



*Disabled person silhouetted against sunset.*

**We, disabled adults and social workers, will strive for relationships that are respectful, honest, transparent and consistent.**

**We will work in the following way so that we can achieve as much as possible together**

### **Guiding Principles**

- We will use the social model of disability and draw on social approaches to distress, whilst recognising unique identities and experiences
- We will take a rights-based approach – based on the United Nation convention on the rights of persons with disabilities, the Equality Act and the Care Act
- Social workers will promote Independent Living as the corner-stone of wellbeing
- We will always value the voice of people with lived experience of disability
- We are committed to opposing discrimination and to promoting social justice
- We will not be satisfied till everyone has full and equal citizenship.

## **A Personalised Approach**

- We will start with the disabled person's own views of their situation, priorities, aspirations and preferences
- We will be honest about what is possible and what is not
- We will have conversations rather than being bound by forms and procedures
- The conversations will be meaningful and will be about what disabled adults want.

## **The Process**

- We will act like people, and not just follow mechanistic processes
- We will be ambitious for each other, thinking big and creatively
- We won't be frightened of new initiatives and will work carefully to make them accessible and useful
- We will have open conversations about how things are going and what is possible
- Social workers will communicate in an accessible format
- Social workers will work in a timely, reliable and consistent way.

## **Relationships and Respect**

- We will show respect for each other's choices, preferences and cultures
- We will listen to and act on what is not working
- We will use our expertise to help improve lives and ask for help if we don't know
- We will continue to work to overcome power imbalances between disabled adults and social workers leading to equal relationships and co-producing solutions
- Disabled adults will support social workers to learn and develop through full and equal involvement in education and training
- Social workers will continue to develop their understanding of the needs of disabled adults throughout their careers.

## **Rights and Welfare**

- We will take action together to get the resources that are needed
- We will be prepared to talk about how the context is impacting on us

- We will talk about money
- We will look at all options to promote wellbeing, not just formal care services
- We will work to secure disabled adults' entitlements to benefits
- We will work to increase disabled adults' access to mainstream public, commercial, retail, transport and leisure provision
- We will work with disabled people's organisations to enable greater voice, choice and control for disabled adults
- We will strive to ensure that advocacy is available for people who need it
- We will work together to plan for what may happen in the future
- Social workers will work with other professionals to ensure decisions are made in people's best interests if they are not able to make a decision themselves
- We will work together to ensure disabled adults are in control of what happens to safeguard them if they are at risk of abuse or neglect
- Social workers will join their work up with that of other services
- Social workers will enable people to take advantage of the Care Act duty to provide people with information and advice relating to care and support
- Social workers will seek to maximise access to resources from all quarters
- Social workers will be accountable for their practice.

### **The Wider Context**

- We will highlight the barriers that prevent disabled adults from living full lives, including barriers to work
- We will be aware of the impact of policies across central and local government, and health and other services on disabled adults' lives
- We will jointly gather and speak up about evidence of how the context impacts on disabled adults
- We will work for diverse and inclusive involvement of disabled people
- We will advocate for solutions to overcome the barriers that are highlighted by disabled people, practice experience and research evidence
- We will gather evidence about what is helpful and share this
- We will tackle poverty and discrimination together
- We will look for allies to work with us.