

Disability Sheffield

Let's Talk About Restraints: Working together to share knowledge and increase understanding of issues relating to restraint within the disability community

Founded in January 2003, Disability Sheffield Centre for Independent Living is a 'not for profit' user led organisation that is run and controlled by disabled people in Sheffield.

We are a small organisation employing nine staff and around 15 volunteers. The majority of our trustees, staff and volunteers have direct experience of disability.

Our aims are to encourage and assist disabled people to have their own independence and full participation in their community. In order to do this, we strive to deliver responsive, professional services that meet the needs identified by disabled people to support independent living.

Disability Sheffield currently holds contracts with Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver an advocacy & information service, as well as a contract with Sheffield City Council focused on ensuring the voice of disabled people is heard in the city.

Currently, we have contact with around 75 individual employers (this includes 25 self-funders), 25 personal assistants and 20 family carers.

What we wanted to achieve

- To produce and embed guidance – designed, developed and delivered by individual employers and personal assistants – seeking to minimise the use of restrictive practices in health and social care.
- Deliver training for individual employers, family carers, personal assistants and practitioners. In this training, it was important to show the difference in relationship between the individual employer and personal assistants (in comparison to that of someone being cared for in a residential setting or by agency staff).
- To use feedback from the training to design a toolkit available in accessible formats for facilitators to deliver similar training. You can access the toolkit [here](#).

What we did

Working with our individual employer and PA development group, as well as the Doncaster based user-led organisation Active Independence, we surveyed individual employers, personal assistants, family carers and health and social care practitioners.

We wanted to find out what they knew about the word 'restraints', whether they have given or received training, and whether restraints practice had been written into their care plan.

The 100+ responses gave a clear indication of the lack of training and knowledge about this subject in this cohort. From this evidence we were able to co-design training that addressed some of the fundamental principles around restraint from a social model of disability perspective.

The training included case studies with examples of both appropriate and inappropriate restraint, an explanation of what restrictive practice is and a definition of restraint. We also used a video which SCIE produced, that gives some insight into the Mental Capacity Act along with an action plan, session plans and guidance.

We then piloted the training with a mixed cohort of professionals, individual employers, personal assistants and family carers. The feedback was used to make changes to the training prior to the toolkit being designed.

Using all the materials from the training we employed a freelance graphic designer to create a website and toolkit.

What we achieved

We have fully co-produced and published a website and training pack on the subject of restraint which can be used by employers, PAs, family carers and practitioners in health and social care. It can be accessed [here](#).

Individual employers welcomed the opportunity to talk to other disabled people about restraint and to learn about the different relationships that they have with their personal assistants.

For many participants it was either the first time they had received training in this area or the training represented a useful up-date.

It was also an opportunity for personal assistants, carers and practitioners to question what they do and why they do it? We found things were often done because they have always been done and people rarely question this.

About the Website and Toolkit

A free website and toolkit is now available [here](#). We recommend that people delivering training have completed appropriate facilitation training or have the skills and confidence needed to lead training.

We deliberately kept the print colours to a minimum to make it affordable to print. The entire programme of training can be used as hard copies printed out or by using a PC or tablet. This would work well in a person's home with a team of personal assistant. Parts of the course can be used depending on time and availability.



This has been a very valuable, innovative project. The necessity to encourage a conversation with individual employers, PAs, family, carers and professionals around the thinking in the restraints arena has been long overdue.



Blake Williamson, individual employer

What we learnt

Safer restraints link into other aspects of care and is quite a complex and sometimes controversial subject.

Co-production is a wonderful way for sharing ideas and making good things happen.

Delivering pilot training was really useful to see what worked well and what didn't work. The information from this exercise really helped to form the foundations of the toolkit.

Holding a conference to showcase our findings and toolkit was a great way to engage people in this conversation.



It's made me think a lot about different ways of restraining somebody (and) thinking you are being helpful when actually you're not. It's made me question what could be asked of an individual working as a PA.



Sarah Johnson, PA and Training Participant

For more information please visit

www.disabilitysheffield.org.uk

Skills for Care Recommends

Skills for Care produces a wide range of products and services to support individuals who employ their own care and support, and their PAs.

Information hub for individual employers and PAs

This information hub has links to free resources to support people who employ their own care and support. It also has a section for supporting organisations and PAs.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/iepahub

Individual employer funding

Skills for Care has funding available for individual employers to train themselves and their PAs.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/iefunding

Restrictive practices

Skills for Care has produced a guide to support employers who want to minimise the use of restrictive practices.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/restrictivepractices

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