

I have just scanned the report on the lives of disabled people. From what I have seen it is very comprehensive and impressive, congratulations to the whole team for the work completed so far. I would be very grateful to receive a hard copy so that I may read it in detail. As the expert advisor to the Valuing People Support Team on cultural diversity and ethnicity I was particularly pleased to note the references made to the inequalities experienced by people with disabilities from minority ethnic communities. I was also very pleased that this issue is raised as an integral feature of the whole report which is very valuable. I have a specialist interest in children with disabilities from minority ethnic communities and therefore was pleased to see specific attention given to their experiences. e.g. pages 29, and 86. Specific mention of disabled children on page 86 which addresses the current situation:

"There is unmet need among minority ethnic families with disabled children

The levels of unmet need for services by minority ethnic parents with disabled children have been found to be higher than for white families. There is also some evidence that minority ethnic families with disabled children have lower take-up of benefits such as Disability Living Allowance.

One aspect of minority ethnic families' interaction with service providers is language, and there are shortages of interpretation facilities in some areas. There are also ways in which assumptions that minority ethnic families receive high levels of family support can affect the level of services offered to them. And services can also be delivered in a way that makes it difficult for certain families to take them up (for example, provision of overnight support for children out of the home, rather than in the home).

I note from the report that there are more than 59 recommendations, however I personally feel the commitment to create a new office for disability issues responsible for co-ordinating government work on disability within the wider equality agenda is 'good news'. In this context will the unit be appointing people with a special remit for working within the ethnicity diversity agenda?