

Appendix 1: – Service User Stories

Rosalind's Story - Hi My Name is Rosalind*. I am 53 years old I have a mild learning disability I have spent all my life using special services for people with learning disabilities. As a child I went to special school, when I left school I was sent to Prudhoe hospital for three years, from there I went to a large day centre for 17 years and have attended a community base for the past 18 years.

If I had the chance I would have liked to work in a big department store, in fashion, a hair dresser or a beautician.

I am a service user.

The best thing that happened at the base was in 1994 I got a clerical job, taking in the centre charges, this made me feel great, I felt I was the same as the staff, this give me a new lease of life. Being busy is just great. I still do this now and I get paid monthly into my bank account, I have a council badge, a pay slip, holidays and a contract.

In 2004 I got the chance to join a user led enterprise at the base, this meant I could use my skills. The enterprise moved out of the base in 2008 into its own office where I go three days per week.

I have learned how to present myself positively, how to speak up, how to talk to people, use the phone, computer, typing, photo copying, do the banking, make appointments and be responsible.

Through our hard work with the enterprise we have been to glitzy award ceremonies, stayed in 5 star hotels, eaten posh food in Michelin star restaurants, used planes to travel, hired cottages, made speeches at conferences met important people and politicians.

This has made me feel part of a team, being all colleagues together, I feel on equal footing to other people who are on the bus travelling to work with me each day.

I'm another face in a crowd but in a good way.

Vision for Disability Day Services

Some of the week I am a service user which is ok these days I like most things about the base, the rest of the week I have my business head on.

I feel great and proud of what I have achieved, every one should get the chance to do something like this.

** Rosalind has chosen to change her name. This is her story. She wrote it herself.*

This story is about Sandra. She is an example of someone who will benefit from focussed work in the *Wellbeing and Independence* theme:

Sandra is forty three years of age, has a learning disability and attended a large day centre Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 4.00pm. This day service was not near to Sandra's home, so Sandra spent a lot of time on the minibus everyday to get to there and back.

After the closure of the centre Sandra took part in a Citizenship programme in a community base near to her home. At the same time Sandra was re-assessed by her Social Worker to identify her future care and support needs.

During the Citizenship Pilot Sandra visited lots of places in her local community and identified activities she would like to take part in. Sandra also decided she would like to volunteer to work with children.

During the re-assessment Sandra and her parents decided to take a direct payment so that Sandra could be supported to do the activities of her choice at other times of the day and at weekends.

Sandra was referred to the Supported Volunteering project to help her to find a placement with children.

Sandra now only attends the community base one day a week. She has a personal assistant who helps her to do things in the evenings and at weekends. She works two afternoons a week in a nursery and is supported by a volunteer support worker.

Vision for Disability Day Services

This story is about Tony. He is an example of someone who will benefit from focussed work in the *Enterprise and Work related opportunities* theme:

Tony is twenty five years old and has autism. Tony attended a building based day service four days a week. Tony had someone with him all of the time when he was at the service. The centre was not near Tony's home and he was picked up each morning and taken home each night. The day service had supported Tony to do lots of voluntary work.

Tony wanted to get a paid job in gardening but had no experience or qualifications.

Tony volunteered to take part in a gardening enterprise to get the experience he needed to find a job, supported by his day service staff. He also did an employment course at his day service to learn about what having a job would be like.

Tony asked for his staff to continue to support him from home two days a week to take part in activities he could walk or get a bus to.

Tony now has a paid job three days a week and is doing his NVQ.