

# How to improve dialogue between disabled people and health and care services

easy read



By Fazilet Hadi

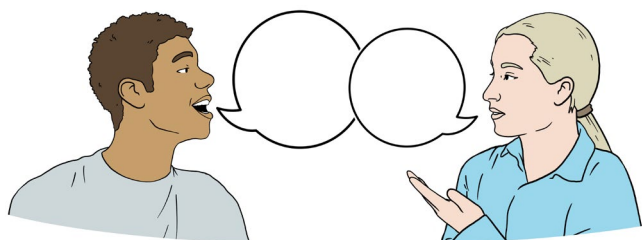
**TheKingsFund**>



# About



This easy read blog is about how to improve **dialogue** between disabled people and health and care services.



**Dialogue** means the way people speak and communicate with each other.



It was written by a person called Fazilet Hadi who works at Disability Rights UK.

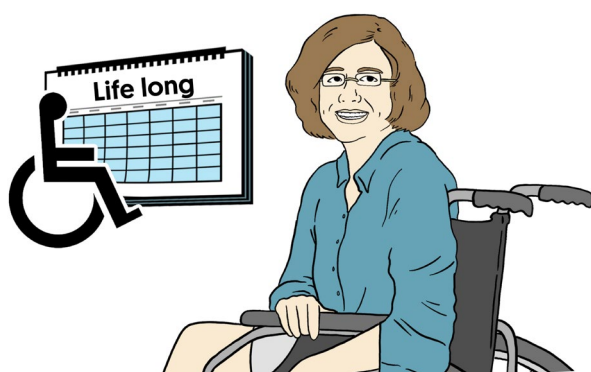
## Health and care and disabled people



There are 14 million disabled people in the UK, and they are big users of health and care services.



Disabled people should have their say in how services are planned and run.



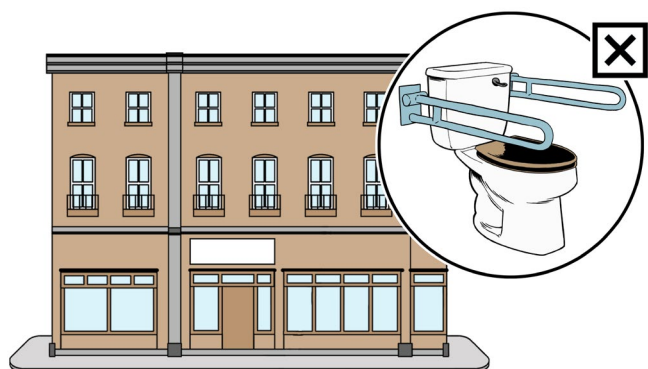
Often disabled people are seen as someone who needs to be cured or fixed. But millions of disabled people are living with life long conditions.



Advice and treatment should be empowering. This means making sure people have the information and confidence to have their say or make decisions.



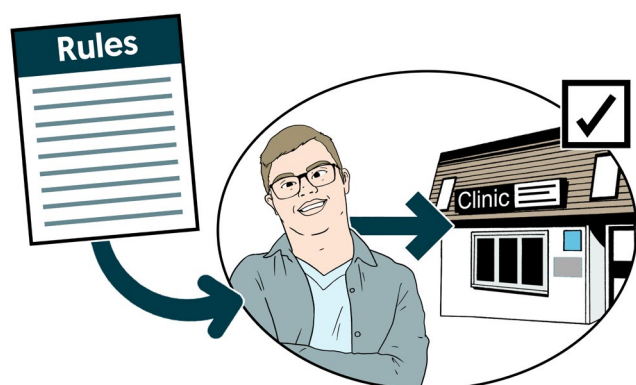
**Barriers** to using health and care services need to be removed.



**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, this is people's thoughts and attitudes towards someone. Like thinking a disabled person can not do things on their own.



Services should work together to remove barriers.

## Our research



The King's Fund and Disability Rights UK have done research into what would help improve dialogue between disabled people and health and care systems.





The research has helped to make advice on how to improve services.



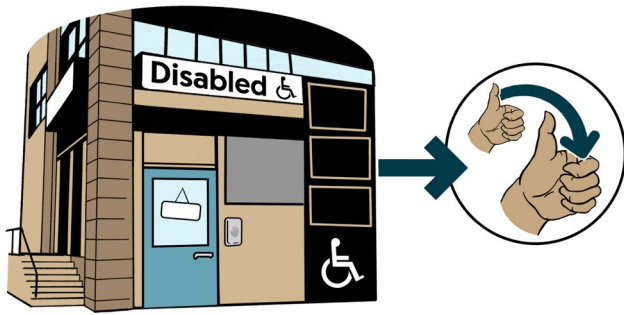
**Integrated care systems (ICSs)** give the chance to change things and to do things better.



An **ICS** 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.



ICSs should think about the way they work and how to best support their community.



**Disabled people's organisations (DPOs)** can also help to support change and to make improvements.



**DPOs** are organisations led by disabled people that support equality and inclusion.



They advocate for people's rights. This means they help people to understand their rights, make decisions, and support them to explain their decisions to others.



Many DPOs have struggled with funding in the past 10 years. This is money they get from the government or other organisations, to pay for things.



Many DPOs have had to close down because of problems with funding.



DPOs can work with ICSs to support disabled people in their community.

## What needs to happen



These are ways that DPOs could help improve dialogue between disabled people and ICSs.

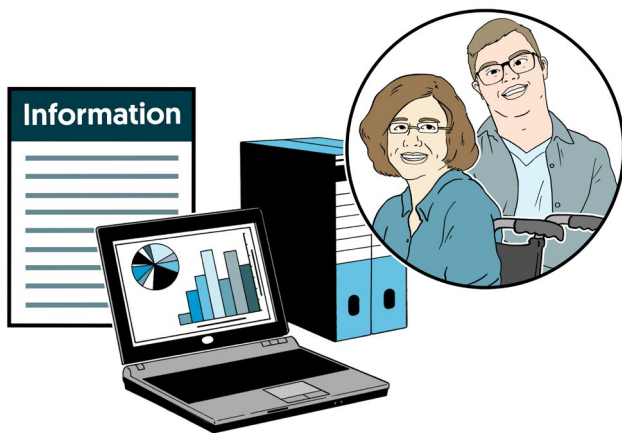


This advice is split into 4 parts.

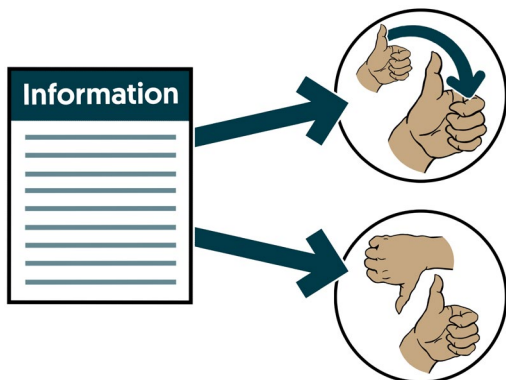
## 1. Advocate



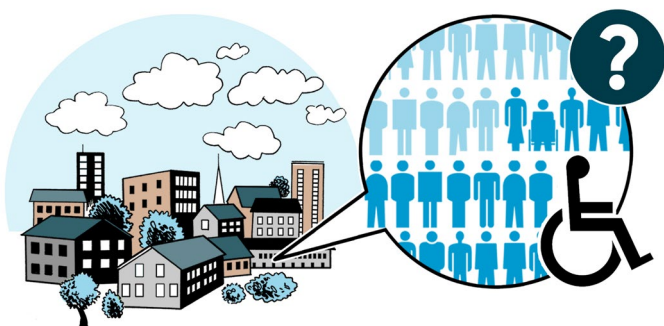
DPOs should make sure that the local ICS knows that it should be communicating with local disabled people.



ICSs should be collecting and looking at information about disabled people.



They should use this information to make decisions and improvements.



The information collected can be things like how many disabled people are in the community.





Or it can be information about **health inequalities** and barriers to 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.



A good first step for DPOs could be to ask their local ICS for reports they have on disabled people and health inequalities.

## 2. Prioritise



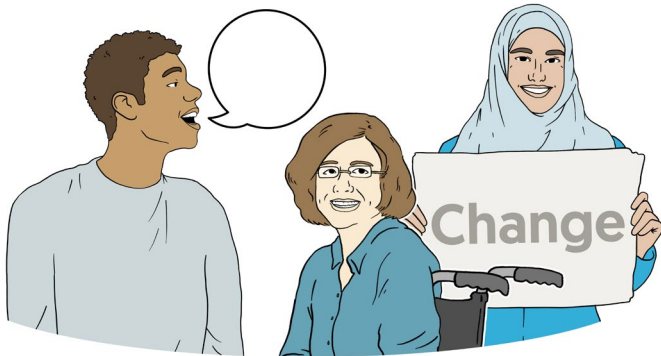
Prioritise means to think about the order you are going to do things, and to do the most important things first.



DPOs should think about which groups in an ICS are best to communicate with.



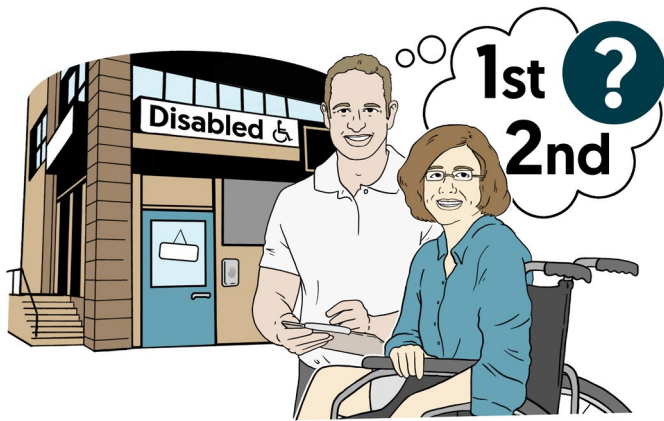
The groups could be people who make decisions for the whole ICS, or local groups that work in one place or service.



DPOs should talk with disabled people and **activists** about how they can best support improvements for disabled people and ICSs.

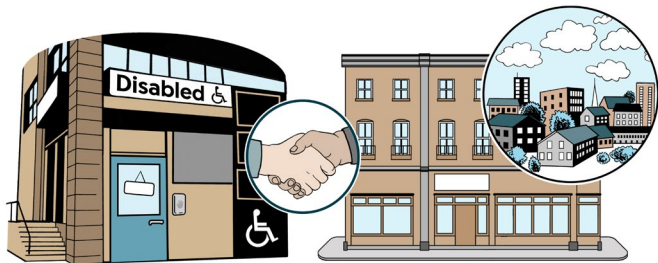


An **activist** is a person who works to bring about political or social change.

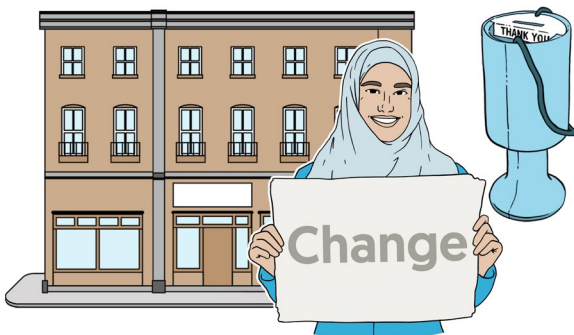


DPOs, disabled people and activists can work together to decide what order to do things in, and what is most important.

### 3. Partner



DPOs should work with community organisations and organisations in the **voluntary sector**.



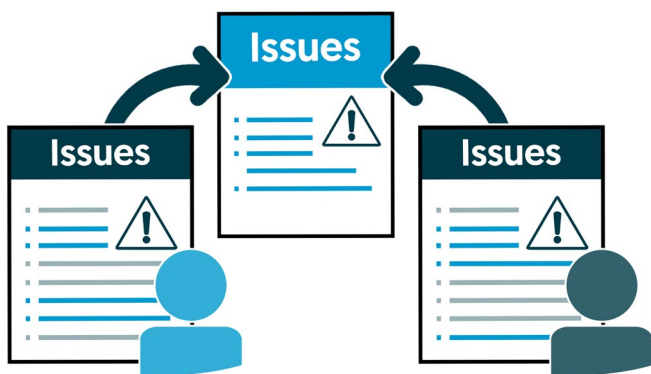
**Voluntary sector** means organisations that work to make social change, not money, such as charities.



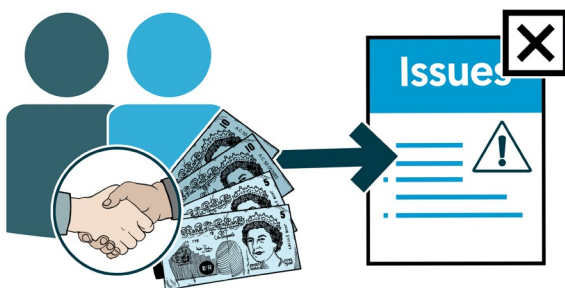
DPOs should work with organisations that support groups that experience **discrimination**.



**Discrimination** is when a person is treated unfairly or badly because of something like their race, religion, gender, or sexuality.



By working with other organisations they can find issues that affect them all.



They can work together to challenge these issues and get funding to support their work.



A good first step for DPOs could be to contact **voluntary sector umbrella bodies**.

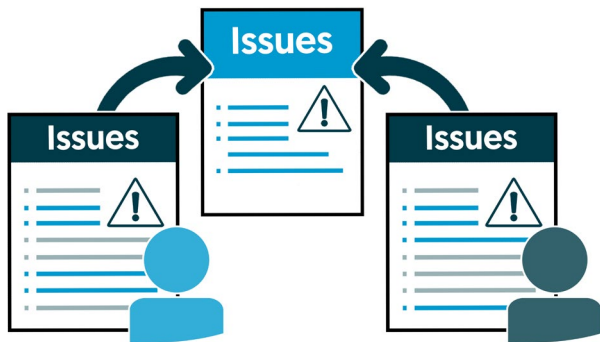




**Voluntary sector umbrella bodies** are organisations that work to support and improve other organisations in the voluntary sector.



DPOs can ask voluntary sector umbrella bodies to meet with groups experiencing discrimination and talk about the issues they face.



They can find if there are issues that affect more than one group.

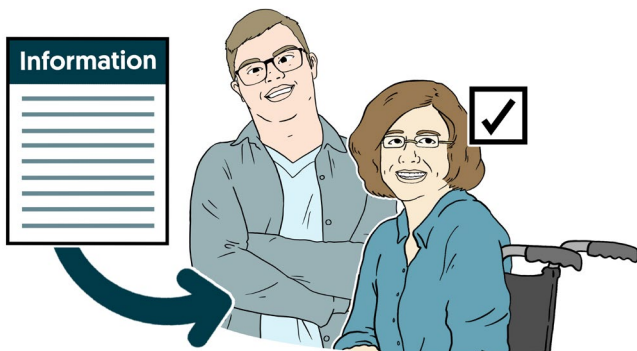


This information can help DPOs know what issues need to be challenged in their community.

## 4. Empower



DPOs should make sure that disabled people know about the new ICS and what it is.



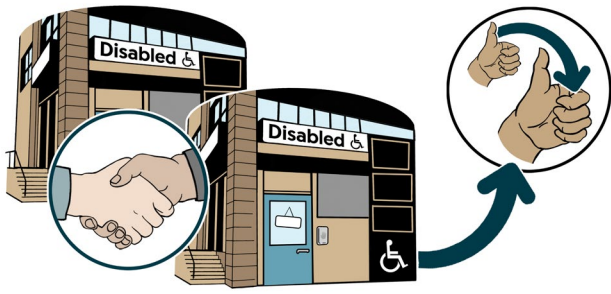
They should make sure they have information about how services are changing.



DPOs should work with the ICS to support more disabled people to understand how they can have their say and help improve services.



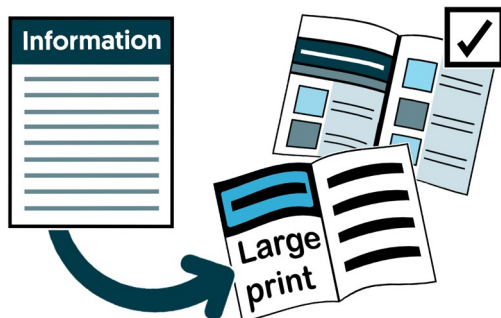
This might be asking the ICS to make information that explains the new health and care system and how to share opinions with them.



DPOs should work together and share this experience to improve how they work.



It is important to show that disabled people want to work with ICSs to make improvements.



The information should be made in different accessible formats, such as easy read or large print.

## Conclusion



DPOs have lots of experience in how to best work with health and care services, and how to make improvements.



This can help ICSs to improve health in their community and to challenge health inequalities.

**Thank you for reading**



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:

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# 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.

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