



Helping disabled people do the best they can and take part in their local area

Next steps

September 2012



Easy Read

DWP Department for
Work and Pensions

Important

Green writing

In this easy-read booklet we sometimes explain what words mean.

The first time we mention any of these words, it is in **bold green** writing. Then we write what the words mean in a blue box. If any of the words are used later in the booklet, we show them in **normal green** writing.

These words and what they mean are also in a Word List at the back of the booklet.

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What the Minister for Disabled People says

Hello. My name is Esther McVey and I am the Minister for Disabled People.

In December last year we wrote a booklet called Helping disabled people do the best they can and take part in their local area – Tell us what you think.



I want to say thank you to everyone who took part in our **discussion** about helping disabled people do the best they can.

Discussion

This is when people talk to each other and say what they think.

We found out that disabled people want to do these things.

- Disabled people want **independent living**.

Independent living

This means people having choice and control over the **care and support** services they need to live their lives the way they want to.

Care and support

Care and support are the services and other things that help people live full, independent, active and healthy lives.

- Disabled people want to take part in **society**.

Society

Society means all the people and all parts of life in this country. Being part of **society** can mean being accepted and having your views listened to. It can mean being able to live where you want, vote for a government, or join a group. When people are accepted by others this makes a good **society**.

- Disabled people want to do the best they can, just like everyone does.

Some disabled people face many **barriers** when they are trying to take part in **society**.

Barriers

These are things that stop disabled people living like other people. **Barriers** include things like being treated unfairly and not getting enough help to do the things disabled people want.

Barriers cut down the choices disabled people have. **Barriers** also cut down the chances disabled people have to do things. This is bad for all of **society**, including disabled people.

We need to get rid of these **barriers**. We all need to do these things.

- We need to understand disability better. Only around 3 out of every 100 disabled people have had an **impairment** since they were born. As people live longer, most people will become disabled, or they will look after someone who is disabled.



Impairment

This is something about the way a person does things. It may be things like being unable to walk well, not being able to see or hear other people clearly, not being able to think hard for a long time, or not being able to remember things.

- We need to deal with the way other people think and act towards disabled people. This will stop disabled people being treated badly or unfairly.
- We need to give disabled people more choice and control.
- We need to give our **communities** a bigger say in what happens in their local area.

Community or communities

This means the people, schools, shops and companies in the local area. Good **communities** are places where people join in and do things together to make their area a good place to live.

- We need to work closely with other groups to make changes that will last.

We have done a lot of work already. You can find out more about this work in another booklet called Helping disabled people do the best they can and take part in their local area – What we have talked about so far.

These are some of the things we are working on to make things better.

- Looking at how the good things that happen in the **Paralympic Games** can change things for disabled people in the future.

Paralympic Games

The **Paralympic Games** is a sports competition that disabled sports people from all over the world take part in. The **Paralympic Games** are held after the Olympic Games.

- Changes to the health services and the social care services.
- Changes to the **welfare system**.

Welfare system

This is a government system that gives help to people when they need it. For example, benefits, education and medical care.

We are doing this because of these things.

- We support disabled people's right to work.
- We support disabled people's right to **independent living**.
- We want other people to see what disabled people can do, not what they cannot do.

Some disabled people have told us that they worry about the changes, especially the support and money they get.

We need to think about these things when we are changing the **welfare system** and **public services**.

Public services

These are services from local councils and government. For example, housing, education, social services and health services.

We need to change the **welfare system** and **public services** because they were set up many years ago. And now they do not fit with the way we think about disability.

This booklet sets out our new way of thinking and what other changes we want to make. It also says what we think are the most important things to do next.

This is the next step of our work to find new ideas to help disabled people do the best they can and take part in their local area.

Over the next few months we want to work with disabled people to make new plans. I will make a new group of people to lead the things we do. This group will be a disability action alliance and disabled people will lead it.

I look forward to making a real difference for disabled people.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Esther McVey".

Esther McVey MP
Minister for Disabled People

Disability today

The way we look at disability needs to change

We need to understand more about disability. It affects lots of people in different ways. This will help us make the right changes.

There are more than 1 billion disabled people in the world. This number will get higher.

In this country there are more than 11 million disabled people. This means that 1 person out of every 6 people is disabled.

The number of disabled people keeps changing. This is because a person's **impairment** can change. For example, someone who cannot see well may have medical treatment to help them see better.

The **barriers** they face can also change. For example, changes may be made to local buses so someone who cannot see well can hear all the information they need. They would no longer need support to get about.

This means that they may not always feel disabled.

There are lots of **impairments**. People get them at different ages and in different ways.

Only around 3 out of every 100 disabled people have had an **impairment** since they were born.

Most people will get more illnesses or **impairments** as they live longer and their bodies and minds get older.

More than 1 out of every 2 people over the age of 70 are disabled. Most of us will live to the age of 70 or older. So a lot of us will become disabled.

This means that we must not think of disabled people and non-disabled people as 2 different groups.

We need a plan that makes sure we understand the **diversity** of the people in this country. And also the many different things that disabled people want to do in their lives. We also need a plan that understands that different people have different needs.

Diverse or diversity

This is a mix of different kinds of people. For example, men and women, young and old people, black and white people, disabled and non-disabled people.



In the past we only thought about what **impairment** a person had.

This means we thought that making their **impairment** better was the most important thing so they could be part of **society**.

We felt sorry for disabled people. We did not treat disabled people as people with an equal right to a full life.

In 2009 we signed the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People**.



United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People

This is a list of rights that disabled people have. All the countries that support the Convention agree that disabled people should have these rights.

We supported the idea of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People** when it was being worked out.

The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People** showed how we have changed the way we think about disability. It said these things.

- Disabled people have the same rights as everyone else.
- Disabled people should be able to make decisions about their own lives.
- Disabled people should be able to play a full and active part in **society**.
- Disabled people should be **involved** when we make decisions that will affect the way disabled people live.

Involved or involving

Being **involved** is not the same as being asked. Being **involved** means disabled people playing a bigger part in planning, not just being asked about work done by other people.

We are making sure that we use this way of thinking to get rid of **barriers**. This will mean that disabled people can do the best they can and take part in **society**.

We agree with the idea of **independent living**. We are a world leader on disability rights and **independent living**. But we want to do even more.

We will get rid of **barriers** to get disability equality. And we will also **involve** disabled people when we are making plans that will affect their lives.

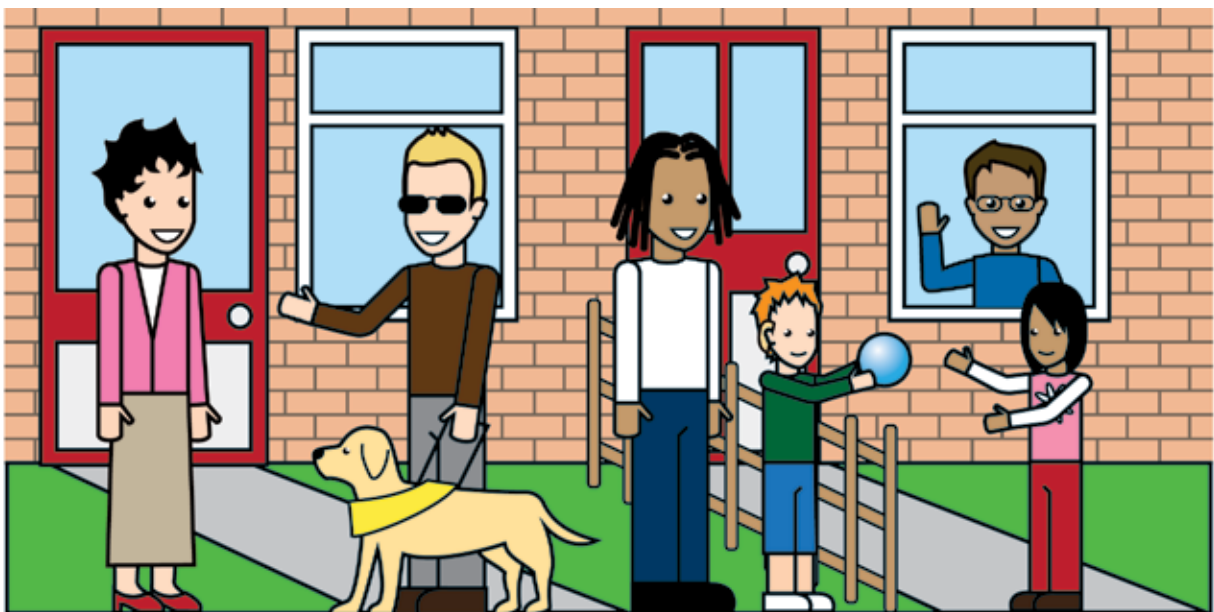
Disabled people are a very important part of making our **economy** and **society** the best they can be. This is because they work, do **volunteering**, care for people and play an active part in **communities** and families.

Economy

The economy is how much money the country has. It is made up of the goods and services in the country compared to how many people want to use or buy those goods and services.

Volunteering

This is when people do work for which they are not paid. For example, work in a charity shop.



The government has a plan to grow the **economy**. This will mean there is enough money in the country for the services we all need.

We will also be able to make new jobs, and make learning in schools and colleges better.

We know that work is good for everyone. It is good for people's health and the way they feel. We know that more disabled people want to work. Everyone should have the support they need to work if they want to.

But we know that some disabled people may not be able to work and may need support from the government and other services. But everyone gives something to their families and **communities** and helps our country be the best it can be.

We have to make sure we support disabled people properly. We need to find new ways of doing this in a way that people understand and agree with.

Everyone has the right to do the best they can and to have self-respect and to be well thought of by other people.

Our aims

The **discussion** we had on helping disabled people do the best they can and take part in their local area had 3 main parts.

- Helping disabled people do the best they can.
- Choice and control.
- Changing the way people think and act towards disabled people.

These 3 parts helped us to work out our new aims for disabled people.

We want disabled people to be able to do the best they can for the things that matter most to them. These are things like work, education, health, family and **community** life, and all parts of **independent living**.

Our aim is to make things fair and equal for everyone. We want people to have more power to do things. This would give everyone **equal opportunities**.

Equal opportunity or equal opportunities

This means having the same chances as everyone else to join in and live a full and happy life.

We want disabled people to have the same choice, control and freedom for **independent living** as everyone else.

This does not mean that disabled people need to do everything themselves. It means that any support a disabled person needs should be based on their own choice and be what they want.



To do this we will need **communities** where disabled people's voices are heard and where disabled people can do the best they can.

We will make sure that **communities** have a bigger say in what happens in their local area. And that people who make decisions about the **community involve** disabled people.

We will make it clear who is responsible for making things better for disabled people. We will make it easier to ask the people responsible to explain if changes are not made. We will also make it easier for people to complain if something goes wrong.

We will make changes to **public services** to help disabled people to be independent and to take part.

We will deal with the things that mean some disabled people do not have the chance to take part in all parts of **society**. Those things includes the things that cause **poverty**.

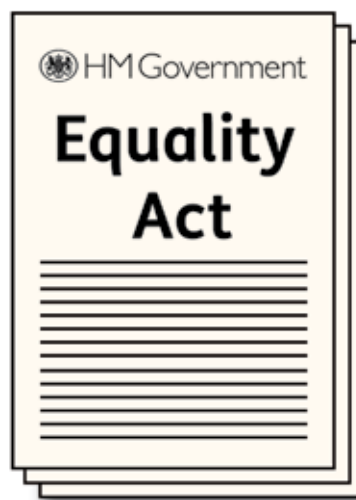
Poverty

This is when a person or family does not have enough money to pay for the things they need, or to take part in everyday life as much as other people.

We will build on good, strong rights and laws. This will include the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People**. It will also include this country's rights and laws like the **Human Rights Act** and the **Equality Act**.

Human Rights Act

This is a list of rights that everyone should get. It includes things like the right to life, the right to an education and the right to freedom of speech.



Equality Act

This is a law to make sure that all people are treated fairly and equally.

We need to make sure that everyone knows about these rights and the laws that protect them and deliver them.

Service providers must know about and follow the laws.

Non-disabled people must be shown that the rights they take for granted must also apply equally to disabled people.

Disabled people tell us that to meet our aims we will need to do these things.

- Make changes to **public services** to support independence.
- Work with other groups and organisations to work out and set up changes.
- Give people a better understanding of disability and disabled people in this country.

Making changes to public services to support independence

What disabled people told us helped government departments to work out the best way of changing **public services** to better meet the needs of disabled people.



This will help us meet the aims of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People**. It will also make sure that disabled people are **involved** in getting the **public services** they need.

The changes include things like these.

- Changing the **care and support** system.
- Changing the **welfare system** to help disabled people get and keep independence. It will also support employment.

- Setting up 2 new services. One is called Public Health England. The other is called **HealthWatch**. These 2 services will give disabled people more information. They will also get them **involved** in health services.

HealthWatch

HealthWatch makes sure that the views of the public and people who use health services are taken into account in their local area.

- Giving disabled people more choice and better **joined-up services** across government departments.
- Testing new ways of making **joined up services** in the **Right to Control** areas. We hope these new services will help us make more changes in the future.

Joined up services or joined up working

This is when a **service provider** makes sure their service links well with the services of other **service providers**.

Right to control

This is about disabled people making their own decisions about their support instead of other people making decisions for them.

Service providers

These give the support that disabled people and older people need. Examples of **service providers** are local councils, some voluntary groups and care and support businesses.

- A new Transport Action Plan which has been worked out with disabled people.
- Single education, health and care plans for young disabled people.
- Setting up new ways to tackle **disability hate crime**.

Disability hate crime

If a person breaks the law because they do not like disabled people that is a disability hate crime.

- Setting up new ways for disabled people to take part in public life.

You can find out more about the changes in another booklet called Helping disabled people do the best they can and take part in their local area – What we have talked about so far.

As we make the changes we will keep working very closely with disabled people. This will make sure everything runs well.

The new disability action alliance group

We were told that disabled people and disability groups need to be more **involved** in making plans and making changes.

We were also told that our plans do not link up with what happens in real life. We were told that people want changes to their local **communities**.

We want to change the way government works with people, their families and local **communities**.

The **Office for Disability Issues** will help to set up a disability action alliance. This group will be put together by **Disability Rights UK**.

Office for Disability Issues

This is a group of people who work for the government. They help government workers understand about disabled people, and what they need to do to help make things fairer for disabled people.



Disability Rights UK

Disability Rights UK is a group that works with disabled people. It aims to do these things.

- Be run by disabled people.
- Get **independent living** for disabled people.
- Get more choice and control for disabled people.
- Break the link between disability and **poverty**.
- Get disability equality.

The disability action alliance will work out what needs to be changed. It will also find good ways of working to support disabled people and tell people about them.

The disability action alliance will make a real difference to the lives of disabled people by doing these things.

- Making sure disabled people and disabled people's groups have a say in important decisions.
- Bringing together groups from the **private sector**, **public sector** and **third sector** who can make a difference.

Private sector

These are businesses and groups that are run by people or groups and that make money out of their work.

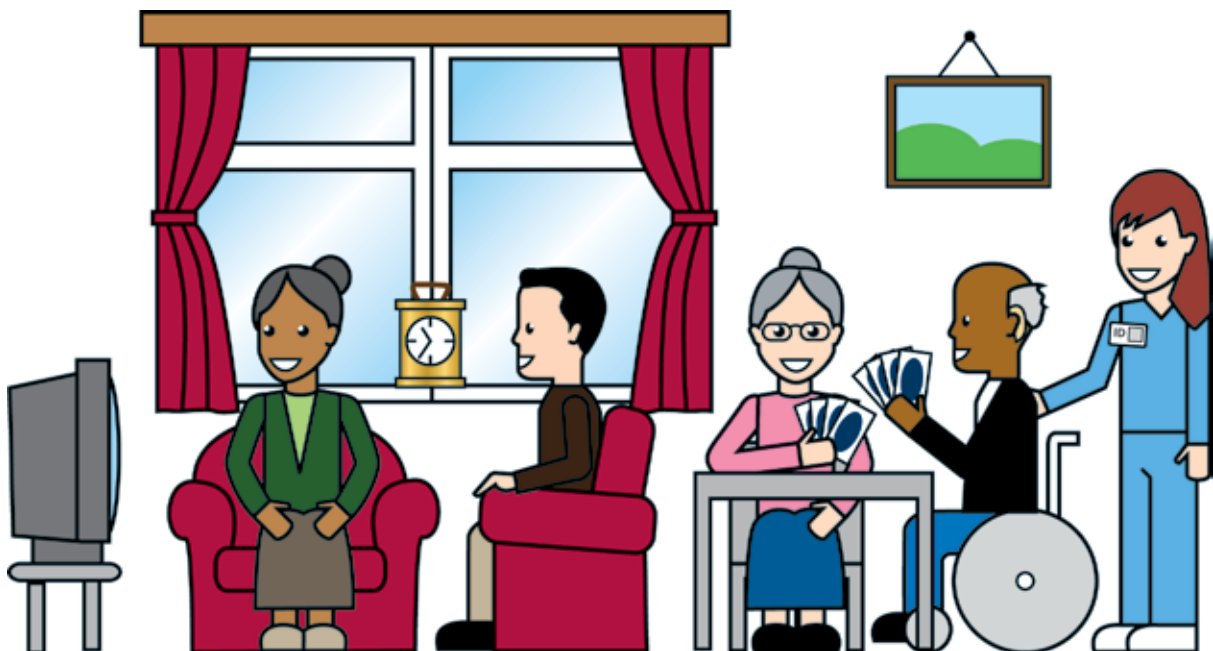
Public sector

These are groups that provide services and are run by the government. This includes most schools, most hospitals and local councils.

Third sector (or voluntary sector)

These are groups that do not make money out of their work. Examples are **community** groups, voluntary groups, charities, co-operatives and housing associations.

- Using groups that work in the local area.
- **Involving** disabled people who we do not hear from as much as others. This includes disabled people in **care homes** and disabled people from black and **ethnic minorities**.



Care homes

These are places where people go to live when they cannot get the support they need to live in their own home. Sometimes they are called residential or nursing homes.

Ethnic minority

This means people who, because of their race, colour, culture, language or nationality, are not the same as the majority of the population. For example, black Caribbean people, Pakistani people, Chinese people and Bangladeshi people.

- Helping disabled people so they understand their rights and can use them.

Doing these things will help us follow the rules in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People**. It will also help us deal with things that disabled people have told us about.

The **discussion** about helping disabled people do the best they can and take part in their local area talked about the things that are important to disabled people.

We think that this means the disability action alliance could look at 3 areas.

- Looking at ways of dealing with problems early, or stopping problems from happening. This is often very important so that disabled people can keep doing the best they can.
- Making sure disabled people have more choice and control over their lives.

- Telling other people about good **communities** that include disabled people. This should include anything that will change the way other people think and act towards disabled people.

The **discussion** has also given us lots of new ideas from disabled people and disabled people's groups about how to make things better. For example, a new way of tackling **barriers** to choice and control in local areas.



The disability action alliance will decide which ideas are taken on and who will do them.

A few groups have already said they would like to join the disability action alliance.

Please contact us at fulfilling.potential@dwp.gsi.gov.uk if you are an organisation and you would like to be **involved**.

Getting to know more about disability in this country

We need to change the way we think about disability in this country.

In the future, most people will either be disabled or they will look after someone who is disabled.

Information like the Life Opportunities Survey tell people new things about disability and the **barriers** that disabled people face. We will have new information about this later in the year.

We will work with disabled people's groups and experts who are good at understanding information. They will help us to write a booklet about disability and the issues disabled people face.



Government and other groups will use the booklet to make new plans to help disabled people live independently and do the best they can.

We also want the new booklet to help people understand more about disability. This will help to change the way people think and act towards disabled people.

The new booklet will talk about these things.

- The number of disabled people in the country.
- The areas disabled people live in.
- How disability can change during a person's life.
- The **barriers** disabled people face.
- The link between health conditions, **impairment** and disability.
- Whether disabled people have the same chances as everyone else. And what can change the chances they have.
- If changes in education, work and other areas have made things better for disabled people. This will also show us if more changes need to be made.
- The times of change in a disabled person's life, like moving from education to work.

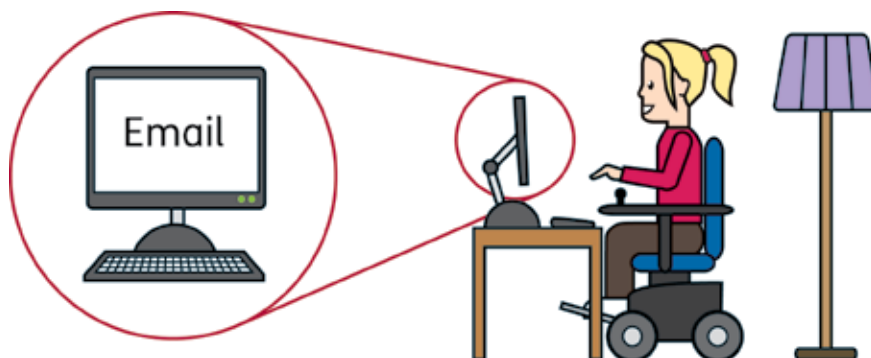
Working together in the future

The **Office for Disability Issues** will do these things.

- Help to set up the disability action alliance.
- Work with the disability action alliance to make new plans.
- Make it clear what difference the new plans will make. Use other information to help us do this, including what the disability action alliance tells us.
- Work on a new booklet about disability. This will be written by autumn this year.
- Work with government departments to make sure that when they are making changes they listen to what disabled people and their families and people who support them think.
- Collect information to check that things are changing in the right way and the plans are working properly. We will also ask disabled people what they think.

We know that disabled people want to take part in making the plans and checking that the plans are working properly.

Please send an email to fulfilling.potential@dwp.gsi.gov.uk if you would like to be **involved**.



Word list

Barriers

These are things that stop disabled people living like other people. **Barriers** include things like being treated unfairly and not getting enough help to do the things disabled people want.6

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Notes

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A copy of this easy-read report is also on this website.

Copies of the full report can be made available in other formats on request. Our contact details are shown below.

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