

Easy Read

# Planning and organising your services

Our guide to commissioning services for  
people with a learning disability



This is an easy read version of the National Commissioning Board's  
**'Commissioning Services for People with a Learning Disability: Good  
Practice Guidance'**

November 2017

# How to use this document



This is an easy read version. The words and their meanings are easy to read and understand.



You may need help and support to read and understand this document. Ask someone you know to help you.

Some words may be difficult to understand. These are in **bold blue writing** and have been explained in a box beneath the word.

If any of the words are used later in the booklet they are shown in **normal blue writing**. If you see words in **normal blue writing**, you can look up what they mean in **Hard words** on page 35.

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# Introduction



This guide is about helping the **Regional Partnership Boards** plan and organise services for:



- people with learning disabilities and
- people with learning disabilities who also have autism.



There are 7 **Regional Partnership Boards** in Wales. They are groups of people from local health boards and local councils.

They work together to make sure health and social care services in their areas are planned well.



This guide has been written in easy read for people with learning disabilities.



People with learning disabilities and their families must be involved in the planning of their services.

# What is commissioning?

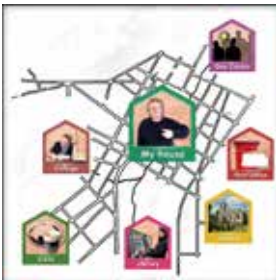


**Commissioning** is the way services are planned, organised and paid for.

The person in charge of **commissioning** is called a **commissioner**.



When **commissioning** services, **Regional Partnership Boards** must think about:



- What support people in their local area need so their needs can be met.



- Their local areas and the resources they have there. And how much they cost.

Services can be **commissioned** from the local council, private, public and third sector.

# 4 steps to commission services

There are 4 steps that must be followed to **commission** services:



**1. Find out what people need and write a plan for providing services.**



**2. Provide the services.**



**3. Check how well the services are working.**



**4. Find out if anything needs to be changed to make the services better.**



These steps **must** be followed in order. And service users **must** be involved at each step.

# Joint commissioning



**Joint commissioning** is when 2 or more organisations work together to plan and organise services.



This is really important for making services better for people.



**Joint commissioning** helps to join up the care people get and gives people more choice.



When services work together, care is organised better.



**Joint commissioning** involves thinking about:



- All the services available to people.



- The communities that people live in.



- The support needed at different ages of a person's life.



- Keeping services going in the future.



**Everyone needs to understand how important it is to work together to make services better.**

# The commissioner



**Commissioners** must make sure public money is spent wisely.



They must make sure services are very good and last into the future.



**Commissioners** must have good skills and ideas that will help them work together with others.



They need to be able to work with both health and social care services. For example, housing, education and benefits services.



There are lots of different job roles involved in **commissioning**. People need to work together well to get the best outcomes for people.

# Commissioning services

Services should help people have good lives. They must have a good impact on:



- the people who get support from services



- their carers



- the community people live in.



Welsh Government policy says people with learning disabilities have the right to:



- be healthy and happy



- be independent



- make their own decisions



- have family and friends



- be part of their community



- be supported by their community



- be able to get services that can meet their needs.



**Commissioners** need to think about how care services can help people with learning disabilities have these rights. And have good lives.



**Commissioners** should follow the **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act**. This started in April 2016.

The **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act** is a law that aims to improve the health and well-being of:

- people who need care and support
- carers who need support.



The **Act** says that services should be **co-produced**.

**Co-produced / co-production.** This means people who use services are included in all decisions. They are seen as equal partners with professionals.

It helps to make sure that everyone involved in planning or providing a service understands how important the views are of the people who use the service.



The **Act** also says **commissioners** must think about a person's care at all ages of their life.



This is very important when someone leaves child services and goes to adult services.



The **Act** says that care and support services need to make sure a person has good **well-being**.

**Well-being** means a person is happy, healthy and is comfortable with their life and what they do.



And the **Act** says the needs of carers should be thought about as well.



Welsh Government wrote a **Well-being** Statement to go with the **Act**. There is an easy read version of this statement.



The **Well-being** Statement will help **commissioners** know what care and support is needed to make sure people are happy and healthy. And have good **well-being**.

## Important values



Services should be planned around the people who need them. And the people they love in their lives.



People who get services should be involved in planning their own support.



People should be treated with **dignity** at all times.

**Dignity** means valuing someone and treating them with respect.

This means:



- valuing the things that make a person who they are



- giving care and support that is best for the person



- sharing information with people in a way they can understand



- being aware of how different things can affect a person's **dignity**

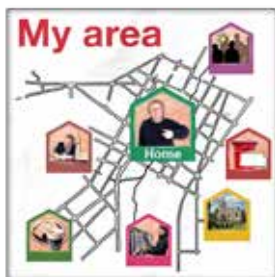


- valuing ways of working that promote everyone's **dignity**.



- knowing that they may need to report care and support that does not treat people with **dignity**.

## Services in the community



People with learning disabilities must be able to use services in their community.

Services in the community include things like:



- Cinema.



- Sports centre.



- Library.



- Job centre.



- College.



- Dentist and Doctor.



Services must make **reasonable adjustments** to make sure people with learning disabilities can use them.

**Reasonable adjustments** are changes that places and services can make so that everyone is able to use them.

For example, putting ramps in buildings for wheelchair users. Or giving information in easy read.



People with learning disabilities need information and advice in a way they can understand.



This is important for helping them have control of their lives. And to make their own choices.

## Special health services



People with learning disabilities have poorer health than other people.



They need support to understand and explain their health needs. And support to get information about health and how to keep healthy.



It is important that everyone is able to use services. But people also need support to help them feel confident to go to new services.



Some people will need extra help from a person to get care and support.



Some people will need someone to speak up for them. Or to help them understand what services they can get and make their own choices.

## Early support



It is best to give support as early as possible. This will help stop the problem getting worse.



All needs should be taken care of. Not just needs that are very serious. This can stop people needing more and more support because their problems are getting worse.

## Support during emergencies



Services should also be able to give support in urgent situations. Support should always be based on what the person needs.



If people go into hospital their support should join up with the care they get in hospital.



Hospitals need to work with community services to make this happen.

## Ongoing support



Everyone who needs ongoing care and support should have a plan that involves them in all decisions about their care and support.



Where people live and who they live with is important.



People with learning disabilities should be supported to live in the community where they have family, friends and other links.



They should have houses and flats that look the same as the houses and flats that other people live in.



It is very important that services do not go back to putting people with learning disabilities in hospitals. It is important not to separate people with learning disabilities from other people.



Ongoing support should help people:

- do the things they want to do



- learn new skills



- have new experiences



- be independent



- have a job



- have family and friends.



Their care and support should also help them keep their traditions and beliefs.



**It is important that everyone truly believes people with learning disabilities can live good lives in the community.**



Physical disabilities, health problems and behaviour problems should not stop them doing this.



**Commissioners** must not **commission** services that separate people from the community they live in.

# Planning services together



Services must be **co-produced** to get good outcomes for people.



People who need care and support know what life is like for them better than anyone.



Professionals should work with people to help them find the best care and support.

They need to ask questions about **What Matters** to them. For example:



- **Tell me about yourself?**
- **What matters to you?**

This will help them:



- work on what strengths people have



- help set up support networks



- focus on what matters to the person. And get the best outcomes for them



- work together as equals



- help change ways of working for the better.



**Co-production Network Wales** is an organisation that can help services find out how good they are at [co-production](#).



[Commissioners](#) must take the lead to make their services [co-produced](#).

Co-production should be used at each of the 4 steps for commissioning services:

## 1. Finding out what people need and writing a plan



- People with learning disabilities should be members of decision-making groups.



- Commissioners should work with people with learning disabilities to run consultations.



- People with learning disabilities should agree with plans and changes.

## 2. Providing services



- Commissioners should promote services where people with learning disabilities have a strong voice and real control over how their service is provided.



- 1 option would be for people to use a **direct payment**, with any support they need for this.

A **direct payment** is money that social services can give people to buy their own service.



- Another option would be that the service is provided by a membership organisation that people belong to and help to run themselves.



Section 16 of the **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act** says that local authorities **must** promote this this type of organisation.



### 3. Checking how well services are working



- People with learning disabilities should have a say about how their service is working, with support to help them do this.



- People with learning disabilities can also help with the checking of other services than their own. This includes helping professionals to know what things are important to check.



### 4. Finding out if anything needs to be changed to make it better



- People with learning disabilities and their families should be able to take part in regular surveys and checks.



- A useful tool is **Working Together for Change**. This involves following 8 steps to make sure you think about the needs of everyone involved in your service.

# Changing services



**Commissioners** must take the lead to make change happen in services.



They need to explain to everyone in all services why change is needed.

They need to make sure:



- Everyone understands what they are doing and why.



- Everyone understands their part in making change happen.



- People have the chance to have their say at all stages.



- People can be open about their thoughts and ideas.



- Everyone knows what is happening. And how it might affect them.



**It is important that everyone truly believes that the best way of working is by [co-producing](#).**



**This is true for all services. And at all stages of a person's life.**



**It may take extra time and support for everyone to get used to this way of working. But it will make sure that people who use services will get the best support.**

# Keeping people at the centre of services



Commissioners should only commission services that work in person centred ways.



Pathways are a good tool for planning care and support. They help services work together better.

A **Pathway** is a way of setting out what care and support services are available at each stage of life. Everyone can see the **pathway** and follow it.



Pathways must be **co-produced** with people. This is very important. It will help make sure services are **co-produced** too.



1 way to do this is to talk to lots of people with learning disabilities and their families. They should be asked **What Matters** questions like:

- What matters to you?
- What has helped you get the things that matter to you?
- What might have helped make things better?





**Pathways** should give information on services at each life stage. For example, early years and starting school, adult life, and getting older and aging well.



They should show how people can move to different services. They should be able to get the services they need when they need it.

Well planned **pathways**:



- are easy to understand



- show that people can get services when they need them



- help services work together



- make sure people get the services they need, when they need it



- think about the whole family



- are agreed by all staff



- make best use of services.



**It is important that everyone understands the need for clear [pathways](#). [Pathways](#) must let people move between services.**

# Supporting people with challenging behaviour



**Challenging behaviour** can be things like hitting people, breaking things or hurting yourself.

**Challenging behaviour** can sometimes make it difficult to give someone care and support.



The best way to support people with **challenging behaviour** is to use **Positive Behavioural Support (PBS)**.

**Positive Behavioural Support (PBS)** is about understanding why a person behaves in a challenging way. There is usually a reason or problem that causes someone to behave in a certain way. **PBS** tries to sort out problems.



When people get stressed and upset **PBS** helps people to calm down. **PBS** is never about punishing or doing bad things to people.



**PBS** looks at what people can do, their **well-being** and helps them have a good life. This means that the person does not need to use **challenging behaviour** any more.



Here is a 6 minute film to explain what PBS is:  
[www.bild.org.uk/capbs/pbsinformation/introduction-to-pbs](http://www.bild.org.uk/capbs/pbsinformation/introduction-to-pbs)



PBS can stop problems getting worse for people. This helps stop care and support breaking down. And helps to avoid people being put into hospital.



PBS deals with challenging behaviour in a safe and kind way. It is good to have an emergency team who can give support 24 hours a day.



To give PBS staff must listen to the person and their family and others who know them best.



The support given depends on what is best for the person. And what their needs are.



All staff and carers must have training in PBS to use it. It is important for all people in the person's life to know about PBS.

# How do you know services are working?



**Commissioners** must focus on how services can work together to give the best outcomes.



This is a good way of spending money. They should not focus on the cheapest ways to give care and support.



There are guides that help **commissioners** check outcomes.



They say how **commissioners** can tell people are living good lives.



It is sometimes difficult for people with learning disabilities to say what matters to them.



**Commissioners** should try to speak to people who know the person well to find out about their outcomes.



**Checking outcomes is the only way to know people are living good lives.**

# Hard words

## Challenging behaviour

Challenging behaviour can be things like hitting people, breaking things or hurting yourself.

Challenging behaviour can sometimes make it difficult to give someone care and support.

## Commissioning

Commissioning is the way services are planned, organised and paid for. The person in charge of commissioning is called a commissioner.

## Co-produced / co-production

This means people who use services are included in all decisions. They are seen as equal partners with professionals.

It helps to make sure that everyone involved in planning or providing a service understands how important the views are of the people who use the service.

## Dignity

Dignity means valuing someone and treating them with respect.

## Direct payment

A direct payment is money that social services can give people to buy their own service.

## Joint commissioning

Joint commissioning is when 2 or more organisations work together to plan and organise services.

## Pathway

A Pathway is a way of setting out what care and support services are available at each stage of life. Everyone can see the pathway and follow it.

## **Positive Behavioural Support (PBS)**

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## **Regional Partnership Boards**

There are 7 Regional Partnership Boards in Wales. They are groups of people from local health boards and local councils.

They work together to make sure health and social care services in their areas are planned well.

## **Reasonable adjustments**

Reasonable adjustments are changes that places and services can make to make sure everyone is able to use them. For example putting ramps in buildings for wheelchair users. Or giving information in easy read.

## **Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act**

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act is a law that aims to improve the health and well-being of:

- people who need care and support
- carers who need support.

## **Well-being**

Well-being means a person is happy, healthy and is comfortable with their life and what they do.