



Disability Unit

The UK Government's report to the United Nations about the rights of disabled people

2021



easy
read

Contents

Page

Introduction	3
What we have done since the last report:	4
Recommendation 1	4
Recommendation 2	6
Recommendation 3	8
Recommendation 4	14
Recommendation 5	18
Recommendation 6	21
Recommendation 7	22
Recommendation 8	25
Recommendation 9	28
Recommendation 10	30



In this easy read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.



Some words are [blue and underlined](#). These are links which will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction



The **United Nations (UN)** wants the UK Government to write a report about what we are doing to improve the **rights** of disabled people.



The **United Nations (UN)** is an organisation made up of many countries working together to make the world a safer and better place.



Rights are things that every person should be allowed to have and do by law.



In 2016, part of the UN called the 'UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' gave us some recommendations to improve disability rights in the UK.



This is an Easy Read version of our report, explaining what we have done towards the UN's recommendations over in 2020 and 2021.

What we have done since the last report



The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities gave us 10 recommendations to improve the rights of disabled people in the UK.

This is what we have done towards the recommendations between 2020 and 2021:



Recommendation 1

The UN Committee asked us to check that we are being fair to disabled people when we make important decisions.

What The Government has done:

- Each year we look at how people are affected by tax, **public spending** and benefits.



Public spending means the way we spend government money on services for people, like education and healthcare.



- This year we found that the poorest families will get more money from public spending than they will have to pay in tax.



- We are making sure we are being fair to disabled people by spending public money on:

- health services.
- support to get a job.
- making buildings, places and services more accessible.



- The Scottish Government has been helping disabled people to get a job.



- The Northern Ireland Government has been looking at how the **benefits system** affects disabled people.

The **benefits system** means the way different types of benefits are managed and paid.



Recommendation 2

The UN Committee asked us to make sure that any changes to benefits are fair to disabled people.

What The Government has done:



- We have been protecting disabled people's rights and following the laws about treating disabled people fairly.
- In July 2021 we brought out a **Green Paper** on Health and Disability Support.



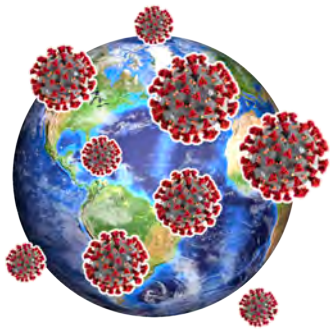
A **Green Paper** contains ideas for changes to the law, or the way The Government works.

The Health and Disability Green Paper looks at how The Government wants to make the benefits system better for:

- disabled people.
- people with long-term health conditions.



Different organisations of disabled people helped us to write the Green Paper.



- We made some changes to benefits for disabled people because of the outbreak of **COVID-19**.

COVID-19 is also called Coronavirus. It is an illness that is spreading around the world. It can affect your lungs and breathing.



- We are looking to improve the way we check whether a disabled person is able to work.



- In the winter of 2020, the Scottish Government set up a new benefit to help families of severely disabled children to heat their homes.

Recommendation 3

The UN Committee asked us to protect the rights and needs of disabled people when we make new plans for:



- where and how disabled people live.
- what benefits disabled people get.

What The Government has done:



- We have been looking at how we can make new homes more accessible.
- We have been giving money so that buildings can make more **Changing Places toilets**.



Changing Places toilets are completely accessible and have enough space and equipment for people who can't use the toilet independently.

Support for people with a learning disability and autistic people



- In March 2021 we wrote our mental health wellbeing and recovery plan. This explained how we will be helping people with mental health problems to recover from the COVID-19 outbreak.



- We plan to give more money to help autistic people to live independently.



- We are improving training for Learning Disability Nurses.



- The Government is planning changes to the law to improve how people with a learning disability and autistic people are treated.



- The Scottish Government has written a new plan which explains how services will improve for people with a learning disability and autistic people.



- The Welsh Government will soon be writing a plan which explains how autistic people can be supported better.



Improving Adult Social Care

- The UK Government is going to bring out its plan for health and social care. We plan to spend £5.4 billion over 3 years improving social care.



- We want more people to get money to buy the support and health care they need.



- We are setting up Integrated Care Boards - these are groups that will make health and social care services work together better.



- We are writing a plan for health and social care so that all elderly and disabled people are looked after with dignity.



Jobs

- We are working with other organisations to look at how work will be changing after COVID-19.



- We want people to have the chance to work at the times that suit them best.



- We now have 4.4 million disabled people in work. We are pleased with this, but would like to see more disabled people with a good job.



- Over 130,000 disabled people have been volunteering in a job with our Work and Health Programme.



- We are also helping people who need more support to be able to get a job.



- People who ask for benefits because they have been affected by COVID-19 will not have to prove that they cannot work.



- The Scottish Government is carrying on helping disabled people into work.

Access to Work

Access to Work is a government scheme that helps disabled people to get a job and stay in a job.



- In the last year there has been a large increase in the number of people getting help from Access to Work.



- We are making the scheme more flexible, so that it helps people in new ways.



Access to public life

Public life means standing for election or other ways of helping The Government, local councils or local communities.



- In June 2020 we asked some people to look into how disabled people were affected by COVID-19. They came up with 70 ways we could make improvements. We are looking at these ideas.



- The Welsh Government is trying a new way of helping disabled people stand for election.



Recommendation 4

The UN Committee asked us to make sure that disabled people get money to pay for things they need because of their disability.



What The Government has done:

- We have increased the amount of benefits for disabled people.



Motability

Motability is a scheme for disabled people to rent a car, scooter or powered wheelchair.

- A group that advises The Government wrote a report which looked at whether using benefits to pay for Motability was the best way to support disabled people. We are going to respond to the report.



Mental Health White Paper

A **White Paper** explains what we think should be in a new law. Parliament has to decide whether a White Paper becomes a new law.





- We have been asking people what they think about our Mental Health White Paper.



- The White Paper explains ideas for how health and social care services would work together to help people with a learning disability and autistic people.



- We asked an organisation called 'Skills for Care' to write some guidance for services to work together to help people with a learning disability and autistic people.

Moving out of hospital



- We have given money to local councils to help move people with a learning disability and autistic people move out of long stay hospitals.



- We want to help people live in their local community near to family and friends.



Thalidomide health grant

- The Thalidomide health grant helps people who have been affected by a drug called Thalidomide.
- We will carry on helping people who were affected by Thalidomide into the future.



Better Care Fund

- The Better Care Fund helps local councils pay for changes to people's homes, so they can live independently.



- We have given extra money to this fund this year.

Social care funding

- During COVID-19, we gave extra money towards adult social care.





- In Wales, more money was given to help disabled people to live independently.
- The Welsh Government also gave extra money to help disabled people in an emergency.
- The UK Government has also given money to local councils to help them deliver important services during COVID-19.

- In Northern Ireland more people are getting money from the **Independent Living Fund**, so they have more control over their lives.

The **Independent Living Fund** is money you can get to help you live independently.

- We have given more money this year to the **Family Fund**.

The **Family Fund** helps the families of children with a disability.



Recommendation 5

The UN Committee asked us to make sure that information from The Government can be read and understood by disabled people.



What The Government has done:

- This year we have a new senior manager who is working to make more information accessible across all government departments.
- During COVID-19 we have had online and telephone meetings with disabled people, rather than making people come into our offices.



The courts

- The courts have made it easier for people to use online video so they don't have to come into the court buildings.





- The courts have written a plan that checks that **vulnerable** people can use the courts in the same fair way as everyone else.

Vulnerable means you might need help and support to stay safe and well.



Websites and apps

An **app** is a computer programme that you can download onto your phone or computer, to help you do something.



- We are continuing to make sure our websites and apps are accessible to everyone.



- In Scotland there is a law that says that The Government must make information accessible to everyone.



- In Scotland there is help for people who use sign language to communicate with The Government.



- The Welsh Government is training more people to use British Sign Language.



- The Northern Ireland Government has many ways to help people communicate online and through their websites.



Recommendation 6

The UN Committee asked us to make sure disabled people can use the courts when they are not getting their proper rights.



What The Government has done:

- This year we gave a lot more money to law centres and other charities so they can give legal advice to people.
- People can get support to use the law if they think they have been treated unfairly.



They can ask for help to pay for this support through a service called Legal Aid.



- The courts have to treat disabled people in the same fair way as everyone else.

Advice and support

- We are continuing to support various organisations that provide help and advice to disabled people.



Recommendation 7

The UN Committee asked us to involve organisations of disabled people when a law or policy may affect disabled people's rights.



What The Government has done:



- We have set up a Regional Stakeholder Network in England. This is a network of groups of disabled people, parents and carers who tell us what they think about ideas for new laws and policies.

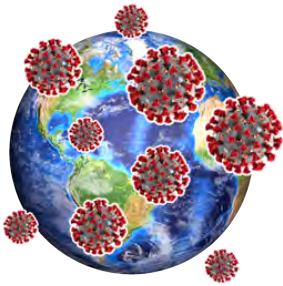


- We worked closely with charities and organisations of disabled people.



- We worked with many disabled people and disability organisations to write the National Disability Strategy which we published in July 2021. The strategy explains how we want the lives of disabled people to improve.

Clinically extremely vulnerable people



Clinically extremely vulnerable means you have health issues which mean you are more likely to be very ill if you catch COVID-19.



- During COVID-19 we have been talking with organisations that work with clinically extremely vulnerable people.



- We have had special rules to keep clinically extremely vulnerable people safe from COVID-19.

Transport



- The Department for Transport has been working closely with a group of disabled people.



- They have been helping The Government with plans for buses, trains, cycling and walking.



- Each local transport authority has to work closely with local disabled people to check that their services are properly accessible.



Other

- The Scottish Government has been working with organisations of disabled people to make plans for how to improve and change services.



- The Welsh Government regularly meets with a group of disabled people to talk about ideas for new policies and laws.



- The Northern Ireland Government has a new set of plans to improve the lives of disabled people.

Recommendation 8

The UN Committee asked us to:

- stop TV, radio and news showing disabled people as people who can't do things for themselves.
- deal with hate crime and bullying against disabled people.



What The Government has done:

- We take all hate crime very seriously. We are looking at the law about hate crime to see if it could be improved.
- We have been working this year to make a law about keeping people safe online.
- We have given money this year to help schools stop children bullying disabled children.
- This year in Scotland there is a new law about hate crime.
- The Scottish Government is working to help people deal with bullying and hate crimes.



Helping people stay safe online



- This year we wrote a new plan to help children and adults stay safe online.
- We are also training teachers so they can help disabled children to stay safe online.



Campaigns

A **campaign** is a plan of things to do over time, to try and change something.



- The UK Government is planning to support schools to help prevent disabled children being bullied.



- This year the Scottish Government has run a campaign to help people understand more about autistic people.



- This year Scotland has had a campaign to help people understand more about hate crime against disabled people.



- This year the Welsh Government has had a campaign which explained how hate crime affects disabled people.



Recommendation 9

The UN Committee asked the UK to make sure they think about different groups of disabled people when we set up new services. This could be:



- disabled people on a low income.
- people that have more than one disability.

What The Government has done:



- We have a law that says that disabled people must be treated in the same fair way as everyone else.



- We have been looking at improving how The Government works with autistic people. We have been asking autistic people and their organisations how things should improve.



- We now have a group of Government Ministers who are helping all our departments to improve the lives of disabled

people.



- This year the Scottish Government has created a new group to:
 - make sure people who don't have much money get the help they need.
 - help protect people's human rights.



- This year the Welsh Government set up a network of disabled people to speak up about changes that should be made to help disabled people.



- This year the Welsh Government has developed a new way to make sure disabled children can get the support they need to learn and do well in school.

Recommendation 10



- The UN Committee asked the UK to keep thinking about policies and services to make sure that they aren't being unfair to disabled people.



What The Government has done:

- We want to see a million more disabled people in a good job by 2027.
- We give regular information about how disabled people are taking part in schools, housing, and local communities.
- We have a new law that says that we will check that local councils are providing proper adult social care services.





- The Scottish Government is looking at new ways it can make sure people are getting their human rights.



- The Welsh Government has set up a Disability Equality Forum - this is a group that is looking at how disabled people have been affected by COVID-19 in Wales.



- The Welsh Government is writing a new action plan for disabled people to help them recover from COVID-19.