



## The Learning Disability Action Group and the Mental Health Action Group

### Who is this document by?

Disability Rights Commission

We are the **DRC** – The Disability Rights Commission. We work to make the lives of disabled people better.

### What is this document about?



We have written this document as we will stop work at the end of September 2007. But we want to tell other organisations about the way we have worked first.



This document is about some groups we set up in 2001. The groups are called **action groups**.

### Why did we set the groups up?



We wanted disabled people to be a part of our work and to help us make decisions about things.



But some disabled people, like people with a learning disability and people with mental health conditions, have not always had the chance to do this.

We wanted this to change.

So we set up some groups of disabled people to:



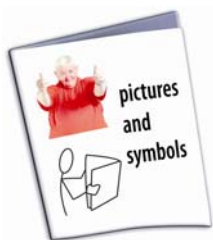
- help us with our work
- help us and other people understand their needs.

This document talks about the work that **2** of these groups have done. The groups are called:



- **The Learning Disability Action Group**
- **The Mental Health Action Group**

## **1. The Learning Disability Action Group**



This is a group of people with a learning disability.

At first, the group gave us advice about things like making information easy to understand.



Now the group does lots of work to really change the lives of people with a learning disability for the better.

The group works really well.

Here are some reasons why:

### **1. There are lots of different people in the group**

For example, there are people with different types of learning disabilities and people from different backgrounds and cultures.

The person who runs the group has a learning disability.

### **2. There are some people who help the group with its work**

For example:

- someone helps the person who runs the meetings choose what to talk about in the meetings and to make sure all the things are talked about





- another person plans the meetings
- another person takes notes in the meetings.



**3. People in the group get on well and help each other**



**4. The group works well with other groups, like the Mental Health Action Group**

## **What good work has the Learning Disability Action Group done?**

Here is some of the good work that the group has done.

The group has:



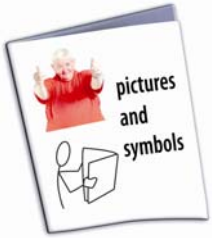
- ✓ Helped more people, like the government, know about the needs of people with a learning disability.



- ✓ Helped make signs better. Signs are things that show people the way to somewhere.



- ✓ Made some guides to help local councils make their services better.



- ✓ Helped us make our information easy to understand and helped other people to make their information easy to understand.



- ✓ Helped make it easier for people with a learning disability to look after their money and to have a bank account.



- ✓ Helped the government make their laws better. For example, their law about mental capacity. Mental capacity is about whether you are able to make decisions about things.

The group has also:



- ✓ Helped make it easier for people with a learning disability to use transport.



- ✓ Made some information to help people with a learning disability to vote. (Voting is about deciding who you want to be in the government.)

## 2. The Mental Health Action Group



This is a group made up of people who have mental health conditions.

Mental health conditions are to do with your mind and the way you think and feel. They can make it difficult to enjoy things and get on with people easily.



People with mental health conditions are often treated in a bad way. For example, most people who have had a serious mental health condition for a long time do not have a job.



The Mental Health Action Group has done lots of good work.

Here is some of the good work that the Mental Health Action Group has done.

The group has:



- ✓ Made a report to tell people with mental health conditions about their rights to do with lots of everyday things like health and transport. The report is called **Coming Together**.



- ✓ Helped make it easier for people with mental health conditions to get and keep a job. For example, the group has helped make some leaflets and a film about this.



- ✓ Helped the DRC with its work. For example, the group helped with the DRC report about the problems some disabled people have getting the healthcare they need.



## What will happen in the future?

If groups like this carry on after the DRC, it would be good to think about some ideas for the future.

For example:



- People might need some training to understand some of the things the groups talk about.



- The groups might want to try other ways to have their meetings to see if they work better.



- The groups need to do things like check their work from time to time to see how well they are doing.

- The groups need to make sure they keep telling people about the work they are doing.



- The groups could work more closely with other groups of people to help get things done.



In October 2007, a new organisation called the **Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR)** will take over the DRC's work.



We think it is very important that the groups that we set up still carry on when this happens.

The groups have done a lot of really good things and there is still more work to be done.