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**making a difference  
to the lives of people with  
severe learning disabilities**

## **Offering positive behavioural support across Gloucestershire: a county-wide case study**

This case study describes a county-wide implementation of positive behaviour support (PBS), in Gloucestershire.

Gloucestershire has an above average number of people with a learning disability and/ or autism compared to other similar-sized counties.

- There are over 3,400 people with a learning disability on Gloucestershire GP registers.
- In 2016 there were 1,850 people diagnosed with autism.
- Gloucestershire County Council funds services for over 1,400 people with a learning disability.
- Around 1000 of these people live in residential care settings – and over half of these people are from other counties.
- An estimated 13,046 children have special educational needs and disability (SEND) in Gloucestershire.
- At the end of 2017 the Children and Young People Learning Disability Team had 162 open cases and there were 112 on the waiting list – all of which needed support with high levels of behaviour which challenges.
- There were 19 identified children identified as displaying significant challenging behaviour.

### **Support for people with a learning disability and/ or autistic people**

Gloucestershire is made up of a single clinical commissioning group (CCG) and a single local authority, and adult social care providers span across the private and voluntary sector.

There are 16 adult social care employers who provide supported living under a specialist challenging behaviour framework, jointly evaluated by health and social care.

There are 16 residential settings that provide support for people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people who display behaviour which challenges services.

The local authority also owns a self-contained 2 bedded unit for short breaks and 3 overnight learning disability and autism services.

## **When was PBS introduced and how?**

The council set up a 'Challenging behaviour working group' to develop a Challenging Behaviour Strategy which outlines their strategic approach to supporting individuals with learning disabilities and/or autistic people who display behaviours which challenge - PBS is strongly featured in the strategy

The group meets monthly to monitor the project, making sure that the strategy is achieving its aims and outcomes. It includes representation from people who access care and support, health and social care services (specifically learning disability services), 2gether Trust, education providers, mental health teams, family and carers.

PBS plays a key role in a number of strands in the strategy:

### **Learning Disability Intensive Support Service (LDISS)**

The LDISS is a multi-disciplinary outreach team that supports children, young people and adults with a learning disability, to prevent hospital admissions or an out-of-county placement.

The team includes speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, psychologists, PBS practitioners, social care and health providers, support workers and qualified practitioners).

### **Positive behavioural support (PBS) service**

The PBS service is funded by Gloucestershire County Council, and focuses on early intervention for people with learning disabilities. It ensures multiple agencies work together to take a preventative approach and ensure that people who display behaviour which challenges have patterns of life and conditions of everyday living, which are as close as possible to regular ways of life in society.

The service provides bespoke training, co-ordinates a PBS clinic with colleagues from locality community learning disability teams, and delivers periodic service reviews for quality teams under a PBS framework to check the implementation of PBS.

*"Before the PBS service got involved we just felt stuck" Teaching Assistant*

### **Training strategy**

Gloucestershire County Council offer free training to direct care staff, families and carers which is based on a common set of values and principles largely based around a PBS approach.

Direct care staff can apply to become PBS trainers and roll out training in their own organisation, as well as supporting the delivery of free training for the council.

*"This is the most in-depth training I have been to, I feel very empowered" Service manager*

## **PBS support for individuals, their families and carers**

Families can access free PBS training as part of the training strategy. For more specific support, they can access the Intensive Support Service (LDISS) or attend the monthly PBS clinic.

## **PBS on an area/ systems level**

PBS support is integrated into commissioning frameworks across Gloucestershire and referrals to appropriate PBS services are integrated into social care practice across ages.

People with learning disabilities work with Clinicians, professionals, support staff and families to implement PBS through integrative working, promotion of the PBS training and principles and the PBS clinic.

The council have experience some challenges with getting 'buy in' to PBS in schools on a large scale, and maintaining the early intervention – they're continuing to explore options to re-establish this.

## **What has worked well**

- The PBS training strategy has gone really well, with the courses consistently fully booked.
- LDISS works well to reduce the number of inappropriate inpatient placements.
- The PBS consultation clinics have been beneficial in reducing waiting times for support for carers and promoting integration between health and social care services.
- The PBS service has provided a link between the theory learned in PBS training and putting that into practice for people who access care and support.
- The PBS service has helped to support the work of Gloucestershire County Council's Quality Team around the support needs of individuals who challenge services.

## **Positive outcomes**

Implementing the strategy across the county has led to lots of benefits for people with learning disabilities. For example supporting people to transition from residential special schools and inpatient units from outside the county, to local community placement.

There's lots of evidence suggesting a culture change in the area and better working between agencies, which has improved outcomes for individuals. This has been captured in case studies which were presented in local forums including Gloucestershire's Community of Practice.

Here are some quotes from the case studies.

*“Evidence suggests that individuals with complex needs and behavioural challenges are at increased risk of placement breakdown. A lady who experienced this in the last year was supported into temporary respite. Although usually displaying as able, sociable and independent, at times of anxiety her levels of distress increase and she can display self injurious behaviours. Due to a placement breakdown and increased anxiety, a referral was made from the adults CLDT team to the Learning Disability Intensive Support Service. The team were able to support her with the opportunity to discuss worries and seek reassurance, and provide intensive support at the respite placement. Despite joint efforts the self injurious behaviour increased resulting in hospitalisation. The LDISS Team responded flexibly, increasing their hours of support at the respite service. During hospital admissions the Hospital Liaison Nurses communicated with both LDISS and the provider to ensure consistent messages. Whereas traditionally she may have been detained within an inpatient service, she continued to be supported at the respite placement until a permanent home was found for her where she is now settled; with a reduction in behaviours.”*

*“I would like to thank you for your help, you gave us really good advice and made us believe our life could be better” Parent*