Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and the challenges of welfare reform

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Overview

• Improvements (and barriers) to awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion
• Welfare reform – effects and challenges for specific groups
• Recognising and sharing good practice
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

- Prejudice
- Discrimination
- Equality Act 2010
- Stereotyping

Protected characteristics
Different types of discrimination
Welfare reform – effect and challenges

- Increased cases of disability hate crime
- Race – English not first language
- Victims/survivors of domestic violence
- Many disabled people affected
- Mental health & debt
- Threats of suicide
Common diagnoses of mental ill health, learning disabilities and developmental conditions

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Obsessive-compulsive disorder
- Phobias
- Psychosis
- Bipolar disorder
- Schizophrenia
- Personality disorders
- Eating disorders
- Dementia

- ADD/ADHD
- Asperger’s Syndrome
- Dyscalculia
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- High Functioning Autism
- Tourette’s Syndrome
“Enough is enough. Disabled people are driven to suicide because of the Government's welfare reform”

“As a survey reveals that disabled patients have been driven to suicide due to the Government's fitness to work test, it's time to fight back”

“Disabled people have become the cannon fodder for a UK war on welfare”

Lord Freud: Bedroom tax suicide 'desperately sad'

Suicide and the unspoken side of welfare ‘reform’
75% thought their mental illness had made their debt worse – this rose to over 80% for those in problem debt

Almost 90% of those in problem debt felt that their financial difficulties had made their mental illness worse
Responding to threats of suicide/harm

Communicate with them

- What do they mean by that?
- Is it a passing comment to grab your attention?
- (find out what real issue is and support them)

- Are they showing suicidal tendencies? (have they planned/taken steps to do something)
- What is the real/underlying problem?
- If you have concerns now you have to accept you do not have the skills to do anything more than support them, talk to them, and lead them in the direction of someone who can help (medical professionals)
South East issues

- Spare room subsidy
- Personal Independence Payments (impact on DLA claimants)
- Benefit cap
- Universal credit
Good practice in dealing with challenges of WR

• Financial inclusion / welfare advice posts (*Raven*)
• Training on mental health disorders / learning disability / identifying specific needs (*Southampton City Council*)
• Dealing with threats of suicide – training and procedures (*Homes in Sedgemoor*)
• Examples from policy forum participants