

Looking through the report, I find it difficult to feel confident that those with Asperger Syndrome will be included in the guidelines.

In trying to clarify what a disability is, it would appear that autistic spectrum disorder would perhaps be seen as an impairment rather than a disability - is this so, and if so will it undermine how this group are seen in respect to disability legislation.

The reason for asking is that Valuing People fell short in its advocacy for ASD in that it initially excluded Aspergers unless there was also a learning difficulty. Further debate (Hansard Debate) has corrected this situation but in practice it remains very difficult for individuals to access services as they fall between eligibility criteria for learning difficulties services and mental health services. Does the strategy group liaise with the All Party Parliamentary Group for Autism?

I strongly feel there is a need to be specific about Asperger's syndrome, how it is classified and the fact that any recommendations include AS adults.

From an attitudinal barrier, they are clearly disabled but by defining disability, impairment and ill-health so specifically, it may lead to further confusion with disability providers only providing for 'disabled' in the physical sense, and excluding those with impairments and ill-health due to budgeting priorities.

I would suggest that many adults with ASD are socially disabled to a significant degree which prevents them living independently. In some cases this is more disabling than someone with an accepted disability eg blindness.

I'm not sure this report gives clarity to this situation.

Yours faithfully

Parent of an adult with Asperger Syndrome