Learning Disability England

Stronger, Louder, Together!

"REACH – constantly aspire for better" Reflections on Supported Living today

Blog by Jane Knight, Learning Disability England member

This radio 4 programme, File on 4 on 12th February 2019 looked at supported living and what they mean for vulnerable people and serious injuries inflicted on them. For those living in supported living environments. As LDE we believe that institutionalisation can happen in any setting if strong values and principles are not driving how the support is designed and delivered. Good care and support cannot be achieved without excellent factors rather than the people supported have come to expect because it is available care models.

The programme interviewed Jayne Knight, an independent advocacy, housing and care specialist and a member of LDE. She spoke to Jane and asked her, on behalf of LDE, if she could tell us what she thought about supported living as it is, what's working well and what needs to happen for it to improve.

Supported Living – What I am seeing and hearing, Jayne Knight

Supported Living means living in your own home with support to live the life you want to. It is easier sometimes to describe it as supported living, but the model supported living has started to mean something very specific and very simple concept. In my view, a great deal of supported living is being delivered by the Authorities, developers and large companies and it is not working well enough. We end up with housing and care situation so far removed from having the ability to have your own sanctuary, your home, where you live and have chosen people to support you that you trust.

I went to an opening of a specialist block of flats and I thought the tenants were sitting outside eating the lunch provided as part of the opening ceremony. The manager and others, not my tenants, were eating the ribbon. Tenants were presenting the bouquets. The manager announced that they had said very proudly we are 4 and we be supporting 4 people. These flats looked fabulous because we are the people who with and house people who want to be with them. It is from the heart of the people who they are having and providing care for. Can you imagine someone like Martin the Builder opening a new scheme for first-time buyers saying that? They just wouldn't do it because that way, but within this modified design to learning disabilities they are proud in charge believed it was accepted, and it worked. We have the right people in the right place, with the right values and principles and the right attitude to have to compromise and set up a bigger flat for someone rather than a bungalow to achieve that. You never know that Martin will have a swimming pool and in kelly gardens. These are the sorts of compromises anyone has to make when deciding where to live the most important thing is that people with learning disabilities are in a free to exercise the same kind of choices, with equal control over them as anyone else.

The way that economic factors such as Universal Credit and Welfare Reform Units work tends to mean, with some exceptions, that the private rented sector is not offer the same housing opportunities to people with learning disabilities that it does to people without disabilities. LHA is paid at the same rate for housing 30% of housing available in the particular area, which restricts availability to the cheapest, and frequently therefore the worst housing. There are way however that Local Authorities can and do, in fact, use local authorities with an irresistible lure towards the energy of the local regulated supported living provision, which is not the same as the cost of the costs back from central government, local authorities know that the full fee for people in residential care, but in supported living provision, provides benefits for accommodation and other benefits for Bills. These provider factors combine to create a situation where people are transitioned into supported living available, rather than to bring the lesser support individuals can choose to best suit their needs and lifestyle. Where Local Authorities do this with see fabulous examples of people with very level of disability living a full life. Where people are treated as a commodity and a good business proposition we see some of the worst provision.

There are three areas over needing to change: 1. Economics, 2. Regulation and inspection, 3. Choice and Control.

1. The supported living market is expanding and we see it as a commodity and private investment money chases the money. Investors can make for themselves. Within some of the Authorities there are some solely to profits and disregard for people's choices, there are some who would like to be more ethical and who should be encouraged. Many of the better of the Authorities are trying to do the right thing, but are constrained by the rules and that they work without their commissioning hands tied behind them not used by the local authority. The local authorities are trying hard to broker assist partners to remove some of the barriers that current commissioning ethical investors who want to provide good housing and care. Ignore these the best people in Transforming Care are the housing leads in very. These people have a 'can do' approach and can be asked to go around the local advice about how to make something work and to use their creative and imaginative proposals going forward for people who just need accessible housing and good care.

2. Regulation and inspection have been much improved, it is recognised. It is the head office of the supported living provider which is inspected. Thus, we don't want inspections just wandering into supported living, but not looking at all is not the answer. When people lack capacity, we need to be inspecting a situation which people can take advantage of and which can cause impact. If, for those without capacity who need a tenancy it currently is not enough to have judicial process – one potential solution is the Independent Mental Capacity Advocate into that tenancy process so that people don't go ignored. It is important that protection and regulation which can fit the particular need for the tenant, in an onerous system. Housing advocacy is needed to make sure that people are correctly advised. It should be a requirement that the housing up a specialist tenancy arrangement that the social worker has to be aware of tenant or families have received separate independent advice.

3. In 2002 the REACH standards were written, they are 17 years old, still the recommendation, but widely unused. They were introduced by the Care Tenancy Test by the NDTi and remain good, practical and practice advice and the law and practice in relation to supported living. They were called REACH because you can't always achieve the absolute best but it is the beginning, but you constantly aspire to better. These are 1 Tailored Support, and if borne in mind throughout the process of choosing accommodation and support. It is appropriate to serve as a simple, excellent guide to what supported living is really that, supposed to live a life and a reasonable life. Supported living. These standards include things like being able to choose who lives with, where you live, and who provides the support you need. Things which should not be too much for anyone to expect. Some of the standards have been are so far removed from supporting a person in their own home that they look like the worst type of residential care. Care providers know that they don't are in their workplace and not the people homes. Similar to the assumptions where staff walk in and immediately put the person on drugs without asking anyone, taking huge risks with people's lives, making family bills to become huge and not taking care of the tenant's property. Care commissioners think it is a problem to take a room in Bournemouth without permission to

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and bring back to a seen 2000 normal practice in supported living. A young man recently out of hospital is being supported by a care provider care provider ring rat bell week to bell week to bell week and chose the colours of lime green and purple. It looks amazing and he thinks he said could I arrange to have the hallway painted. he said he is 19 for his 20th layer. He also suggested to the care provider, Ms Knight that they needed to change their cleaning products. Just the smells of coming out from the toughie life in a hospital and the smell of cleaning products were important.

The joy of knowing you have the safety of your home and your home when you your key in the lock and that everyone who comes there is welcome, is safe and trust in your home. It's simple and it's so simple and it's so simple. It is something that is so far removed it's potentially dangerous and loss the quality of some of the most vulnerable people in society.

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