

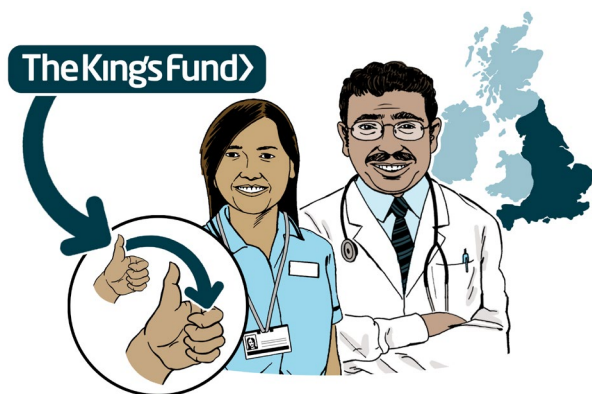
# Towards a new partnership between disabled people and health and care services

## Getting our voices heard

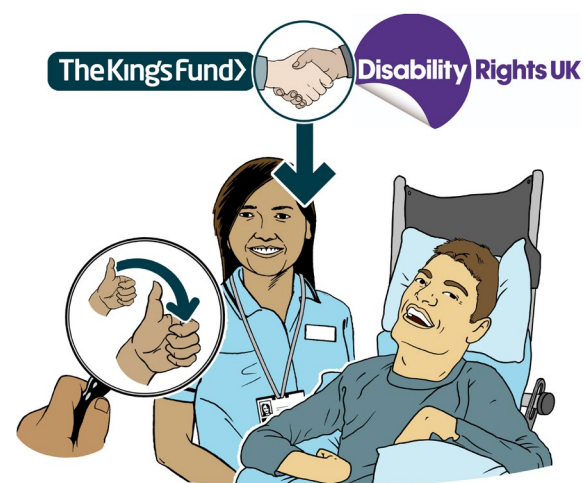
easy read



# About this work



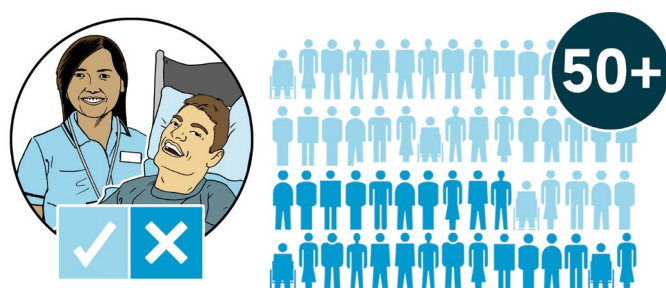
The King's Fund is an organisation that works to improve health and care in England.



The King's Fund and Disability Rights UK worked together to explore what **partnership working** between disabled people and health and care systems looks like, and how it could improve.



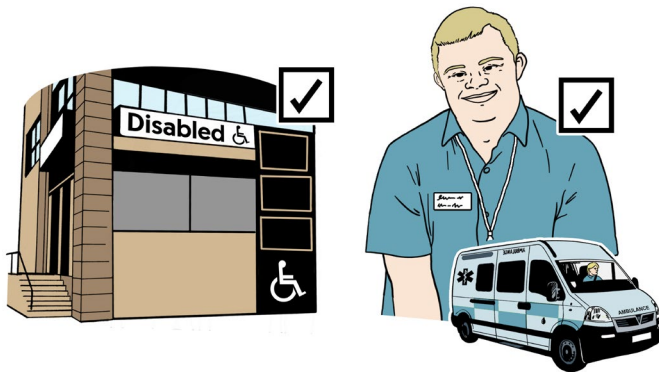
**Partnership working** means working together in a way that lets everyone have their say, and promotes shared decision making.



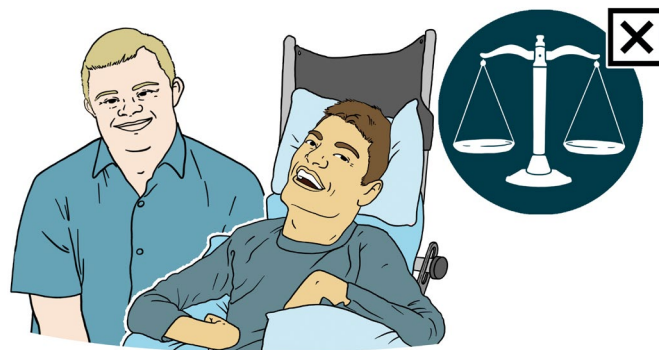
More than 50 people took part in this project. People with, and without, experience of disability and the health and care sector.



The people who took part were from different ages, ethnicities, genders and sexualities.



In this group there were people from 15 disabled people's organisations and there were disabled people who work in health and care.

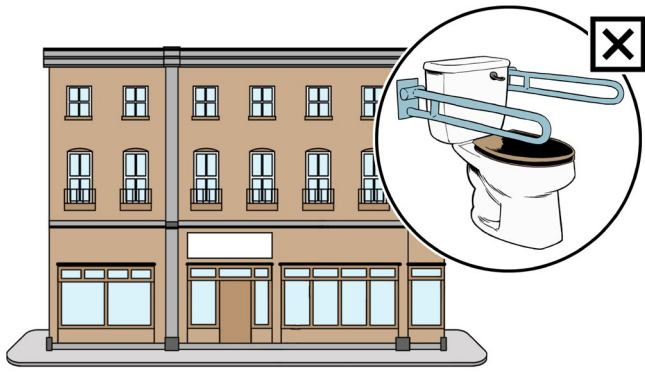


Disabled people experience **health inequalities** and face **barriers** to accessing health and care services.



**Health inequalities** are when there are unfair differences in health between groups of people. For example, people living in a richer area being more likely to live longer than someone in a poorer area.





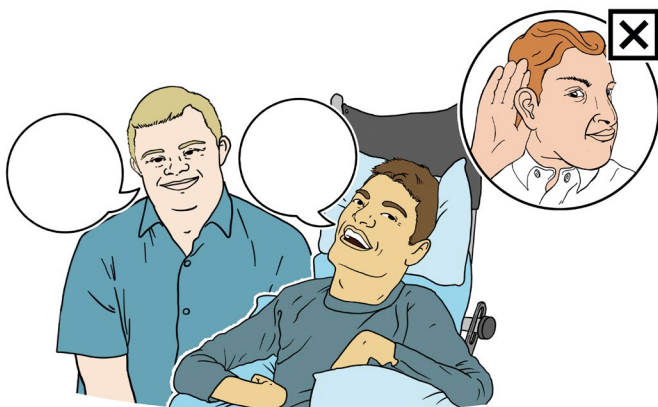
**Barriers** are things that stop people, or make it hard for them. This can be a physical barrier like buildings not having accessible toilets.



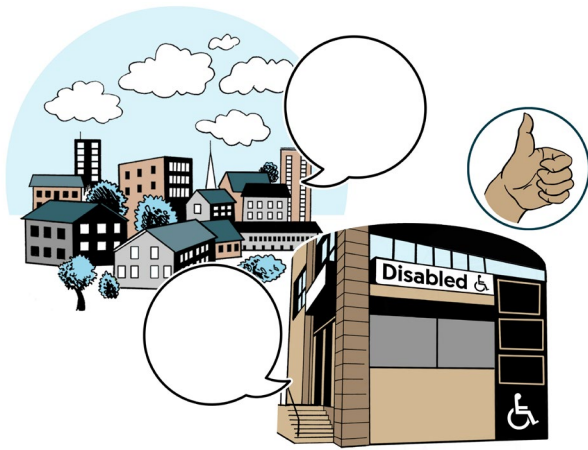
Or a social barrier, which are people's thoughts and attitudes towards someone. Like thinking a disabled person can not do things on their own.



We think it is important for health and care systems to think about how to include disabled people and get their opinions on how to improve services.



We think that disabled people are not involved enough and often do not have their voice heard.



Disabled people's organisations are in touch with local communities and are experts in what they need.



We think it is important to hear what local communities say.



This is because people using health and care services will understand what they need, what is working and what could be improved.

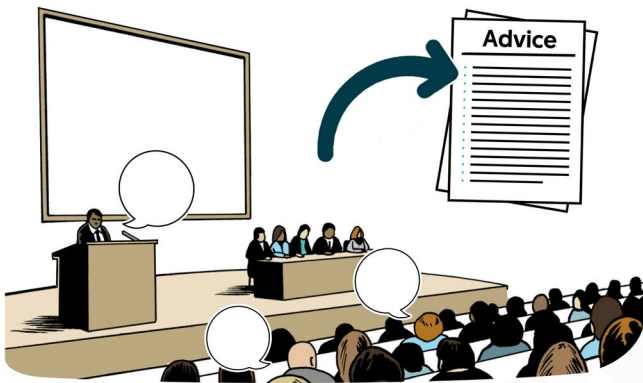


This will be useful information for **integrated care systems** being put in place.



An **integrated care system** is when NHS organisations and other services in local areas work together to plan health and care services to meet the needs of their community.

## What we learned

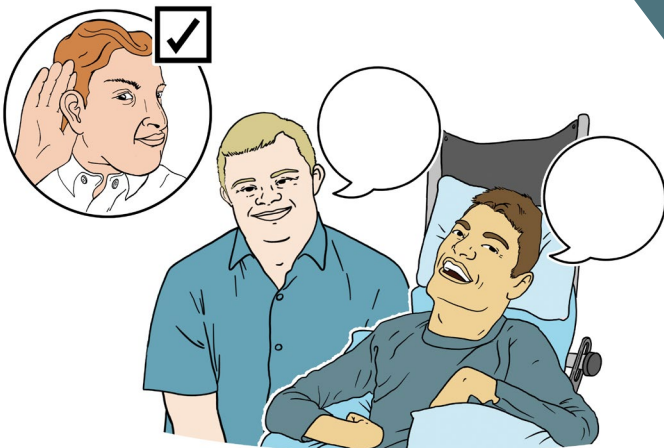


After our talks we thought about what was important for people to do to improve partnership working between disabled people and health and care systems.

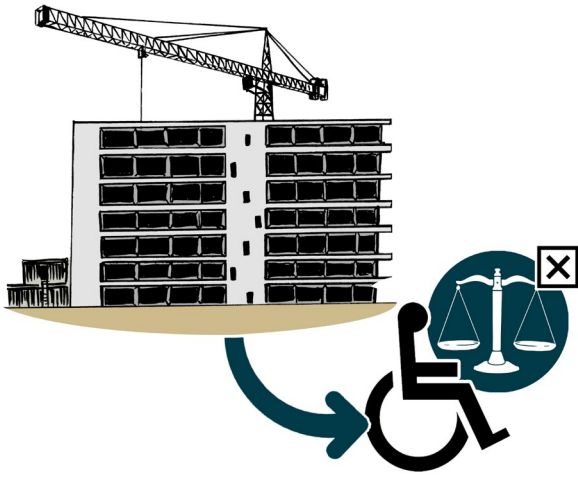


We have split this information into 4 main categories.

### 1. Listen and understand



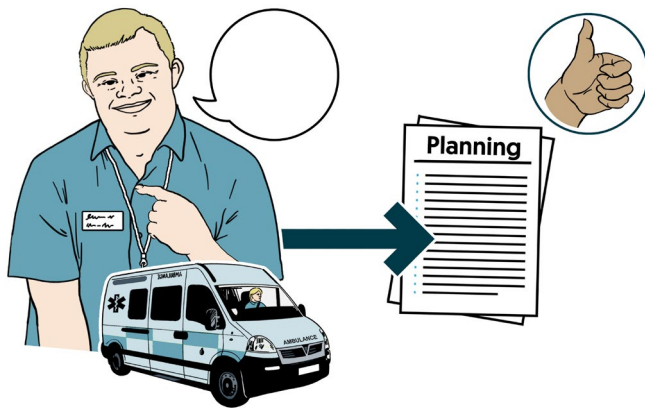
To properly involve disabled people in planning services, the health and care system needs to listen to disabled people.



It is important to understand that the challenges disabled people face are caused by the way the world around us is designed, and not by their disabilities. This is called the **social model of disability**



Health and care leaders need to support their staff to understand disability better.



They should also support disabled staff to use their lived experience and professional experience when planning services.



The health and care system needs to make sure it thinks about disabled people's involvement at all stages of planning.





Involving people properly means making sure that people delivering services share power and work equally with the people who use them. This is called the **principle of co-production**.



Staff working in health and care need to understand the principle of co-production.



Health and care leaders should use integrated care systems to help think of new ways of listening to people.

## 2. DPO support



There are ways disabled people's organisations (DPOs) could work to support their local health and care systems.

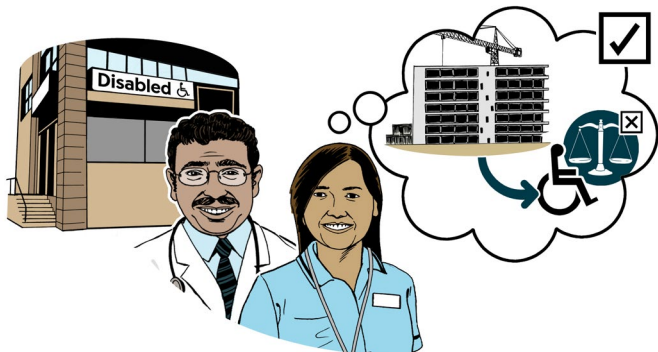




Working together with other local DPOs and user led groups will help them have their voice heard.



DPOs can make a bigger difference by finding out what they can improve in local health and care systems, and working with other local groups with similar goals.

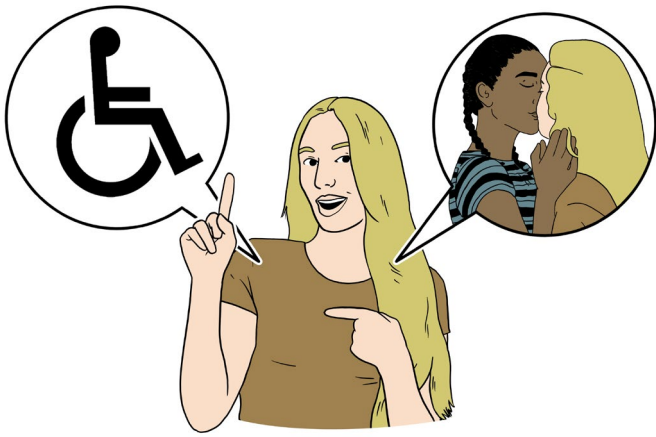


DPOs can support local health and care staff to understand the social model of disability, and how to properly involve disabled people.

### 3. Intersectional approach



Health and care organisations and DPOs can do more to make sure they take an **intersectional approach**.

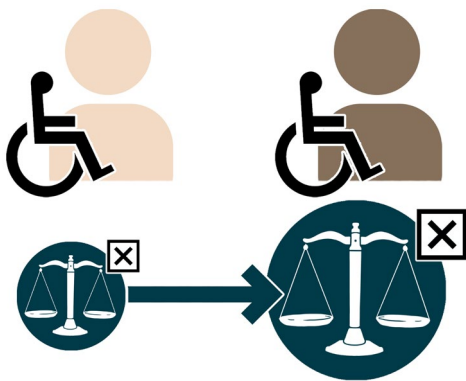


## **Intersectional approach**

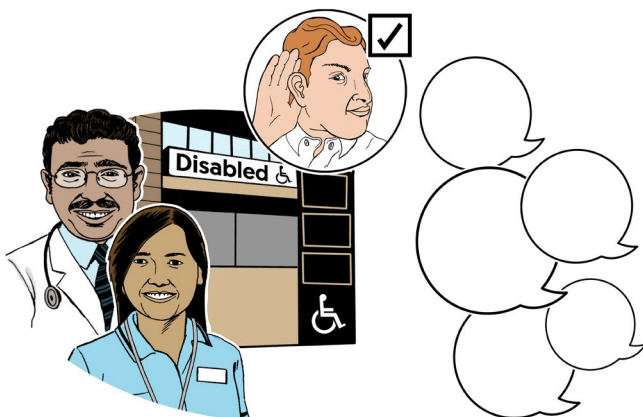
means understanding that no one has just one identity, and making sure that disability is not seen as a stand alone issue.



Disabled people come from all sorts of different backgrounds, ethnicities, genders and sexualities.



Some of these things can make being heard even more of a challenge.



Health and care systems and DPOs need to listen to lots of different voices, opinions and experiences.

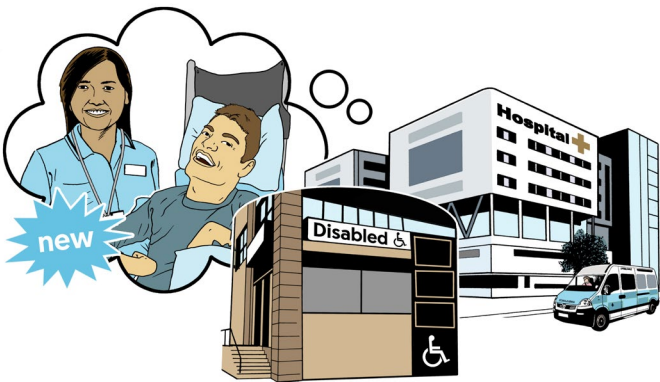


They need to understand the issues affecting disabled people and make links to other groups facing challenges.



This gives different groups the chance to come together and for their work to make a bigger difference.

## 4. Working together

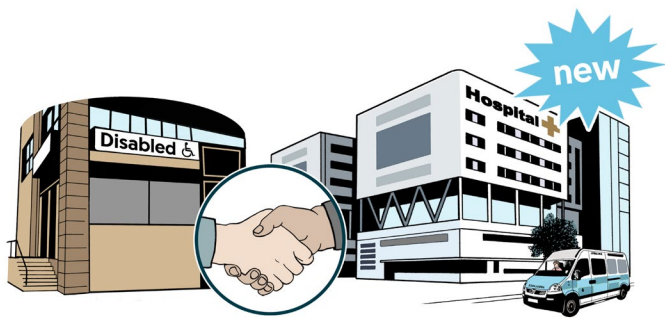


Local health and care systems and DPOs can learn new things from partnership working.



They can also learn new things from the new integrated care systems.





They can use what they learn to make new ways of working together.

## Conclusion



We do not think any of the issues raised in this project are new. And many things have got worse for disabled people in the past 10 years.



This is why making sure disabled people's voices are heard is very important.



If you have any questions, or you want to find out more about our work then you can visit our website at:

**[www.kingsfund.org.uk](http://www.kingsfund.org.uk)**

Or call us at:

**020 7307 2568**

# The King's Fund >

The King's Fund is an independent charity working to improve health and care in England. We give advice based on our research, we work with teams and organisations, promote understanding of the health and social care system, and bring people together to learn, share knowledge and talk. Our vision is that the best possible health and care is available to all.

**[www.kingsfund.org.uk](http://www.kingsfund.org.uk)**

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