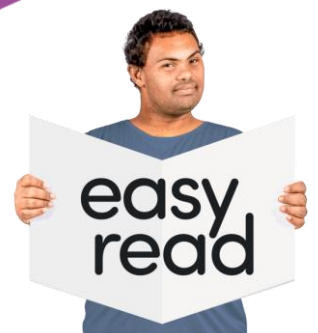


Easy Read Report:

Barriers to disabled people using talking therapies in Gloucestershire





We wanted to find out what difficulties disabled people have when using free or low cost talking therapies in Gloucestershire.



Talking therapies are when you talk with a counsellor about things that are worrying you.



We did this because our research from 2022 found that disabled people had problems getting good support for their mental health.



We worked with disabled people who had used talking therapies to do this research.



We interviewed 14 disabled people.



These people were aged over 18.



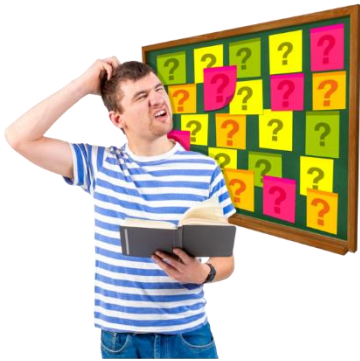
They had used talking therapies in Gloucestershire in the last 5 years.



They told us that they had problems in 3 main areas.



The first area is 'reasonable adjustments'.



Not having reasonable adjustments made talking therapies difficult.



People were not asked about reasonable adjustments.



The buildings where the therapy took place were not accessible for wheelchair users.



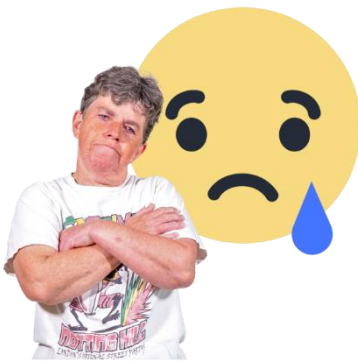
Some people were told they couldn't have reasonable adjustments.



Some people weren't allowed to do therapy in a different way, for example face-to-face and in groups.



Therapists sometimes didn't have the skills to work with someone with their disability.



Some people were told they can't have therapy because they have a serious mental illness.



The second area is 'treating disability as important in therapy'



People told us that their disability was often not talked about or forgotten, even when participants told their therapist about this.



There was not much time spent talking about the person's disability or reasonable adjustments.



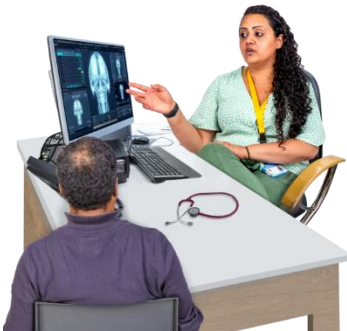
Information about someone's disability or reasonable adjustment was not passed on to the people in charge of the therapy.



Therapists sometimes forgot people had a disability



Sometimes therapist thought patients can do something that they cannot do



The third area is on 'living with a disability'



This is about the ways living with a disability affects how someone does things.



People's health is always changing and this can make it hard for someone to always go to therapy.



Some people were made to feel that they could not be trusted because they could not go to sessions because of their health.



People were told they cannot have therapy because they need carers, and their life changes a lot.



There was no support or understanding of problems getting transport to go to sessions.



People could not go to low cost therapies because they don't have much money.

What we think needs to change:



1. Therapists having a good attitude about giving people reasonable adjustments.

Let people know that you want to help meet their needs.



2. Ask people if they need reasonable adjustments before their first appointment and again when you meet them for the first time.



3. Work together with the patient when talking about reasonable adjustments.

Don't wait for the person to tell you everything.

Let people know what will happen at the therapy and what you need them to do.



4. Don't just ask people 'do you need reasonable adjustments' because not everyone knows what they are.

Ask questions like 'if I have to give you written information, how can I make it understandable for you?'



5. Make sure that there are different ways of providing the therapy, like having an online meeting or a group meeting or face-to-face.



6. Do not stop people's therapy if they cannot go to a session because of their disability.



7. If you think there may be a danger to doing face-to-face therapy, do a risk assessment with the person first.

Don't stop helping someone because of their disability or condition.



8. Be clear with patients about having a serious mental illness and if they can use talking therapies.



9. Give clear and accessible information on websites about how accessible your service is to disabled people.



10. Make sure there are different ways for someone to refer themselves to the service, for example the phone, paper or email.



11. Share information about your service and workbooks in different ways, for example easy read and audio versions.



12. Have better understanding and confidence in giving a service to disabled people.



13. Look at changing the language used to talk about disabled people when they cannot do part of therapy.

Don't say people are 'not engaging'.



14. As a reasonable adjustment, be flexible with a disabled person whose life changes a lot.



15. Look at offering money support for transport to people who can only use wheelchair accessible taxis.

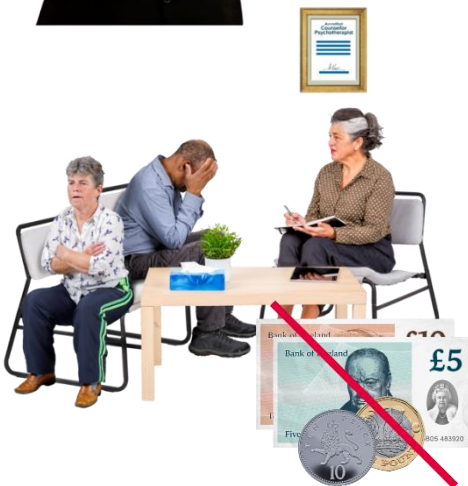


16. Ask disabled patients about the effect of travel problems on attending therapy.

Offer reasonable adjustments to help with this.



17. Use a clear, easy way to check someone can have cheaper or low cost therapy.



18. Commissioners to look at if they can give more options for free talking therapies that are accessible to all disabled people.



19. Commissioners to work with services to make accessibility better.