to the whole family at different ages and stages in their lives.

There are all sorts of families and sometimes we disagree, but we *unite* in our aim of better lives for people. We also know that many people with learning disabilities are having families of their own, or are caring for older parents and we need to provide them with the right support when and how they need it.

Working together as partners we can achieve more. The National Valuing Families Forum will continue to work closely with the National Forum for People with Learning Difficulties, and with others, to make sure Valuing People Now really changes lives for the better.



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The Key Messages in Valuing People Now



People with learning disabilities should have the same rights and choices as everyone else.



People with learning disabilities have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.



People with learning disabilities should have the same chances and responsibilities as everyone else.



Family carers and families of people with learning disabilities have the right to the same hopes and choices as other families.

What is Valuing People Now?



Valuing People Now is the Government's new **strategy** (big plan) for people with learning disabilities.

Valuing People Now explains what the Government thinks should happen to make things better for people with learning disabilities.

Valuing People Now explains what the Government will do, and what it expects different services to do.



This version tells you about all the main things that are in Valuing People Now.

Why have we written Valuing People Now?



Since Valuing People in 2001, things have got better for many people with learning disabilities.

More people have personal budgets, advocacy groups are stronger, and some people are in paid jobs.

But, some things have not changed as much as we wanted them to.

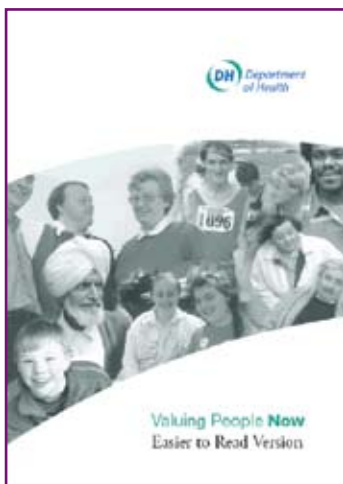


For example, a report called **Healthcare For All** said that things need to change so that people with learning disabilities get good healthcare.



People with learning disabilities and their families tell us that they are still not getting the help and support they need.

How did we make **Valuing People Now**?



In 2007, the Department of Health (DH) published Valuing People Now: from progress to transformation.

This was to find out what people thought about the plans for Valuing People Now. Lots of people replied.

There is an easy read version of the report about what people said.

This is on the DH website:

www.dh.gov.uk/consultations



Now read about the main points in each of the chapters of Valuing People Now.

Introduction: Human rights



Valuing People Now says people with a learning disability have the same human rights as everyone else



A report called **A Life Like Any Other?** showed that people with learning disabilities often do not have their human rights respected.



Everything in Valuing People Now is about making sure that people with learning disabilities have their human rights respected.

Chapter 1: Including everyone



Some people with learning disabilities miss out more than others.



These groups are

- people with lots of needs
- people from different backgrounds and cultures
- people with Autism
- people who are in prison or have been in prison



Valuing People Now says that the needs of these people must be part of any plans about learning disability.



Valuing People Now includes work to make sure that these people are included in the Government's plans.



Valuing People Now says it is important that families have a say in how the people they love are cared for and supported.



This is really important for people who have high support needs and lots of problems with their health.

Chapter 2: Personalisation



Personalisation is about planning for and getting the life you want.



People with learning disabilities and their families should get to say what support and care they need.



People with learning disabilities and their families should get to plan how to spend the money for their care and support.



For example, in the past people have been told which service would help them with personal care. People did not have a choice and sometimes the services did not meet their needs.

With Personalisation, people should be able to choose who they want to support them and how.

Personalisation should mean you have more choice, control and independence.



The Government will make sure that the way Personalisation is done meets the needs of people with learning disabilities and their families.

Chapter 3: Having a life

Better Health

We know that people with learning disabilities do not always get the same healthcare as other people.



Some people have died because they did not get the right healthcare.

This must not happen again.



The NHS (National Health Service) has to make sure that it

- gives everyone good healthcare
- includes people with learning disabilities in all its healthcare plans
- gives people good specialist healthcare services when they need them
- offers people with learning disabilities annual health checks



Valuing People Now explains what the Department of Health will do to act on the 10 things that the report **Healthcare For All** said must happen.



Abuse of people with learning disabilities in healthcare services must stop.

Housing



We know many people with learning disabilities do not get to choose where they live or who they live with.



Many people live with their families or in a house with lots of other people. Often they have not been asked if this is what they want.



There are plans in Valuing People Now to give people with learning disabilities more choice about where they live and who they live with.



The Government will work to make sure that local housing plans include the needs of people with learning disabilities and older family carers. People who live in NHS campuses are being supported to move to different housing in the community.

Work, education and getting a life



The Government thinks that people with learning disabilities should be able to have ordinary lives like everyone else.



People with learning disabilities want to go to college, get a job, have relationships and friendships and enjoy leisure and social activities.



In Valuing People Now there is a plan to make sure that young people get the support they need as they become adults, through person centred Transition planning.



Different parts of the Government are going to work together to make plans for education and employment better for people with learning disabilities.



We will produce a big plan for employment in the spring. This will mean that there will be more chances for people with learning disabilities to get a paid job.

Relationships and having a family



The Government thinks it is important that people with learning disabilities

- get the chance to meet new people and keep in contact with old friends
- have the chance to have relationships and get married if they want to



Valuing People Now also says that people with learning disabilities have the right to become parents.

The Government will work together to make sure that parents with learning disabilities get the right support to be a good parents.

Chapter 4: People as citizens

Advocacy



Valuing People Now says it is important that people with learning disabilities get the right support, information, advice and advocacy.

The Department of Health will have a programme of work to:



- find out what advocacy services there are and how much they cost
- support the people who plan advocacy services
- help self advocacy services to check if they are giving a good service



- help self advocacy services to give better services to people from black and other minority communities



- help self advocacy services to give better services to people with complex needs

- support people with learning disabilities to be leaders

Transport



We know that transport is very important for people with learning disabilities. But it does not always work well for them.

The Department of Health will work with the Department for Transport to check that their transport plans include the needs of people with learning disabilities.

Being safe at home and when you are out



People with learning disabilities have the right to live in safety. Often they are the victims of hate crime.

The Home Office is making a Hate Crime Strategy (big plan) to include the needs of people with learning disabilities.



The Department of Health is going to make some changes to guidance (rules) about how to protect people with learning disabilities. These rules are called **No Secrets**.

Justice



People with learning disabilities sometimes find it hard to make a complaint or get legal help if they have been treated unfairly.



People with learning disabilities sometimes find it hard to report a crime or be a witness in court



The Crown Prosecution Service are the people who decide if a case is going to court.

They are making a new policy about how to take cases to court when



- a person with a learning disability has been the victim of a crime
- a person with a learning disability is going to be a witness in court

Chapter 5: Making it happen



Valuing People Now needs lots of groups to work together to make it happen.

We are going to carry on supporting

- The National Forum for People With Learning Difficulties
- The National Valuing Families Forum



There will be a new **National Learning Disability Programme Board**.



This group has the job of checking on how Valuing People Now is working at Government level.



There are also going to be new **Regional Learning Disability Programme Boards**.



Learning Disability Partnership Boards will be really important in deciding about local services and support for people with learning disabilities and their families.



The Department of Health and the Valuing People Team will give extra help to Partnership Boards that are finding it hard.

You can read more about this in the **Valuing People Now Delivery Plan**.

Summary: A list of the main things that we expect will happen in the next 3 years

You (and your family) will



✓ all benefit from Valuing People Now



✓ have greater control over your life and have support to make your person centred plan



✓ get the healthcare you need and the support you need to live a healthy life



✓ have a choice about where you live and who you live with



✓ have a good life with chances to work, study, and enjoy leisure and social activities



✓ be supported into paid work – this includes people with more complex needs



✓ have the choice to have relationships, become parents and carry on being parents, with the support you need



✓ be treated as equal



✓ be able to speak up about what you want from your life. If you need support to do this, you should be able to get it



✓ be able to use public transport safely and easily



✓ feel confident that your right to live in safety is supported by the law, police and prison service

For more copies of this easy read Delivery Plan contact:

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Thanks

We would like to say thank you to all the people with learning disabilities, their families and supporters who helped us with Valuing People Now.

Mencap helped to make this easy read.

Thanks to Mencap and Photo symbols for the pictures.



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