

Making It Happen

How to Influence the Development of Services for Deafblind People

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Personal Experience

- Individual rehabilitation with deafblind people
- Masters degree research into numbers and needs
- Development and management of specialist deafblind services for four councils
- Senior Policy Adviser (Disability) Department of Health

Today's Focus

- Influencing National Policy – Section Seven Guidance
- Influencing local service development from two perspectives:
 - Professional
 - Deafblind service user

Influencing National Policy – Achieving Statutory Guidance

- 1989 “Breaking Through” report produced
- 1990s Nationwide development of initiatives
- Late 90s “Yes to Access” Campaign
- 100 Deafblind people lobby Parliament
- DH set up Working Party and Consultation
- 2001 Guidance issued
- New duties placed on Local Authorities and deafblind people achieve new rights



Influencing Service Development at a Local Level as a Professional

Work in Partnership With Deafblind People

- Employ deafblind people
- Develop user groups
- Ensure sound evaluation/feedback mechanisms
- Ensure “dual sensory” inclusion alongside single sensory
- Work with other deafblind/disability organisations e.g SENSE

Knowledge – Know Your Facts

- Identify numbers and needs
- Understand policy context. What can you use/exploit?
- Use current government generic policies/agendas to your advantage
- Maximise on local issues/initiatives

Know and Influence Your Stakeholders

- Identify key individuals and groups
- Consider how best to influence them
- Engage Senior Managers
- Use politicians/members
- Develop a marketing strategy
- Provide information and training for generic staff
- Develop “champions”

Learn How to Sell

- “Stand in their shoes” – empathy
- Short punchy well prepared presentations - AIDA
- Sound business case – e.g. Invest to Save

Influencing Service Development at a Local Level as a Deafblind Person

- Form or join a deafblind group/organisation
- Challenge discrimination
- Seek support from local politicians
- Use publicity for your cause
- Work in partnership with others
- Work with deafblind people

Together we can make a difference!

