

Assignment two

Develop a 'blog' post which demonstrates your in depth understanding of an advocacy issue of your choice.

Advocacy Support for People with Learning Disabilities.

Everybody whatever their age, colour, or sex, will sometime in their life need the support of an advocate. According to Age UK (2022) an independent advocate role is to support the people who believe that they are not being taken seriously and their views are not being taken into account, as well as their rights being respected. Some of the people, that need the most help would be people who are classed as having a disability.

But what is classed as a disabled person?

Mencap (2022) states that 'a learning disability is a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities - for example household tasks, socialising or managing money - which affects a person for their whole life.' Mencap (2022) believe that there are up to 70,000 people with learning disabilities in Wales, but out of all of them, only 1 in 4 are known and supported by social services. The table below is provided by StatsWales (2022) and shows how many disabled people are on the register in Wales.

Total disabled persons on the register at 31 March					#Total disabled persons on the register at 31 March		
#Total severely sight impaired	#Total sight impaired	Total without visual disability		#Total without visual disability			
		#Total with hearing impairment	# Without Visual Disability - Physical disability only				
Wales		(r) 5,646	(r) 5,549	(r) 7,688	(r) 21,409	(r) 29,097	(r) 40,292
Wales	Isle of Anglesey	159	175	24	899	923	1,257
	Gwynedd	258	307	36	1,103	1,139	1,704
	Conwy	70	36	39	1,581	1,620	1,726
	Denbighshire	181	98	276	(r) 276	276	555
	Flintshire	126	370	249	1,545	1,794	2,290
	Wrexham	10	3	14	85	99	112
	Powys	(r) 466	(r) 263	(r) 6	(r) 5,737	(r) 5,743	(r) 6,472
	Ceredigion	149	194	175	637	812	1,155
	Pembrokeshire	270	370	686	1,558	2,244	2,884
	Carmarthenshire	428	477	1,201	2,734	3,935	4,840
	Swansea	610	538	515	621	1,136	2,284
	Neath Port Talbot	377	402	733	1,615	2,348	3,127
	Bridgend	455	397	1,044	890	1,934	2,786
	Vale of Glamorgan	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Cardiff	788	694	855	1,750	2,605	4,087
	Rhondda Cynon Taf	461	370	922	(r) 922	922	1,753
	Merthyr Tydfil	142	120	251	(r) 251	251	513
	Caerphilly	313	270	62	(r) 62	62	645
	Blaenau Gwent	(r) 55	(r) 58	(r) 15	(r) 33	(r) 48	(r) 161
	Torfaen	24	85	60	(r) 182	(r) 242	(r) 351
	Monmouthshire	224	247	488	193	681	1,152
	Newport	80	75	37	246	283	438

(StatsWales, 2022).

Disabled people face an upward battle throughout their lives. Where can disabled people and their families turn to when they need help? Palrung (2022) believes that disabled people are not just looking for the help and information they need, but that the information that they receive is up-to-date and accurate at the time and unbiased.

Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHA) are usually trained under the Mental Health Act 1983 and can help disabled people enforce their rights. According to Mind (2022) an IMHA can help if a disabled person is a 'qualifying compulsory patient' or a 'qualifying informal patient'. An IMHA can help a qualifying compulsory patient by explaining a person's rights, and explaining about any treatment a person might be having and they can help that person get their views across according (Mind, 2022). However, if the person is a qualifying informal patient, the advocate will explain about any treatment, the reasons why a person is receiving said treatment and what the legal basis is, if any, as well as attending any meetings that the person needs to attend in regard to their treatment.

There are laws and regulations in place, which are there to help improve a disabled person's life. Such as the recent UK social care legislation (Equality Act, 2010) which has combined past laws and regulations into one, indicating that it protects disabled people from discrimination, whilst in or trying to gain employment, if they need schooling such as, day service but also protects the staff that look after them. Then there is how a disabled person can gain access for example, a building if they use a wheelchair, is there a ramp, automatic doors and then a lift if the person must gain access to another floor.



(We know your dreams, 2017).

There are different models of disability according to Disabled World (2022) these are:

1. Medical – this is where the disabled person is viewed as a problem of the person, usually caused by disease, trauma, or other health problems.
2. Social - sees the issue of "disability" as a socially created problem.
3. Tragedy and/or Charity Model of Disability – this is where disabled people are viewed as deserving pity.
4. Moral Model of Disability – this model is where disabled people are morally responsible for their own disability. For example, bad actions due to their parents.
5. Empowering Model of Disability – allows disabled people or their family to decide the cause of action needed for any treatment or services they would like to benefit from.
6. Social Adapted Model of Disability – this model is where a disabled person has limitations in an environment more for an able-bodied person.

7. Religious Model of Disability –with this model the disabled person is punished by God, due to a sin committed by the person or their family.

(Disabled World, 2022).

With the seemingly lack of support for disabled people where it comes to advocacy, were they not getting the correct help and the quality of support? Also, what they are receiving can also be inconsistent. Therefore, Voice Ability (2022) set out a case for the need for a national commissioned specialist advocacy service. Voice Ability (2022) also recommended that there should be a specialist advocacy service which would support and provide a more effective service to all disabled people.

Does this send a message that disabled people are less worthwhile than normal people and make disabled people feel less valued?

The Welsh Government are making changes to improve the lives of disabled people. Their aim is to start a National Learning Disability Observatory for Wales where they will be able to start collecting data and information about disabled people to help improve their everyday lives. They also want to improve support by using “Positive Behavioural Support” and trauma informed care with disabled people (Welsh Government, 2022).

People First (2022) state even in the womb, a disabled child has not the same rights as a normal child. This is because you can still abort a disabled child even after the 24-week mark, up to full term. People First (2022) aim to support disabled people, especially with their campaign [#DownrightDiscrimination](#) which aims to have the clause taken out of the Abortion Act to stop the later in pregnancy abortions, just because they are disabled. They believe that everyone has a right to exist whether they are disabled or not. BBC (2014) stated ‘some ethicists don't like the argument that abortion should be allowed where the baby, if born, would suffer from physical or mental handicap’.

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