

Feedback from Speak Out Advocates on issues for people with complex needs.



November 2012

Information gathered so far around issues for people with complex needs.

Speak Out has supported 9 people with complex needs with a 1:1 advocate in the last year. 4 of those people have challenging behaviour. The feedback here is related to the advocacy work for these individuals supported by Speak Out.

Advocates have supported the voice of the individuals in a number of areas:

Person Centred Planning

All cases were related to appropriate person centred planning whether to do with suitable housing, choices, or quality of life.

- Specifically in 6 cases the actual person centred plan for the individual was the focus for the advocacy as it needed developing and used.
- In one of these cases there was not a person centred plan and the service wants support from an advocate to do this.
- In another service the individual had a communication passport that included likes and dislikes, medication etc but some of the information was out of date or misleading. This service was focusing on nursing needs and struggling to understand and respond to the social and emotional needs of this person. Since then through intervention by Scope and a Speak Out advocate quality of life has improved.
- Without good and evolving person centred plans peoples' choices and experiences were limited and their identity not valued.
- In one case a Speak Out advocate worked on Build a picture of my life to develop choices and used this to communicate to parents about their choices.

Money

- In two cases money that was available for enhancing the individual's life was not being spent. In one of these cases the person staff at home had not identified what it is the person enjoyed doing. Money which could have been spent for social or leisure purpose was accumulating.
- In another case the person was paying for taxis when the house had a car to be used.

Housing

3 of the people with challenging behaviour have received advocacy support around housing.

- One person needed to find more safe and suitable housing. The result was positive.
- The two other cases live in houses that have been part of the accommodation review. Both peoples' quality of life and behaviour has improved significantly in their current housing and the concern was any move would be detrimental to their emotional wellbeing and affect behaviour adversely. In the case of one of these people the Council has decided to maintain their service. In the other case we are waiting to hear the outcome of the accommodation review. A Speak Out advocate is supporting this person's voice and there is concern that the alternative move proposed would have an impact on the individual.

Health

This is not something that has come up a lot but as research into premature deaths is highlighting that people with more complex needs are more likely to die prematurely. This is something to look into.

- One person supported is known to have had negative experience in hospital but didn't want to talk about it.
- One issue was having support workers there while going through painful procedures. The advocate had to put pressure on the support worker to stay and give the support the individual wanted as they wanted to go and do something else.
- The other issue has been in the case of supporting someone around dental care who won't let staff help brush teeth. Accessing specialist dental staff needed to happen and social worker had referred this to an advocate as one of the issues to bring forward.

Staffing Levels

In three individuals' cases an issue around staffing has arisen.

- The above case of staff member staying with individual during hospital treatment
- With the same person, the advocate has become aware of shift changes determining how late someone can stay out, ie staff change at 10pm. However staff were responsive to advocate and partner coming back later from a Blue Camel Club.
- For one person the level of support assessed to be needed i.e 2:1 is not available to go out which is affecting visits to family and being able to go on holiday (due to cost of providing 1:1 staffing)

Good practice

In three of the individual cases good practice has been highlighted in providing safe, stimulating, responsive and appropriate environments.

Follow on

Speak Out will continue to collate themes and issues from advocates and also talk to professionals working with people with complex needs.