



Andrew Hubbard

Disability Training Awareness

CUVP Conference

April 2005

Access Requirements


- The following is a good practice guide.
- Is the venue on a public transport route?
- Are there clearly marked pedestrian crossings: how easy/difficult would it be to cross a road independently?
- Parking facilities, accessible spaces clearly marked.
- Clear accessible route from car park to main entrance.



- Access slope to entrance.
- Steps with hand rails. Step edges in contrasting colour, usually white.
- What width are the doors? Wheelchair access.
- Are there automatic doors, and how do they operate.
- What is the floor surface made of Is it slippery.



- Colour contrasts, eg door frames, lift entrances, etc.
- Signage, is it clear, any Braille?
- A fully accessible toilet: adequate turning and transfer space for wheel-chair users.
- Lighting in training venues: Natural, electric, fluorescent- tube, spot lights, Portable lamps.

- 
- Chairs; some with arms, some without arms.
 - Hearing loop. Portable or permanent.
 - Do we need to book a sign interpreter?
 - Palentographer.
 - Information in alternative format: electronic disc.
 - If requested in advance a lap top computer with accessible soft-ware package pre installed.

Attitudinal barriers

- Change to facilitate access costs too much money
- Suffering Disabled people are 'suffering from'
- Need care, always need looking after.
- Demanding, not satisfied.
- Disability is always visible. Stereotype.
- Needs of disabled people cause problems, finance.



- Angry and unpleasant, chips on shoulder.
- Want to be cured. Who's opinion is this?
- Poor thing or brave survivors. Huge energy in denial to 'fit in' 'Heroes'
- Can't work. Not capable. Access to work not considered.
- Can't have sex – or even think about it. What if they have children?



- Can't live alone
- Pigeonholing / labelling
- Should not / cannot reproduce
- Don't need to make choices because others can do this for us
- Deserve pity and patting on the head (patronising)
- There to be ignored, embarrassment of communication.



- Need protecting
- Low expectations – schools, parents, employment.
- Where have these attitudes come from?
- Ignorance - lack of education, and integrated education
- Charity model Portrays suffering and ‘victim of’ imagery.



- Media Disabled people are bad, evil, often linked with devil, religious texts, Leviticus, Old Testament.
- Negative experience if a person has a negative experience with a disabled person they think everyone's the same
- Bad use of language Language to label and define by impairment. Spastic, Mongol, Deaf and Dumb.




- Insecurity, and need to feel “better” about oneself - helping
- DDA Very medical way in which the legislation is written.
- Lack of experience of being with disabled people

Awareness/Equality Training Key differences.

- Disability awareness training tends to focus on individual impairments and conditions.
- Disability Equality training moves away from the medical perspective.
- Awareness training concentrates on problems faced by an individual.
- Equality training looks at the social construction of disability.



- Awareness training deals with behaviour and language use around disabled people.
- Equality training asks : why is this often a problem?
- Awareness training often focuses on one impairment.
- Equality training focuses on discrimination disabled people share.
- Awareness training belongs in the Medical Model of disability.

- 
- Equality Training belongs in the Social Model of disability.
 - Awareness training is usually delivered by non-disabled people.
 - Equality Training **must** be delivered by disabled people.
 - Awareness training is a part of Equality training
 - Equality training sees disability as an equal opportunities issue which includes awareness training.



Barriers in systems and state policy.

- Benefit system – doesn't support, inflexible, having to prove yourself, medically invasive, loss of personal identity.
- Health system – lack of support, have to prove your illness, accessibility, social services, no alternative formats of information.



- Government – housing systems, lack of access, i.e., slopes, doors.
- Employers – policies and practices, attitudes. lack of knowledge DDA.
- Education: Segregation, special schools. Low expectations, poor assessment.
- Public transport. How public is it?



- Legal system – the way it is organised and operates, and also physical barriers. Most courtrooms not accessible. National Assembly Wales: not accessible debating chamber, accessible public gallery.



- **Key Points**

- Impairment is not the problem

- Disability is an Equalities issue.

- Everyone can contribute towards change

DDA examples (Education)

- Look at each statement, consider if there are grounds for discrimination or not.
- A young man with moderate learning difficulty applies to do English A level. He has poor literacy skills and the college does not have sufficient evidence that he could sustain the reading and writing necessary to complete the course.



- A man makes a written request to a college about its courses. He does not tell the college that he has no sight. He is sent the print version of the prospectus which he cannot access. The college does produce the prospectus in alternative formats.



- A man makes a written request to a college about its courses. He does not tell the college that he has no sight. He is sent the print version of the information which he cannot access. The college does not produce the prospectus in any other format.



- A blind student on a distance learning course sends her essay in by Email. The tutor returns hand written comments by post.
- A tutor is fully aware that he has a hearing impaired student who lip-reads. He continuously talks whilst writing on the board with his back to the class.



- There is a regular field trip on an Organic Farming course and they stay at the same hotel each year. The manager of the hotel always accommodates them on the top floor and there is no lift. There is a wheelchair user on the course.

Definitions of Disability



- **Impairment:** the functional limitation within the individual caused by physical, mental or sensory impairment
- **Disability:** the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers
- **DISABLED PEOPLE'S INTERNATIONAL**
1981

Disabled People and Discrimination

- Consider the statements below: Is there any truth in them?
- If you do not agree with the statements, what arguments would you put forward to counter them?



- Disabled people cannot be regarded in the same light as other oppressed minority groups such as Women, Black people or gay people. Unfortunate as it is we must accept that people with impairments can never participate equally in our communities.



- It is impractical for disabled people to expect to use public transport. It is much more practical to provide separate provision such as special buses or dial a ride schemes.
- Inability to get into a building is not a form of discrimination; it is an unfortunate fact of life.



- The problem with educating disabled children in mainstream schools is that it is too costly in terms of resources and special adaptations; it is not practical to provide the specialist help some disabled children need.
- It is not right that business' should bear the cost of adaptations so that disabled people can work there.



- Business' and service providers, such as estate agents, should not have to bear the costs of adaptations so that disabled people can make use of the services.
- The difficulty with outlawing discrimination against disabled people in the job market, is that there are some jobs disabled people simply cannot do.



- The needs of disabled people would be better met by a programme of education and persuasion, rather than rights in law. Rights in law will only alienate the very people whose help is needed.

Physical barriers, environmental barriers.



- Lamp posts Steps
- Bollards
- Traffic lights Pedestrian crossing posts often in centre of pavement.
- Pedestrians, not looking where they are going.
- Cars, often parked on pavements, parked on drop kerbs.
- Staircases, no lifts; poor hand rails.
- Broken lifts.
- Bathrooms, Inaccessible toilets, no turning space for wheelchair users.



- Doors, revolving / double; automatic doors, visually impaired people
- Spiral stairs.
- Handles, inappropriate locks.
- No grab rails. Hand rails that finish before last step.
- Lack of colour contrast. Door frames, step edges.
- Poor drop curves / Braille paving.
- Lack of Braille on lift buttons. Lack of embossed numbers.
- Lack of talking lifts.
- Poor lighting in reception areas.



- Ramps without rest areas – too steep
- Seating. Chairs with or without arms.
- Code entry locks. Visual impairment.
- Air travel in general. Extra charges, wheelchair users.
- Trains, buses, ferries. 'Special Needs'
- Packaging and junk mail.
- Computers, lack of accessible soft-ware.
- Right-handedness, i.e. cameras, scissors.
- Expense of equipment
- Trees - town planning. Overhanging trees and shrubs.



- Escalators.
- Broken paving.
- Thick carpets, not good for wheelchair users.
- Sports stadiums, lack of accessible seating.
- Bikes, left on pavement.
- Wet floor signs, visually impaired people fall over the sign!
- Play areas Lack of, (safety surfaces)
- Gravel
- Information that isn't in the right format; Braille, tape, disc.

Quick Guide to DDA part iv Education

- This guide refers to Post 16 Code of Practice, DDA part iv.
- The University does not have to be experts on disability.
- The University does have to give every opportunity for people to disclose their disability. They must make this an attractive and comfortable proposition.



- The University has a legal duty to take reasonable steps to accommodate all disabilities.
- The University does not have to accept sub-standard work, adjust academic standards or accept unreasonable behaviour. Disability is not an excuse.
- The University has a duty to take every step to find out how to assist a disabled person.



- The University does not have any right to insist on knowing the specific impairment relevant to the disability.
- The University has a duty to ask how they can help an individual to attain their goals.
- The University must respect the confidentiality of information at all times. (Data Protection Act.)



- If it is visible that a person is disabled, then the University is deemed to have prior knowledge and is accountable in law.
- **N.B** This list is not a definitive guide. Refer to DDA part iv.