



Summary

North West Care Co-operative

About the DRILL Programme

DRILL (Disability Research on Independent Living and Learning) was an innovative 5 year, UK wide programme led by disabled people, for disabled people and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Launched in 2015, the programme was managed by a partnership of Disability Action Northern Ireland, Disability Rights UK, Disability Wales and Inclusion Scotland.

The aim of the programme was to build better evidence about approaches which enable disabled people to achieve independent living. The findings from the projects it funded can be used to inform future provision across a wide range of policy areas, and give a greater voice to disabled people in decisions which affect them.

This is one of a series of summaries of the project supported by DRILL. Final reports, toolkits and summaries of all the projects are available from the DRILL website at www.drilluk.org.uk.

Overview of the project

This project piloted the concept of a care co-operative social enterprise with disabled people in receipt of a personal social care budget or a personal health budget.

Approach

This project aimed to create a sustainable care co-operative that was designed and owned by members to improve their options for independent living.

It involved a small number of learning disabled people and their families in receipt of direct payments, as well as working with funders and regulators.

The project set up as a not for profit business to test long term viability and offer a model that might be replicated without significant project funding.

Findings

The model of a care co-operative requires a different mindset to the traditional, hierarchical and controlling style of working to enable successful participation.

Good support agreements must fully involve, and can be led by, members. There must be a clear focus on member's strengths, their networks of support and how this can be nurtured to aid independence and dignity.

People with lived experience of impairment or long-term conditions can be perfectly capable of running their own lives if given opportunity and support.

Some potential clients were so concerned by their experience with previous care agencies that they preferred to cling onto an unsatisfactory care package, rather than taking the 'risk' of moving to a model of care that would be within their control.

Registering for the Care Quality Commission (CQC) was a difficult process. The co-operative could not satisfy CQC requirements until it was incorporated; but couldn't identify a model to incorporate until it knew that it would satisfy CQC.

Engaging with CQC became easier when talking to a real person and being able to explain the non-standard elements of the co-operative.

Recommendations

The project outlined many recommendations, some of which are listed below. All recommendations are included in the full report, which is linked below.

- A care co-operative approach should be explored more widely as a potential model of care which helps disabled people be more in control of the care they receive
- Public sector organisations must change the way they work in order to make progress in improving their services
- The CQC must adapt their practices to enable easier registration for non-standard care co-operatives
- New methods of recording care visits and other key meetings, such as the use of video, should be made more widespread in the social care sector
- Technology should be better employed to store relevant documents, which would make it easier for everyone to access them
- Ensure the amount an employee member is paid or a user member pays is as consistent as possible from period to period
- Ensure there is co-production of support plans with users
- Co-operatives should be kept small, to avoid the problems that can arise when organisations get large, unwieldy and bureaucratic
- Be radical and take an asset based approach to social care. Delivery models should be built around existing strengths and capabilities
- An optimistic vision is important; talk less about 'care' and more about 'living life well'.

Final report

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Please click on report name to read the full report.

Project partners

**Cheshire Centre for
Inclusive Living**



Breakthrough UK



**Disability Equality
(NW) Ltd**



**Disability Association
Carlisle and Eden**



**Merseyside Disability
Federation**

