

Learning Difficulties and Ethnicity

A Framework for Action

Easy read summary

INTRODUCTION

Valuing People was written by the government to help make services better for all people with a learning disability, including those from **minority ethnic communities**.

The Government wants **Partnership Boards** to have people from minority ethnic communities on them. This is so their views and ideas are listened to. This helps Partnership Boards make better decisions and changes for people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities.

WHY A SPECIAL FRAMEWORK?

This is like a set of tools to show you how to do a job. People with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities do not always get the best help from the services they need. This framework will help Valuing People and services work better for them.





Some big issues

Making sure Valuing People works for everyone

This means making sure that services think about people's culture when they make decisions and offer help. Services will also have to think about how a person's family and community can help.

Services that work for everyone

This Government wants to help everyone work together so the right support and opportunities are given to all people. This means making sure people from minority ethnic communities get the right help. Sometimes, if people want it, this might mean help for people from a minority ethnic community alongside other people from the same community. It is really important though that this doesn't mean people can't use the services that everyone else does or that the only services are separate ones.

HOW THIS FRAMEWORK WORKS

The framework has been written to help Partnership Boards make local support services work better for people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities.

It comes in three parts:

- A **Guidance Booklet** (this helps Partnership Boards to work out how to improve things).
- An **Audit Tool** (this is a way of checking how services are doing).
- A **Resource** and examples file (this gives ideas from other places about how to make things better).

This easier to read booklet tells you what are the main things in the framework.



Making local services for people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities better

To make services better for people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities Partnership Boards will have to follow some rules. The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 is a set of rules that makes sure people from minority ethnic communities are treated equally to everyone else.

To make sure this happens Partnership Boards can:

- 1) Know about people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities who live in their area and how well services work for them**
 - How many people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities live in their area.
 - How many people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities use services.
 - How helpful is the service they get.

- Refugee and asylum seekers may not know about services and will need special help.

Boards can use the Audit Tool to help check these things out.

2) Have a plan for making services better

- Know how services for people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities can be made better.
- Know how people from minority ethnic communities can help make the services better.
- Say what they will do to make improvements.

Boards can make sure that all the plans they have made for Valuing People work for people from all communities

3) Make sure that the needs of people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities are not ignored or forgotten

- Partnership Boards should make sure they listen to carers and community groups.
- They should learn from talking to people about what changes need to be made.

There are different ways of making sure people's needs are not forgotten. One way is to use a small group of people from the Partnership Board to help the Board decide what to do. This is called a **sub-group**. Sub-groups can be people with learning disabilities, carers, family members and other people from the local community. Sub-groups are a good way to find out what things different people think are important.



Having a **Champion** is another way to make sure people's needs are not forgotten. A Champion can help a sub-group. Champions can make sure Partnership Boards listen to what sub-groups have to say. The Champion can make sure that a Partnership Board thinks about people from minority ethnic communities in all its work.

Boards need to be careful though that they don't expect these people to do everything.



SUPPORTING FAMILY CARERS

Valuing People said that services must listen to what family carers have to say.

Important things

- Caring for someone with a learning disability can be difficult. Carers for people with a learning disability may also need support. They may not always get the help or the information they need.
- Sometimes carers may be quite young. Younger carers sometimes miss out going to school and other opportunities.
- Carer groups are a good place for carers to find support.
- Some people have religious beliefs which help them

To help with these things family carers from minority ethnic communities should get help from things like the Carers Grant and local Carers Strategy

Short break services

Families want to make sure people's cultural and religious needs are met by short break services. Some services do offer short breaks where people's personal, cultural and religious needs are met. These work very well. A list of what makes them work well can be found in the resources section.

Short break services should also work around what the family's needs are. Different families will have different needs. Short break services should talk with families and give them proper information. Short breaks can be sorted out to suit people - some can be at home and some can be away.



CHILDREN

Families of people with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities often feel apart from other people and that they are having to cope on their own.

Important things

- Workers must be must be properly trained and have the right information able to properly understand the importance of a person's culture.
- People must be able to understand what information is given to them by workers.
- Families must be told what help and payments they can get.
- Families must be told about schools, social care, and health services where they live.



YOUNG PEOPLE AND TRANSITION

Leaving school and getting older can be hard for young people with learning disabilities. For young people from minority ethnic communities there can be extra problems.

Important things

- Different children's and adult services need to work together well.
- Local services must look at how well they meet the needs of young people with learning disabilities. They must look at the training they give workers. They must look at the information and advice they give.
- Services should make sure young people from minority ethnic communities get the chance to make a person centred plan for their future.



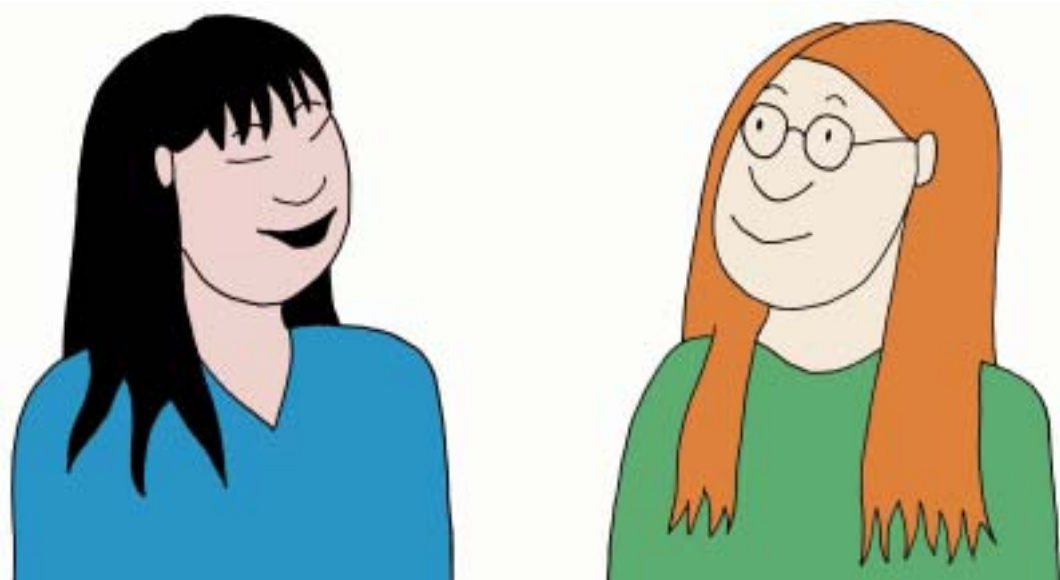
HEALTH

Important things

- Doctors surgeries can be a good place to reach people from minority ethnic communities.
- This means that doctors and health workers need to know all about disabled people from minority ethnic communities. They need to be given information so they can work better for people.
- The workers need to know how a person likes to be helped because of their culture. They need to be able to get information in minority languages.
- **Health Action Plans** make sure everyone who helps a person with learning disabilities about their health knows what they have to do. Families from minority ethnic communities should be given help to understand about Health Action Plans.

CHOICE AND CONTROL

Choice and control means making services work around each person's wishes. This can include people important in a person's life, like their family.



Advocacy

Advocacy is a main part of Valuing People. People from minority ethnic communities sometimes find it harder to get advocacy help. Part 2 and 3 of the Audit Tool help with this.

Important things

- People must understand advocacy and how this fits a person's culture. Advocates need to know about a person's culture.
- Some people from minority ethnic communities might not have had advocacy help before. They might need help to feel okay about using it.

Advocacy groups need to make sure they work well for everyone. They can work together to make things better. They will need money to do this work.

Families might need help to understand advocacy. They might need help to work with workers and advocates.

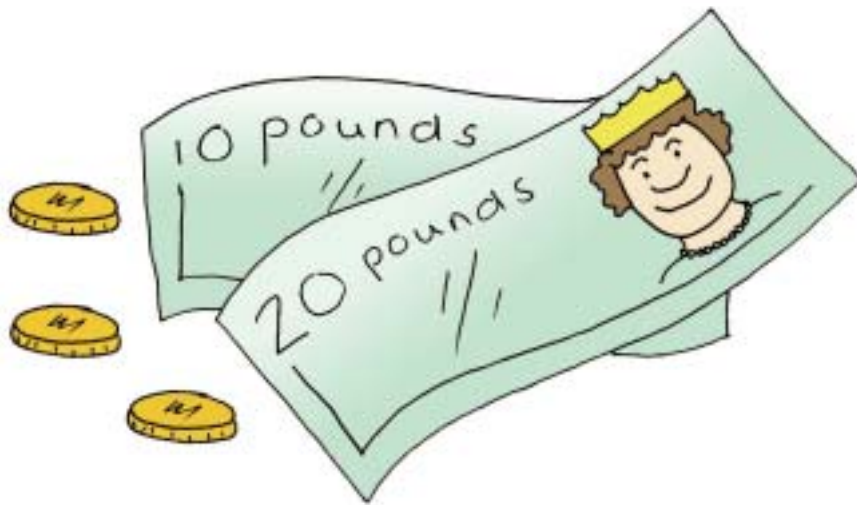
To help find advocates, It could help to go to places in the community to find people. For example, temples, churches, lunch clubs or community radio.



Person centred planning and service co-ordination

Important things

- People from minority ethnic communities should have the chance to have a **person centred plan** if they want one.
- People and families need to be able to choose if person centred planning is right for them.
- Services need to learn about how person centred planning works with a person's culture. Families can help them to learn. When planning it is important to include workers who speak the same language as the family.
- A person with a learning disability who uses a lot of services must have a special person to help them plan what they want. This person is their **Service Co-ordinator**. This service will be very helpful for people from minority ethnic communities if their Service Co-ordinator understands their culture.



Direct Payments

A lot of people don't know about direct payments. People said there was not a lot of information. They worried about how direct payments work.

Important things

- Services need to ask: how many people use direct payments? How many know about them? Is there enough information?
- Is there enough help for people to use them?

Services should make sure that direct payment support services work for people from all communities



FULFILLING LIVES

Changing how day services work

This will mean that day services will be more about what each person wants and will be about helping that person spend time in the community.

Important things

- Person centred planning needs to be offered to people from minority ethnic communities to help find out what people want from modern day support.
- People from minority ethnic communities should be offered the full range of services such as access to college, employment and other services after school.
- People need to know about community, leisure and social things to do.
- Services need to work with community groups to find ways of making improvements.



Employment

Important things

- Partnership Boards need to help people from minority ethnic communities know about work and how to get jobs.
- Partnership Boards need to think about the things that stop people from minority ethnic communities getting jobs and take action to change things.
- They need to support new ideas for finding work for people with learning disabilities and make sure everyone is included.

Education and learning all your life

Learning is important for helping people live the lives they want. People from minority ethnic communities need to be able to use these services too.

In the book 'Services For All', it says that colleges should make sure that they can work with students that don't speak English and that their courses are OK for people from all cultures. Staff at colleges need to know, for example, about clothes, personal care and food for students from minority ethnic communities.

Important things

- Colleges and Learning and Skills Councils need to have information that tells people from minority ethnic communities about learning and how this helps them. This means information will need doing in different languages.
- There are courses that teach people about where their culture comes from.



Things to do and relationships

Having social things to do and having friends and people close to you is very important. Services and carers should help people with learning disabilities spend their time doing what they like. They should help them find friends who like doing the same things.

Important things

- Services should help people from minority communities to have good social lives and enjoy their leisure time.
- Services can work with the community and other services to help people from minority ethnic communities do what they like to do.

Friendships that become sexual relationships

Families can worry about people with learning disabilities having **relationships** that can lead to sex. Workers can help the person with a learning disability talk to their family and friends to make things easier.

Services and workers need to learn about views about relationships within different cultures and work together to help everyone understand each other.



A place to live

People with learning disabilities from minority ethnic communities find it harder to get the homes they want. They don't always know what they can do and what choices they can make. Sometimes their support may be provided only by the family because they do not know about any other help which is right for them.

Information needs to be there for people from all cultures to learn about what people with learning disabilities can do and what choices there are.

Important things

- People doing Partnership Board plans for housing need to make sure they know about needs in minority ethnic communities and talk to people and groups about choices.
- Action from the plans is needed to make finding a good place to live work better for people from minority communities.



Money and benefits

Important things

- Partnership Boards must make sure there is enough information about money and benefits for people from minority ethnic communities.
- People may need help to get the money they are entitled to. Services should help so that people can get this money to live the lives they want.



WORKFORCE TRAINING AND PLANNING

Anyone working with people who have learning disabilities need to know about different cultures. They may need some training.

Important things

- Knowing about a culture means more than knowing religious holidays etc. Workers need to know what things are important in different cultures too.
- Workers will need training to help them. People with learning disabilities and their families can help to teach workers what they need to know.
- Some staff should come from the minority communities found in each place. And services need to work well with the community.
- People from minority ethnic communities with learning disabilities will meet people who work in other services, not just social services and health. These workers will need training too.

