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Foreword by the Prime Minister



Our vision for Britain is of a society where all citizens are respected and included as equal members, and where everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential. For many disabled people that vision can seem far removed from the reality of their lives. But the lives of some have been transformed by having choice and control over the support they need. We are committed to extending such self-determination to all disabled people, and to enabling greater access to

housing, employment, health, education, transport and other opportunities.

Involving disabled people of all ages in how services are planned and delivered means individuals are supported in the ways that they choose and barriers to access removed. Transferring power to those needing support, and joining up services to ensure this happens, changes the way in which support and services are delivered and experienced. It unlocks opportunities, enables people to participate and contribute, and strengthens our communities.

The Independent Living Strategy has been developed with disabled people. I am grateful to Baroness Jane Campbell, who chaired the Expert Panel supporting the Review, and to all the Panel members who provided challenging and constructive advice. The involvement of disabled people in workshops and regional discussions has been essential in shaping this Strategy and I am grateful to all those who took part.

A guiding principle of the Review has been to work across Government to improve the outcomes for disabled people by breaking down the artificial barriers created by fragmented initiatives and organisational boundaries. I am delighted that Ministers in Communities and Local Government, Transport, Children, Schools and Families, Innovation, Universities and Skills, Work and Pensions, and Health have come together to champion independent living and to develop and agree joint ownership of this Strategy.

We are committed to a vision of equality for all disabled people by 2025. This Strategy sets out how we will make progress towards achieving that goal.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gordon Brown".

Gordon Brown

Foreword by Life Chances Ministers

The Strategy brings together a number of initiatives – across Government – which will enable more people to have choice and control over the support they receive, remove barriers to independent living, and improve access to services. For example, a Transition Support Programme will enable young disabled people to access advocacy support and person centred planning; a cross-government national strategy will aim to help people remain in employment when they acquire an impairment or their condition worsens; and a nationally funded rapid response repairs and adaptations services will enable older and disabled people to remain living in their own homes. The Strategy includes measures to encourage the investment of resources to enable disabled people to have control over the resources made available to them. We will also examine the need for advocacy support in situations where people are at risk of losing choice and control.

We want to ensure that independent living – having choice and control over support – is a goal for disabled people of all ages and across all service user groups. For example, older disabled people must have the same options and opportunities for independent living as anyone else and the Strategy contains a number of commitments which will help achieve this goal.

Disabled people have told us that one of the barriers to change is lack of understanding about what independent living means. An important part of the Strategy will be action to promote understanding among service deliverers of how to enable people to have choice and control so that independent living and a personalised approach are integral to the way services are planned and delivered.

A key element of the Strategy is our framework for measuring progress. Together with disabled people, we will monitor progress on the Strategy annually to ensure it does make a tangible difference to people's lives. Where progress is slow we will consider what further action is required.

Foreword by Life Chances Ministers

This Strategy sets out our commitments to work together to deliver real improvements in the lives of disabled people.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anne McGuire".

Anne McGuire MP
Minister for Disabled
People



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Rammell".

Bill Rammell MP
Minister of State for Life
Long Learning, Further
and Higher Education



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rosie Winterton".

**Right Honorable
Rosie Winterton MP**
Minister of State for
Transport and Minister
for Yorkshire and
Humber



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Adonis".

Lord Andrew Adonis
Parliamentary Under
Secretary of State for
Schools and Learners



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kay Andrews".

**Baroness Kay Andrews
OBE**
Parliamentary Under
Secretary of State for
Communities and Local
Government



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ivan Lewis".

Ivan Lewis MP
Parliamentary
Under Secretary
of State for Care
Services (Minister
for Care Services)



Executive summary

Executive summary

- We want to create a society where everybody is treated with dignity and respect and has the chance to fulfil their potential and unlock their talent. We need to ensure that disabled people are a full part of this agenda.
- The Government is therefore committed to delivering on full and equal citizenship for disabled people and sees independent living as being part of the way we advance this. Independent living enables disabled people to fulfil the roles and responsibilities of citizenship.
- This Independent Living Strategy sets out a strategy to improve disabled people's experiences and life chances. It is a cross-government strategy because it is only through all Departments working together can we really deliver for disabled people.
- It is the Government's ambition that by 2013 disabled people have more choice and control over how their needs for support and/or equipment are met. We also need to make significant progress in tackling barriers to disabled people's access to health, housing, transport, and employment opportunities.
- The personalisation of services is one element of the wider cross-government Strategy on independent living. Giving disabled people greater choice and control over the support they need and the resources available to them is important, not just in social care, but across mainstream services as well – housing, transport, health, employment, education and training – and across all age groups, including young disabled people in transition to adulthood and older disabled people.
- We acknowledge that there is a gap between national policy and people's real experiences. This Strategy will begin to fill this gap.
- The Strategy has been developed in partnership with disabled people to ensure that it reflects their knowledge and real life experiences of the barriers to independent living.

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- The Strategy includes new investment from Government, and is also about using current resources in more effective and empowering ways.
- This is a five year Strategy and we will look every year at what progress we are making. We believe that this change can be achieved without new legislation but, we are committed to reviewing the situation if delivery does not happen.

Background

1. In 2006 an Independent Living Review was set up to make progress on the Government's commitment that all disabled people, (including older disabled people), have the same choice, freedom, dignity and control over their lives as non-disabled people. The Review followed the commitment made by the Government in 2005 to deliver independent living for all disabled people.¹
2. The Review was given the task of developing a cross-government five year Strategy to deliver independent living. The Independent Living Strategy sets out the Government's policy commitments, identifying what difference these policies are intended to make, and how this will be measured and monitored.
3. In addition, the Strategy makes proposals for the involvement of disabled people, (including older disabled people), and their organisations in the implementation of the Strategy and invites responses to these proposals.
4. A case study approach was taken to developing evidence-based policies. The Strategy covers transition to adulthood (from the age of 14) through to very old age. Disabled people were involved throughout the course of the Review.

1 Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, Cabinet Office, (2005), 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People'

What does independent living mean?

5. Disabled people, (including older disabled people), have challenged the meaning of 'independence'. 'Independent living' does not mean doing things for yourself, or living on your own. Instead, it means:
 - having choice and control over the assistance and/or equipment needed to go about your daily life
 - having equal access to housing, transport and mobility, health, employment and education and training opportunities.
6. Everyone needs assistance or equipment of some kind. However, many people with physical and/or sensory impairments, learning disabilities, mental health support needs, long-term health conditions or who experience frailty associated with old age, have additional needs for assistance. Some of these additional needs are the result of disabling barriers, such as the need for a taxi if public transport is inaccessible. Others are integral to having a particular impairment or condition, such as the need for a lightwriter for someone who does not use speech, or assistance with daily living for someone who has dementia.
7. Too often these additional needs for assistance or equipment have been met in ways which do not give people choice and control. Instead, others decide on behalf of disabled people how assistance should be provided and this can lead to segregation and social exclusion. This is particularly so for older people and for people with significant levels of cognitive and/or communication impairments.
8. It is important to recognise that anyone, whatever their level of impairment, can express preferences and therefore express choices about how their needs should be met. Our aim is to ensure that all disabled people, including those with significant learning disabilities or other forms of cognitive impairment (including dementia), are enabled to have choice and control over how their support needs are met.

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9. Unpaid carers, that is family members and friends, play a key role in the lives of many disabled people and often the care that they provide is a key factor in helping disabled people to remain in their own homes and participate in society. The Government is currently reviewing its National Carers Strategy to evaluate where it can better support carers to enable them to also have choice and control in their lives in this important role.

Vision and aims of the Strategy

10. The Government wants every locality to have a single community based support system which focuses on all aspects of what people need to maximise their health and wellbeing and to participate in family and community life. The right of the individual disabled person to determine the kinds of services and support that they need will be at the heart of this reformed system.
11. Such choice and control will help disabled people overcome the barriers that they face in participating in, and contributing to, society. The Government is therefore committed to enabling disabled people to have choice and control over the support they need to live their everyday lives. The fulfilment of this commitment will be a vital part of delivering the 2025 vision of full and equal citizenship set out in 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People'.²
12. The aim of the five year Independent Living Strategy is that:
 - disabled people who need support to go about their daily lives will have greater choice and control over how support is provided
 - disabled people will have greater access to housing, transport, health, employment, education and leisure opportunities and to participation in family and community life.
13. Progress towards this vision and aim will be measured and reported on annually to the Life Chances Ministerial Group. If satisfactory progress is not made on delivering independent living, the Government will review the need for new legislation.

2 Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, Cabinet Office, (2005), 'Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People'.

The Independent Living Strategy

14. The Independent Living Strategy includes the following Government commitments:

1. **Promoting independent living:** To promote a shared understanding of the principles and practice of independent living we will:
 - develop a programme to build awareness and change attitudes in order to create support for an independent living approach
 - develop communication materials for practitioners to effectively explain the case and the ways of promoting it
 - use these materials to communicate independent living messages to a wide range of practitioners
 - communicate this agenda to disabled people with a particular focus on ‘seldom heard’ groups, for example, black and minority ethnic (BME) disabled people, older disabled people with high support needs, and young people with autistic spectrum disorder.
2. **Action and Learning Sites and Regional Initiatives:** We will strengthen the evidence-basis to inform future policy development and investment, and demonstrate how to use resources to better promote choice and control. We will develop two initiatives:
 - action and learning sites to demonstrate the redeployment of resources from professional assessment and care management to user-led support, advocacy and brokerage
 - a regional initiative to demonstrate how we can invest in independent living for older disabled people in residential/nursing care or at risk of moving into care.
3. **Housing:** We will take action to maximise disabled people’s housing opportunities and choices by:
 - increasing the provision of housing advice and information
 - updating the Lifetime Homes standard, making it an essential element in the Code for Sustainable Homes and making adherence to it mandatory for all public sector funded housing by 2011

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- setting a clear target for the construction of all new housing to Lifetime Homes standard by 2013, with a commitment to review progress against this target by 2010
 - encouraging the adoption of Accessible Housing Registers and supporting the dissemination of good practice models
 - investing in rapid response repairs and adaptations services
 - developing a method to enable early identification of individuals who are at risk of health and care crises
 - increasing funding for, and improving, the Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) system
 - continuing to invest in the Supporting People programme which promotes independent living by providing housing related support.
4. **Transport and mobility:** We will consolidate progress made in the areas of training, information, and accessibility in public transport and consider action required to enhance the mobility opportunities of people whose needs cannot be met by public transport. We will do this by:
- enhancing personal mobility and transport choices for disabled people based on evidence of what works
 - promoting the training of transport providers in the needs of disabled people
 - developing a strategy to provide information and confidence training for disabled people in using transport
 - working with local authorities to ensure accessibility planning is reflected in Local Transport Plans and Local Area Agreements
 - improving disabled people's participation in the development and implementation of transport policies.

5. **Health:** Our Strategy aims to enhance the understanding of health services' contribution to independent living, to enable disabled people to have choice and control over their non-acute healthcare needs, and to enable them to manage their own long-term conditions. We will do this by:
 - designing and delivering an education and awareness programme for National Health Service (NHS) staff on increasing choice and control, and on the Disability Equality Duty (DED)
 - increasing the take-up of self-management programmes, such as the Expert Patients Programmes, and develop new approaches that work for disabled people
 - scoping good practice in enabling people to have choice and control over their continuing health care needs, and publishing good practice guidance.

6. **Employment and economic wellbeing:** We want to enable individuals to remain in employment when they acquire an impairment or when an existing impairment or condition deteriorates. We will also ensure that benefit and charging systems, and recent reforms, do not create unnecessary barriers to independent living. We will:
 - act to improve specialist employment support services for disabled people
 - develop a cross-government national strategy to enable people to remain in employment when they acquire an impairment or their condition worsens
 - increase access to volunteering opportunities for disabled people
 - change benefit reclaim processes and, if required, regulations to address disincentives and enable participation in public and civic life
 - examine the combined impact of reforms to the benefit system (Employment Support Allowance (ESA), Housing Benefit), employment support programmes, and charging policies within adult social care, to assess their role in promoting disability equality

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- consult on amending guidance on charging for residential care, (in line with current guidance on charging for community services), to remove the current disincentive to paid employment. The Department of Health (DH) will be considering this proposal, along with other proposals to amend the Charging for Residential Accommodation Guide (CRAG)
- review how Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Attendance Allowance (AA) can better support independent living.

7. **Personalisation, choice and control:** We will support the transformation of social care to deliver a system which will focus on timely, preventative and high quality personally tailored services. We want everyone – whether they receive state-funded support or fund support themselves – to have maximum control and power over the support services they receive and we will work with local authorities and key partners to help them deliver this. The long-term aim will be to ensure that every disabled person in receipt of social care, and/or related funding, has the opportunity to have choice and control over the state funding they receive. We will promote:

- increased personalisation of support through, for example, individual budgets and direct payments
- a strategic shift towards investment in early intervention and preventative approaches through initiatives such as the Partnerships for Older People Projects (POPP)
- the development of user-led organisations
- access to better information, advocacy and support so that people are able to navigate health and social care systems
- the take-up of direct payments.

8. **Support, information, advocacy and brokerage:** Effective support, information, advocacy and brokerage services are a key aspect of enabling disabled people to make choices for themselves that might otherwise be made for them by other people. Our policy of transforming social care includes a commitment to a universal information, advice and advocacy service for people who need support in their lives. In particular:
- local organisations should consider the needs of disabled people within their community for support, information, advocacy and brokerage services and should consider co-ordinating their approaches through local strategic partnerships (LSPs)
 - we will examine the case for investment in advocacy support in situations where disabled people are particularly at risk of losing choice and control
 - the Department of Health (DH) will invest in Action and Learning Sites to deliver the Life Chances commitment that by 2010, each locality will have a user-led organisation modelled on existing Centres for Independent Living (CILs)
 - the Department of Health (DH) will develop a National Advocacy Qualification for independent advocates.
9. **Older people:** We will promote a co-ordinated, strategic approach to investing in independent living for older disabled people, and will also seek to ensure that older disabled people's voices are heard and that they are enabled to participate in the development and delivery of services. Most of the commitments in this Strategy will promote independent living for older disabled people.

In addition:

- the Office for Disability Issues (ODI), in partnership with other government departments, will develop and publish a cross-government toolkit that provides a 'one stop' information resource on independent living for older people at a national, regional and local level

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- the Office for Disability Issues (ODI) will investigate the case for investing in independent living for older disabled people in residential/nursing care or at risk of moving into care.

10. **Young disabled people in transition to adulthood:** We will seek to ensure a seamless transition into adulthood for young disabled people, including those with complex health needs, in all aspects of their life, including between children's and adults' services, as well as housing, transport, employment, education and training. We will:

- as a first step, deliver a Transition Support Programme for 14-19 year olds, which will promote joint working, a holistic approach, and include access to an advisor or key worker, advocacy and support, and person centred planning approaches
- in the longer-term, learn from, and build on, this Programme to improve practice in supporting the transition from childhood to adulthood between the ages of 14-25
- deliver the cross-government strategy for post-16 learners with learning difficulties/disabilities which aims to create more sustainable and seamless services
- carry out a public consultation on specialist disability employment programmes for disabled people who face complex barriers to enter and retain employment
- reduce the proportion of young people aged between 16 and 18 who are not in education, employment or training
- support young disabled people to become independent users of transport
- address the housing needs of young disabled people by their inclusion in action to prevent homelessness amongst young people, paying particular attention to those with mental health support needs
- support young disabled people to become active members of their community through their inclusion in the Young Advisors Programme
- carry out a scoping study with a view to piloting and evaluating individual budgets for disabled children and young people.

11. **Disabled parents:** We will promote more joined-up working between health, education and social care to provide timely and flexible support where this is needed by families affected by parental disability. We will also encourage policies and services aimed at parents in general to include families affected by parental disability. Specifically, we will:
- promote good practice in children's and adults' health, education and social care by encouraging the development of inter-agency protocols to support disabled parents and their children
 - include parents with learning disabilities and parents with mental health support needs in local pathfinders to deliver intensive and tailored family support
 - ensure that all information produced by government departments aimed at parents will be made available in accessible formats
 - assist local authorities to develop a more strategic and joined-up approach to parenting support and to strengthen the use of evidence-based parenting interventions through extended schools' and children's centres
 - work across Government, to ensure those policies which tackle child poverty and unemployment, address the needs and circumstances of families affected by parental disability.
12. **Measuring progress:** We are committed to monitoring progress on the aims of the Strategy and the vision it represents. We shall use the new performance framework, in particular the Equalities Public Services Agreement (PSA) to do this.
- the Office for Disability Issues (ODI) will publish progress on the Independent Living Strategy, as part of the Office for Disability Issues (ODI) annual reporting process
 - Life Chances departments will review in time for the next Spending Review and performance framework whether further action to deliver outcomes is needed
 - the Government will review the need for legislation if sufficient progress has not been made against the outcomes by 2013.




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Consultation on implementation of the Strategy and the involvement of disabled people

15. Disabled people have told us there is too big a gap between national policy aims and local implementation. They also told us that they should be involved in both the development and the implementation of policies which affect their lives and services which aim to meet their needs. We are consulting on how to do this.

Monitoring implementation of the Independent Living Strategy

16. The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) Board of Management and Life Chances Ministerial Group will champion a cross-government approach to independent living and monitor progress annually. The framework for monitoring progress is set out in **Annex C**.
17. In addition, we propose to set up an Independent Living Scrutiny Group to monitor progress annually and report to the Office for Disability Issues (ODI) Board of Management and Ministerial Group. Membership would include members of Equality 2025 and additional members drawn from the Expert Panel which advised the Independent Living Review.

Consultation question 1:

We would welcome views on how best to involve disabled people, at a national level, in the monitoring of progress on implementation of the Independent Living Strategy, for example, by setting up an Independent Living Scrutiny Group.

Promoting the involvement of disabled people

18. The new local government performance framework will encourage the involvement of disabled people in the commissioning and delivery of local services. In addition, the Disability Equality Duty (DED) promotes the ongoing involvement of disabled people. The Department of Health's (DH) work to establish a user-led organisation in every locality by 2010 could provide local focal points for engaging disabled people in the implementation of the Strategy. Other initiatives, such as Local Involvement Networks (LINKs), aim to promote local people's involvement in shaping services.

Consultation question 2:

We would welcome views on current arrangements for promoting the involvement of disabled people and their organisations and the contribution these arrangements may make to the monitoring of the Independent Living Strategy

19. There are many existing networks of disabled people which could be drawn together to provide a resource for the involvement of disabled people at local and regional levels in implementing the Independent Living Strategy.

Consultation question 3:

Is there a need for a “network of networks” to facilitate the involvement of disabled people in the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy?

Developing leadership capacity amongst disabled people

20. The Independent Living Review’s Expert Panel advised us of the importance of building leadership capacity amongst disabled people of all ages. They suggested that Partners in Policymaking™ courses would be useful in promoting disabled people’s involvement in implementing the Strategy.³

Consultation question 4:

We would welcome views on current initiatives to build leadership capacity amongst disabled people, on whether further work should adapt the Partners in Policymaking™ model, and/or whether there are other models we should consider.

3 Partners in Policymaking website: <http://www.partnersinpolicymaking.co.uk/index.php>

Supporting implementation

21. The Expert Panel identified a range of different mechanisms to support delivery of the Strategy. The Government Offices for the Regions play a key role and there is a need to assist them to support local strategic partnerships (LSPs) to deliver independent living policies, linking with user-led organisations, and monitoring implementation. We will be producing targeted information and guidance for Government Offices for the Regions, including toolkits, as set out in the Strategy. We would welcome views on what other action may be required.

Consultation question 5:

We would welcome views on the best ways to assist implementation and monitoring of the Strategy at regional and local levels.

Consultation question 6:

We would welcome any other views on the Independent Living Strategy.

Consultation

The consultation period begins on 3rd March 2008 and runs until 20th June 2008. Please ensure your response reaches us by that date. We will publish the results of the consultation. Please send your consultation responses to:

Independent Living Strategy Consultation

Office for Disability Issues

Department for Work and Pensions

The Adelphi

1-11 John Adam Street

London WC2N 6HT

Telephone: 0207 712 2845

Textphone: 0207 712 2032

Fax: 0207 962 8096

Email: independent-living-review@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

VISION AND OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK FOR INDEPENDENT LIVING STRATEGY

Vision: All disabled people will have the same choice, control and freedom as every other citizen and any support is based on individuals’ own choices and aspirations

Greater choice and control

Greater access to housing, transport, health, employment, education and leisure opportunities

Participation in family and community life

NB: The outcome measures set out below are examples only. Full details of measures are given in Annex C

Choice and control (PSA 15, 19) Provision of advice, assistance and support (PSA 19) Independent living (PSA 17, 18)	Local councils’ performance on the seven health, and social care outcomes (CAA) Numbers accessing self-directed support (DH DSO)	Satisfaction of older people with home and neighbourhood (PSA 17) Disabled people in poor housing conditions or housing not suited to their needs (ODI Life Chances Indicator)	Gap in employment rates between disabled and non-disabled people (ODI Life Chances Indicator PSA 8) Disabled individuals living in income poverty (ODI Life Chances Indicator)	Employment /independent living and mental health or learning disability (PSA 16) Experience of using public transport (ODI Life Chances Indicator)	Perception of dignity and respect when accessing public services (PSA 15) People supported to be in control of their condition (DH DSO)	Participation in cultural, sporting and leisure activities (ODI Life Chances Indicator) Participation in public life (PSA 15) Volunteering levels (ODI Life Chances Indicator)	Disabled parents’ access to childcare (ODI Life Chances Indicator) Outcomes for those in receipt of housing support (Supporting People outcomes framework)
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PSA = Public Service Agreement

DSO = Departmental Strategic Objectives

CAA = Comprehensive Area Assessment