

Appropriate skills to keep people safe

Disability Positive is a user-led organisation that supports people with disabilities and long-term illnesses to live well.

Their Learning Service, funded by Skills for Care, provides training opportunities to upskill and develop the knowledge of individual employers and personal assistants.

They offer face-to-face classroom-based, and online training courses, specifically to be suitable for individual employers and personal assistants, including:

- first aid
- manual handling
- safeguarding
- good employer training
- Makaton
- positive behaviour support
- impairment-specific training.

Jackie Tindall, Learning Service Co-Ordinator, says: “The employers and PAs who have accessed the training have given positive feedback and have enjoyed the experience of learning new skills or updating existing knowledge. The courses also reinforce the importance of appropriate skills to keep the service user and carer safe.”

She also commented on the noticeable impact that the funded training has had: “We have found this has developed confidence, understanding and expertise for a number of people across different roles.”

Ellie Roberts supports her 24-year-old daughter in employing personal assistants. Her daughter experiences ASD, Diabetes, severe anxiety and Marfan Syndrome. She receives direct payments to fund 22 hours of direct care.

Ellie has learning difficulties herself and experiences severe anxiety. She was supported by Disability Positive to overcome barriers to access face-to-face training and online learning. She has attended first aid and manual handling training and is booked onto the positive behaviour support training.

Jackie says: “Ellie identified that her training had lapsed and recognised that she needed to access training to update her skills and knowledge. She contacted the Learning Service and we discussed together to create a plan for her training. This was so that it was not overwhelming due to her learning needs.

“Ellie has engaged positively in the learning we have offered. She advises that it has increased her confidence in caring for her daughter and accessing learning. She admits that she was terrified when she came to the first face-to-face course and said the staff were very supportive and accommodated her learning needs.”

Skills for Care disburse funding to user led organisations (ULOs) to deliver training for people who employ or contract with personal assistants (PAs).

Find out more about the funding at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/ulofunding