

To: Councillor Sam Forsyth, Quinton Ward, Birmingham City Council

Subject: Community Support for People with Disabilities in Quinton

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Introduction

This report focuses on community support for people with disabilities in Quinton, Birmingham. Community support is important because it can help disabled people live independently, take part in activities, and improve quality of life. Some people with disabilities may live alone or have limited family support nearby. Without support, people with disabilities may experience loneliness, isolation, and difficulties in maintaining their normal lives.

The Care Act 2014 is an important law for adult social care in England. It requires local authorities to promote individual wellbeing and have regard to people's views, wishes and feelings. It also includes duties around prevention, information and advice, and assessment of care and support needs. This report considers how limited community support may affect people with disabilities and recommends ways to improve support in Quinton.

Impact on the Community

Firstly, people with disabilities who do not have enough support may struggle with everyday activities such as cooking, going outside, maintaining their home, or accessing local facilities. This may be especially difficult for someone who lives alone and does not have family members nearby. The Care Act guidance explains that prevention can include community services and activities that help people maintain independence and reduce loneliness.

Secondly, limited community support can affect emotional wellbeing and quality of life. If people have fewer opportunities to meet others or take part in activities, they may feel lonely. Community activities can give people opportunities to build friendships, develop confidence and feel valued. The Care Act includes physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing, relationships, participation and control over day-to-day life within the areas of wellbeing that local authorities must consider.

Family members can provide support, but they may not always be able to meet every need. Professional support can work alongside family support. A Care Act assessment should focus on the person's individual needs, the outcomes they want to achieve, and their involvement in decisions. It should also consider community support and other resources that may help the person achieve their goals.

Birmingham already provides adult social care services that aim to help disabled people remain independent in their own homes and communities. The council also provides information, assessments, support for people with disabilities and community-based services. Therefore, recommendations should build on existing services and improve access to appropriate support where needed.

Recommendations

Firstly, Birmingham City Council should consider providing more community support workers for people with disabilities who need additional support. Support workers could provide one-to-one support, listen to their concerns and individual needs. They could encourage people with disabilities to go outside, attend activities, and maintain independence. Early support can help prevent needs from becoming big and can promote wellbeing and independence.

Secondly, the council should consider supporting more accessible community centres and activities. These could include drawing, arts and crafts, group discussions and social activities. People with disabilities could meet other people, make friends and feel less lonely. Community facilities should be accessible and suitable for different needs so that people can all participate.

Thirdly, people with disabilities should be involved when local services are planned. The council could work with charities, community organisations, faith groups and people who use services to understand local needs. Services should be flexible and planned with the people who use them.

Finally, the council should make information about support easier to find. Information could be shared in community centres, churches, mosques and local settings through posters, leaflets and information sessions. It could explain how to request an assessment, where to find local support and where to get information about benefits.

Conclusion

In conclusion, community support is important for people with disabilities because it can help them maintain independence, improve wellbeing and participate in community life. Limited support may make everyday activities more difficult and can contribute to isolation. The Care Act provides an important framework for promoting wellbeing, prevention, participation and individual choice. Birmingham City Council should consider increasing community support, providing accessible activities, involving people with disabilities in planning services and making information easier to access. These actions could help create a more supportive and inclusive community.

Reference list

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