

REGIONAL LEARNING DISABILITY
DAY OPPORTUNITIES MODEL

12 September 2013 - Board Meeting



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Introduction

In August 2012 the HSCB/PHA Learning Disability Service Team requested that a review of Day Services for people with a learning Disability be undertaken with the purpose of agreeing a cross departmental Model for the future delivery of Day Opportunities for people with a learning disability in Northern Ireland. It is anticipated that this will allow benchmarking of Day Services in order to drive improvements, ensure consistency of quality and equity of access across Northern Ireland.

The paper sets out the way forward to promote the improvement of day time support activities across the region on an equitable basis and makes a number of recommendations. The paper also identifies the need for additional resource based on rising demand for Day Services.

Within this paper the term “Day Opportunities” reflects the expectations that the Bamford review places across all Departments in relation to Equal Lives which states:-

- Objective 4 “*To enable people with a learning disability to lead full and meaningful lives in their neighbourhoods, have access to a wide range of social, work and leisure opportunities and form and maintain friendships and relationships*” (Equal Lives).

Therefore we are using the terms “Day Opportunities” to mean a package of community-based day time activities which will engage adults with a learning disability in areas such as accredited further education; volunteering; paid supported employment; social enterprise activity and opportunities to meet and make friends and use local leisure and recreational facilities. These services should be discrete from traditional buildings-based day care facilities and access to the Day Opportunities services should be in non-segregated general transport provision.

In June 2007, The Social Care Institute for Excellence published a guide entitled “Community-based day activities and supports for people with learning disabilities: How we can help people to 'have a good day?'”. It acknowledges that there is enough good – best practice out there without Trusts/day opportunities providers having to re-invent the wheel each time and provides a Best Practice Guide for Commissioners and Service Providers wishing to develop measurable objectives in this area.

The headline ‘Having a good day’ is taken from the above paper which indicates that a person with a learning disability should be:

- Undertaking activities that have a purpose
- Being in ordinary places, doing things that most members of the community would be doing
- Doing things that are right for them personally
- Receiving support that meets their individual and specific requirements and overcomes inequalities
- Meeting local people, developing friendships, connections and a sense of belonging.

It is over 10 years since Professor David Bamford started on his mission to create a vision for developing services for men, women and children with a learning disability for the next 15 to 20 years. The learning disability aspects of the 'Bamford Vision' are set out in the 'Equal Lives Review'.

The Equal Lives Review adopted an evidence-based approach, drawing upon existing relevant information and research, and where necessary commissioning research. Exemplars of best practice local, national and international informed the debate and set the strategic direction of the Bamford Vision in October 2009.

The Review's recommendations relating to people with learning disability were based on 5 core values: Social Inclusion, Citizenship, Empowerment, Working Together and Individual support. These core values will continue to influence the development of learning disability services as we move into the future.

In August 2011, The Patient and Client Council published a document entitled 'My Day, My Way' which was the culmination of an exercise collecting together and reflecting the views of people with learning disability about the changes in day services in Northern Ireland. The Bamford Monitoring Group talked to a total of 1190 people with a learning disability, parents, carers and family members as part of this process. The overwhelming conclusion from this work was that day opportunities and alternatives to traditional day care provision are increasingly important to people with a learning disability.

The Service Framework for Learning Disability published in September 2012, sets out clear standards of care that people can expect. This Framework aims to improve the health and wellbeing of people with a learning disability, their carers and families, by promoting social inclusion, reducing inequalities in health and social wellbeing and improving the quality of health and social care services, especially supporting those most vulnerable in our society.

The 2012-2015 Bamford Action Plan continues to progress the enhancement of mental health and learning disability services started through the previous plan. The evaluation of the 2009-2011 Action Plan, published in May 2012, established that over the last two years the joint working across Government Departments and the HSC sector has achieved much, and 80% of the actions have been delivered. It also highlights areas where services can still be improved and the need for more of a focus on outcomes rather than outputs.

The strategy entitled "A strategy to improve the lives of disabled people – 2012 to 2015" also sets out the key priorities that OFMDFM believe will be crucial in addressing the barriers that disabled people face.

Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI) Disability presented to the first minister in December 2009 recommendations are also firmly anchored around the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which aim to promote dignity, independence and access.

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) led by OFMDFM brings together a range of agencies, including voluntary and community sector organisations, that aim to improve the lives of children and young people in Northern

Ireland. A specific sub group on Transition has direct link to the work around day opportunities bringing a range of partners across departments.

In 2013, few would argue that the ethos and direction of travel is no different today than outlined in Bamford's vision. 'Transforming your Care' (December 2011) which has been endorsed by the Assembly confirms the direction of travel.

However, in an economic climate such as the one we find ourselves in, it is essential that we do not lose the momentum. There is a greater need than ever before to see this challenging period as one which offers opportunities to take stock of where we are at. We must build on what we have achieved and further develop partnerships with other statutory and non-statutory agencies to ensure that the future enables individuals with a learning disability to access as broad a range of opportunities as those that are open to everyone else in society.

Current Situation

Each of the 5 Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland is at a different stages in the modernisation and reform of its day services in line with the "Equal Lives" principles and Bamford's vision for day opportunities in Northern Ireland.

Extensive consultation exercises have been undertaken across all stakeholder groups and Strategic Plans aligned to the Bamford vision have been developed and implemented. Day Services Admissions Panels; assessments and access criteria have been devised individually by each Trust. There has been a significant shift from the over concentration of buildings-based services towards community-based day opportunities. This has been supported by investments with the independent and third sector to create partnerships. This reconfiguration has seen, in some areas, over a 50% shift into community-based day provision developing a range of opportunities including further education, vocational and social provision.

Partnerships between Health and Social Care Trusts and the third sector combining European Social Funding and DEL investment have enabled the growth of supported employment provision and social enterprise. This has enabled some learning disabled citizens to realise their vocational aspirations and in some instances progress towards paid employment. There are some excellent examples of social firms who are up to 70% self-sustaining and other developments, along the same continuum, demonstrate a greater focus on activities and the transition towards paid employment. Whilst exemplars of such initiatives are in evidence, access to such provision is inconsistent.

The development of social "clubhouse/bases" and "Drop-In" Centres have gone a significant way towards the integration of people with learning disability into leisure services and local amenities within their own communities. A Drop in Centre can be a place identified in each town where people can "drop-in" to meet their friends. This might be in a leisure or community centre, or in a hired room in a college, church, or business premises. This facility can be open on certain days or at certain times, including evenings and weekends. There is normally a coordinator at each 'Drop In' to act as support and Coordinate the centre and its outreach activities. There may also be a pool of staff and/or volunteers to assist the co-ordinators in activities.

Structured Activities include: Reading and visiting the library, swimming, walking, dancing and yoga, watching television and going to the cinema, snooker/pool, bowls, golf, listening to music, shopping, gardening, eating out, arts & crafts.

Generally, people attend a “Drop-In” as part of a package of community-based day services on the days when they are not at college, volunteering, in social enterprise or in supported employment.

Good exemplars of partnership approaches with further education campuses are in evidence, with the continuum of accredited lifelong learning and integration into the population of adult learners. These include the mixed packages of support received by individuals from the Department for Employment and Learning, Further Education, Health and Social Care Trusts as well as work placements with private retail organisations.

This radical shift from traditional segregated services towards integrated socially inclusive provision has required a reconfiguration of HSC staffing resource and a disinvestment from some traditional buildings-based day provision. Some Trusts have reduced or have plans to reduce the number of their buildings-based facilities with a general move towards smaller Satellite-type services within the community and with independent and third sector partnerships. This means a change not only in the traditional day service but in the associated therapies and allied health professions such as speech and language; occupational and physiotherapy being delivered in the community rather than in a day centre building.

Despite all of the reform and movement in line with the values and principles of Bamford, there remain significant issues of inconsistency of access to services to be addressed. Significant realignment and rationalization of services needs to continue at a pace so that there is a move towards a consistent range and quality of Day Opportunities services across Northern Ireland.

Day Services for People with Complex Care Needs

The need to provide an individualised service for the most vulnerable in our society remains an absolute priority for any modernized or reforming day service. HSC Trusts have considered and adjusted service criteria to concentrate their buildings-based services on those with complex physical and healthcare needs or behaviour support needs.

These individuals with complex needs or higher support will continue to be supported within purpose designed buildings based on the traditional day care setting, however, the challenge remains that many such services continue to be segregated from local communities on the edge of towns or even in Industrial estates away from all community infrastructures. Working within the true meaning of citizenship, individuals have a right to be part of the community that they live in and their day service should enable them to access meaningful activities in the community wherever possible. Trusts, as funding allows are, improving or replacing the stock of Day Centres to make them more responsive to the more complex needs of some people with a learning disability. These improvements to Day Centres will continue alongside the development of Day Opportunities in each Trust.

Cross Departmental working and funding

Future services should be delivered on a joint future basis, requiring government departments working in a cross-departmental arrangement, to put in place a network of services delivering for people with learning disabilities. This means putting in place arrangements for joint resourcing and management of community services.

This model enables the adoption of a joint approach to resourcing and management to promote integrated working across agencies, develop community infrastructure to support adults with learning disability, maximise the use of public monies, streamline policy and procedures, simplify pathways to service provision, minimise the duplication of service provision and facilitate better governance arrangements.

The essential characteristics of the new cross departmental, integrated model of service should be realistic and achievable. People with learning disabilities should be able to access high quality, individualised services through supported living, supported employment, productive day time opportunities, educational, social and leisure activities.

Essential characteristics of building and delivering good community based daytime activities and supports at a regional level include:

- Policy and Departmental Leadership
- Cultural change in cross and interdepartmental working
- SMART commissioning at Regional and Local level
- Workforce development through revised educational and work programmes
- Community capacity-building
- Political will and support both at a regional and local level
- Wider partnership working

Based on the proposed new model of future service delivery, partnership means working across various government Departments including the Departments of Education, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, Department of Social Development, Department of Culture Arts and Leisure and the Department for Employment and Learning.

Future demands and costs

Traditionally the majority of school leavers were placed in day centres provided/commissioned by a Health and Social Care Trust. The model of such provision has evolved over the years from an industrial/workshop philosophy to a social education model which more recently has started to explore day opportunities/community based activities.

Today people with learning disabilities and their families have much greater expectations for their future and require a menu of opportunities that they can choose from that will not only meet their current needs but support them in planning a meaningful future. The future demand will require that day support be delivered within a community based day opportunities environment. In addition the introduction of Self Directed Support and Individualised Budgets will contribute to the reshaping of day time support activities.

The five Health and Social Care Trusts have recently been moving towards ensuring that their building based service will in the future support individuals with more complex health care and support needs. Further integrating existing and new day care services into the community is a challenge as this development moves forward.

During the 3 year period 2013-2015 the 5 Health and Social Care Trusts will have a combined total of 486 individuals coming through transition from education who will need a learning disability day service.

Based on the Northern Ireland current Average, Day Care Cost for the Trust being approximately £72.67 per day, and suggesting that each individual will have on average 5 days per week over 48 weeks per year, the potential cost for providing a traditional model to the above individuals across Northern Ireland will be an additional £8.4m by the end of 2015.

The work undertaken so far by Trusts in line with 'Transforming Your Care' suggests that there is a relatively clear % split that we can base some assumptions on. The Trusts assess that 50% of these individuals coming from school have high support needs and therefore will need a building based approach to include specialised transport etc. The remaining 50% will be able to avail of day opportunities. There is also some throughput of individuals who leave services each year which needs to be offset against the new demand.

It is clear that there is a demographic pressure on Learning Disability Day Services arising from both the net growth in numbers of people and the additional complexity of need of growing numbers of young adults coming from school in addition to older adults developing health and care needs. Further work will be undertaken in each Trust area to cost the required changes in demand and capacity in line with this model.

Aspiration and Vision – Recommendations for Change

As has been set out previously, there is a varied picture of practice in Day Opportunities throughout Northern Ireland with Health & Social Care Trusts differing in where they sit on the journey. European funding has presented opportunities for partnership development, enabling third sector organisations and Trusts to create dynamic and responsive services and establish the access links with existing local community services in education, employment, leisure and volunteering. Whilst this has led to a wide range of day opportunities provision and service providers coming to the fore, it has also meant a 'patchwork' of activity with some areas of the region being better served than others, and some of the most rural areas missing out.

However, there is little value in trying to pursue a vision where exactly the same service exists in each area. To do this would be to dismiss the smaller organisations and their specialist knowledge and best practice within their locality and create a 'standardised' collection of services which will not best serve the client group. Time is better spent in learning from each other, harnessing best practice developing partnerships with providers in the independent and third sectors and encouraging a diverse and geographically responsive collection of services which best meet the needs of people with learning disability. Collaboration is not new to the third sector or Social Enterprises and they are keen to share their learning and develop services to better meet the needs of people with learning disabilities.

To do this, the following recommendations need to be implemented

- Success in Day Opportunities begins at Transition. Joined up working between children and adults services (and other departments/providers) is critical in order to secure the success of day opportunities provision;
- A recognition that choice and person-centeredness for individuals and positive relationships with parents/carers is key to the success of individual placements if they are to meet peoples' assessed needs
- A wide range of opportunities should be considered including clubhouses/bases, community groups, social enterprises, supported employment, further education, voluntary and third sector organisations and outreach projects;
- Any Day Opportunity created should aim to empower individuals to access and participate in activities independently;
- Political will to endorse and support radical changes is critical to the success of a sustainable model;
- Self Directed Support (e.g. Direct Payments/Individualised Budgets) needs to be available where it is the lynch-pin in enabling individuals to access community-based day opportunities;
- There needs to be cross-departmental recognition that Day Opportunities is not solely a responsibility of Health & Social Care – it crosses all departments including education, transport and social development. A multi-agency

approach must be developed to ensure the sustainability and financing of Day Opportunity Provision;

- There needs to be an acknowledgement that service provision will vary depending on geographic location as demonstration of the wide diversity and creativity within our society but similarly that parties with responsibility for Day Opportunities provision in all areas will strive to develop opportunities further;
- As the largest employer by sector, public sector bodies need to lead by example in embracing social enterprise and providing work placements and supported employment for people with learning disabilities.
- Partnerships with third sector and independent providers should be balanced and considerate, mindful of the provision of quality services and sustainability. Whilst independent and third sector partners may deliver services at lower cost than statutory services, the partnership itself must have an outcomes focused approach to benefit of the individual and their family within their community.
- Community capacity building is critical – the means of developing a dynamic and diverse market needs careful consideration and planning
- A set of standards of best practice/quality mark should be developed to ensure quality of provision of Day Opportunities regardless of type/location; The 'REACH' standards in G.B. are an example of this.
- Day Opportunities partners should be encouraged to regularly evaluate their services and engage in continuous improvement and learning from others.
- The use of Assistive Technology in the management and delivery of services at home and in the community is an area that must be developed in Northern Ireland. The 'Centre for Connected Health' has led the way through tele monitoring but should now work with Trusts to develop capacity and capabilities outside the areas of Chronic Conditions. There are excellent examples of using GPS, sensors and other such technologies to support individuals to be more independent in their day to day life.

There are many examples of best practice, as identified above, throughout Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK and organisations should be encouraged to learn from others and share their learning to the betterment of people with learning disabilities' lives.

Quality and Safety

There are some understandable concerns among parents/carers about how adults with learning disabilities will be supported in community placements, how reliable the support will be if staff and services are community-based, and whether relatives and carers will get the same level of support that traditional day services have provided. It should be clear in all plans to further develop day opportunities that the outcome of the changes is not to reduce support to families from that which is currently available. All plans for change must recognize the key role that day care services and day opportunities have now and into the future in supporting people with a learning disability to live at home with families.

Consultation is therefore essential in establishing the model and process for change within existing day centres and the process for undertaking this work should be managed through 'Transforming your Care' and specifically the local Population Plans.

Concerns should not provide reasons to pull back from implementing much needed change; rather they should critically inform plans for the future in the best possible way in order to enable people with learning disabilities to take their rightful place alongside everyone else as community members while providing support for carers. The vision for modernising and reforming existing day services will only succeed if there is a strong sense of regional and local ownership, participation amongst service users, carers and staff as well as political support for the proposals for a new model of community based day activities.

Implementation

In order to build that sense of ownership and the capacity to make and effect decisions at a local level it is proposed to approach implementation in a two phase approach. Throughout these phases and beyond, the HSCB is committed to providing high quality service provision to meet this demand.

1st Phase

The first phase needs to create an overarching mechanism for implementation by establishing a regional implementation group, informed by the views of a wide range of stakeholders.

The focus of this group should be on:

- Strategic direction
- Service specification
- Performance framework
- Human resources strategy
- Resource Management

Each locality needs to establish its current provision profile and develop an action plan to support the implementation of a new approach to day service provision based on development of a range of day opportunities/community based day activities and taking account of the roll out of self directed support.

In addition the plan needs to:

- a. Support the reshaping of the current in-house day service provision and staffing to the new model of working as necessary.
- b. Remodel in-house services to focus on meeting more complex support needs.
- c. Support and work to stimulate market development with an emphasis on partnership working developing a diverse range of activities.
- d. Make any necessary adjustments to contract arrangements arising out of the introduction of Self Directed Support (SDS) /Individual Budgets(IB) for day services.
- e. Ensure cross-project and cross departmental objectives are noted and tracked to deliver desired outcomes
- f. Support individuals engage with both the development and uptake of new opportunities promoting social inclusion, flexibility and maximising independence.
- g. Reflect the adoption of best practice in development plans with particular reference to rurality.
- h. Demonstrate the financial model, sustainability and deliverability of the new service model.
- i. Demonstrate commitment to the principles and values inherent in Bamford.

During this phase a number of issues will need to be addressed;

It has long been recognised that the ordinary milestones of life should be as relevant to individuals with learning disabilities as anyone else and this includes a 'retirement age'. Consideration needs to be given to meeting the needs of old age in the most appropriate setting while still recognising the needs of carers who themselves may be older at this stage.

There are some examples of good practice in the area of independent travel training. Provision of accredited independent travel training empowers the user to make use of community transport; mainstream public transport provision and promotes independence and enhances individual quality of life. This remains inconsistent across the region and has significant impact on those residing in more rural areas. It is crucial that consideration to develop cross-departmental regional plans and roll out of such a programme must support social integration and inclusion.

A significant issue remains that many of the modernized, innovative day services, which have been initiated, are dependent on short-term funding cycles associated with European Funding. The assurance that the independent and third sector has the

governance and service “maturity” to continue in the longer term to meet progressive service need also needs consideration. The realization and investment from other Departments who are critical to the reform of modernized day services, in line with Bamford is not only a Health and Social Services agenda.

Among other issues that need to be resolved are cash payments to individuals attending day centres, segregated and often costly transport provision and the continued attendance of individuals living in residential or nursing homes in statutory funded placements.

This model means working on real and equal partnership terms with the community and voluntary sector where there is a considerable body of developmental expertise and accredited locally commissioned service providers with experience of successfully delivering these approaches within Northern Ireland. Indeed the continuing expansion and development of such services should form a central part of this new model of service delivery with a network of community bases situated in local community centres, village halls, leisure facilities, which are places where people can meet and/or use as starting points for other activities within the local community.

A Bamford Inter-Departmental Group is already in existence which can take forward the co-ordinated approach between Departments necessary for the success of the model.

2nd Phase

The second phase needs to create local mechanisms for implementation of the agreed service reform, informed by the views of a wide range of local stakeholders.

Essential characteristics of building and delivering good community based daytime activities and supports at a local level include:

- Partnerships with people with learning disability and their families
- Leadership
- Cultural change in services
- Personalised planning with people
- Individualised funding
- Smart commissioning
- Workforce development
- Community capacity-building
- Good information
- Good transition planning

- Political will and support
- Skilled team management
- Wider partnership working

Once a local implementation group is established within each Trust area, they should work to an agreed remit, with participation from all key stakeholders. The focus of these groups would be on:

- Person centred planning arrangements
- Community capacity building
- User and carer participation
- Local audits
- Protocols and practice

This approach recognises that there are different factors to take into consideration in each locality such as the extent to which existing day services have been able to adapt their services to meet changing needs. There are different stakeholders in different localities and progress in implementing change will not run at the same pace for all localities. The shape of future services will vary from area to area to some degree.

Modernisation and reform of service have significant implications for the way existing services operate. Mainly, though not exclusively, this relates to statutory provision as the five local Trusts are by far the biggest providers of Day Care Services. This would mean undertaking detailed work on the staffing requirements of the new service and developing a workforce plan to achieve the service reform. In the proposed new model of service, each person with a learning disability would have their own personal plan. That plan would specify hours of support to be provided, when that support would be provided, where and how that service would be provided and of what it would consist. The shape of the service would be determined by the contents of this plan and the needs, wishes and aspirations of each individual, in close consultation with the people who are important to them in their life.

Since every individual's needs are unique to them, so the service provided should be designed solely for them. Because the majority of people want to do things with other people, this will often mean the same member(s) of staff providing a similar service to more than one person at a time, but only where that is part of the agreed plan designed to meet the needs of those individuals. For others the nature of their support needs and personal care needs would mean a one to one staff ratio may be required as is the case with many people in existing services.

The programme for the implementation of this model of day opportunities and activities should, where it is not already commenced, begin with immediate effect but realistically, will take three to five years to complete. A detailed work programme

needs to be developed, consulted on, agreed and put in place in each Trust area. Any proposed change to existing services will require the Trusts to inform the HSCB with detailed communication plans and high level timelines.

The development programme should include transition arrangements and service developments to meet the needs of young people preparing to leave school. Those currently using day centres who wish to move on and experience and develop life skills and those older service-users who wish to retire. In order to achieve this all service-users current service should be reviewed so that the most appropriate service is identified and planned with and for them. This should form an important part of the formal annual review already in place for people attending day services.

Service-users and carers need to be involved in helping to develop the design of the new services and buildings, where appropriate and in deciding what the new services will provide. From previous and numerous consultations with service users, families and carers, it is the expressed view from the majority of service users, families and carers, that community based day services should not simply be available from 9 am to 3 pm, which is by far the main provision within statutory day services at present, but that these services should be flexible and include evenings and weekends.

Services should be designed locally within the framework set out in the new model. This would enable service users, carers and other stakeholders to play a full and meaningful part in the process and would nurture a sense of local determination and ownership.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed new model for day opportunities, while representing a significant and radical change, is essential to ensure a modern, sustainable and quality service for all adults with a learning disability.

The vision for modernising and reforming existing day services will only succeed if there is a strong sense of regional and local ownership, participation between service users, carers and staff as well as Government Departments' support for the proposals for a new model of community based day activities.

Future services should be delivered on a joint future basis, requiring government departments working in a cross-departmental arrangement, to put in place a network of services operating for people with learning disabilities. This means putting in place arrangements for joint resourcing and management of community care services.

This model would enable the adoption of a joint approach to resourcing and management to promote integrated working across agencies to deliver the best possible outcomes for individuals and their families in their community. Providing opportunities for people with learning Disabilities to become true citizens in their own communities is the responsibility of us all.

This model was developed by the Bamford Learning Disability Sub-Group in partnership with representatives of the following departments:

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure
Department for Regional Development
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Education

The membership of the Sub Group includes:

Garth Anderson, Northern Health & Social Care Trust
Louise Coyle, Western Health & Social Care Trust
Margaret Cameron, Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
Alyson Dunne, Northern Health & Social Care Trust
Iolo Eilian, Health and Social Care Board
Rosaleen Harkin, Western Health & Social Care Trust
Molly Kane, Public Health Authority
Aidan Murray, Health and Social Care Board
Bria Mongan, South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust
Noreen McComiskey, Southern Health & Social Care Trust
Neil Magowan, Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
Emma Patterson, Service User Compass Advocacy Network
Emma Rea, Service User Compass Advocacy Network
Brian Sinnamon, Parent
Elaine Somerville, South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust
Janet Schofield, Compass Advocacy Network (Supporter for Emma Patterson and Emma Rea)