

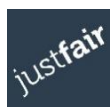


A better normal for disabled people

A campaign for the rights of disabled people

Easyread report 2020

For more information go to www.differencenortheast.org.uk



This report comes from these organisations



Difference North East



Disability North



Inclusion North



Just Fair



Newcastle Vision Support



ReCoCo



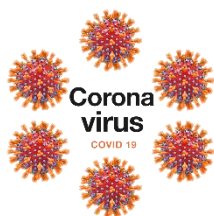
Skills for People



United Response

A better normal for disabled people

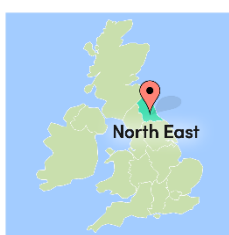
A campaign for the rights of disabled people



The world is changing because of Covid-19.



We want to make sure disabled people don't lose out.

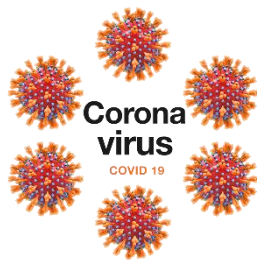


We are calling on organisations across the North East to take action to make sure disabled people are treated fairly.



You can find out more at
www.differencenortheast.org.uk

What is a 'Better Normal for disabled people'?



Covid-19 has been tough on us all.

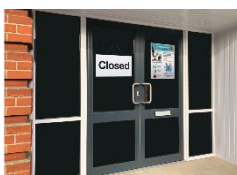
The world has changed because of Covid-19.

Some things will be different for a while: people call this the '**New Normal**'



The New Normal might mean

- Keeping a distance from people
- Wearing a face covering
- Working from home
- It might be hard to find a job
- Some businesses might have to close
- There will be longer waits for some healthcare
- More people will be claiming benefits





If we do not take action disabled people will be worse affected than other people – this is not fair.

We want to make sure disabled people are treated fairly, and do not lose out.



We want a '**Better Normal**'

What we have learned

Covid-19 has affected many disabled people worse than other people



Disabled people are more likely to die of Covid-19 than other people.



People who live in care homes have been at higher risk of catching Covid-19.



Some disabled people feel they are on their own, forgotten by other people.



Lots of disabled people have not had the help and support they need.

Some better news



Working from home (and not in an office) has been better for some disabled people.

More people using computers to stay in touch with each other can be good for people who find it hard to meet people or get out of their house.

Disabled people are being left out



During the pandemic, some people got extra help, like getting food delivered.



Some disabled people found it hard to get food – they didn't fit the government rules for free home delivery.



Many people rely on the internet to keep in touch with people: but lots of people cannot do this – because it is too difficult or expensive for them.



Sometimes local charities and neighbours have been a great help.

Disabled people are being left out

What needs to change?



People need computers, mobile phones and the internet – and help to learn how to use them.



When Councils and businesses make plans, they should ask disabled people what would be helpful.



We all need information we can understand: for example, a film with sign language, or an easyread letter.

Health and care: disabled people are missing out



Covid-19 has meant lots of disabled people are not getting the support they need.



Some support services have closed.



There have not been enough support workers.



This means disabled people are less independent.



Disabled people might have to rely more on their family - this is not fair.



UK Government guidance was confusing.



It has been hard to get things we need like face masks, aprons and gloves.

Health and care:

What needs to change?



Disabled people need support which suits them.



Help for disabled people to have Direct Payments and Personal Health Budgets so they can have more control over their support.



More freedom about how to spend Direct Payments: some people might choose to pay their family to support them, or buy a computer to help them keep in touch.



Personal Assistants should be paid the living wage.



Community groups where disabled people are in charge should be the ones to help people with Personal Budgets (instead of councils).



Healthcare appointments using a computer (instead of going to the doctor) can help.



Disabled people and family carers should be involved in meetings where NHS and council staff are deciding about services.

Employment: bad news and good news



Some disabled people have not been able to work during Covid-19 because:



They couldn't have their PA or support worker



They were waiting for a health appointment



Working from home can be good for some disabled people. It means they can manage their health and care needs in their own home.

Employment: what needs to change



More help for disabled people looking for a job.



The Access to Work scheme needs to work better: and make sure people get the support they need to work.



Treat people as individuals – some can work best from home, some can work best in the office.



Make sure staff have the equipment they need for their work – and that it suits their needs.

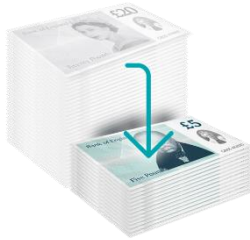


Train staff to use equipment.

Welfare benefits: disabled people are losing out



There have been many changes to welfare benefits over recent years.



Many disabled people have less money to live on than before.

This is not fair.



It can be very hard to claim benefits: there are long waits on the phone, and problems with computer systems.



Some people find it hard to use a computer or fill in a form.



Fewer disabled people are making claims for benefits since Covid-19. This means people are going without money they could have.



People are confused by all the new rules about benefits.

Welfare benefits: what needs to change?



Long waiting times and problems with computer systems should be fixed urgently.



Changes to benefits which have taken money away from disabled people should be reversed.



It should be easy for disabled people to claim benefits 'online': using a computer or phone.



It should be easy for people who help disabled people with their benefits to help them 'online'.



There should be more time given for claims.

What are we calling for?



We think organisations like councils and businesses, health and support organisations should make an '**EPIC** plan' to make the changes happen.



Each plan should include:

Extra money and support to protect the rights of disabled people



Personalised support: we are all different, so each person needs support which suits them



Involve us: we should be included whenever people are deciding things which affect us. We say '*Nothing about us without us!*'



Comply with the law! There are laws to protect the human rights of disabled people: organisations should stick to them!



You can find out what is happening to make a Better Normal at www.differencenortheast.org.uk