



# Person-Centred Approaches Learning Briefing

Including protected characteristics, discriminatory factors & health & social inequalities.

## What is a Person-Centered Approach?

A person-centred approach means putting the Adult with care and support needs at the centre of any process or decision in order to support their needs, goals, & outcomes to be met. This approach moves away from professionals deciding what is best for an Adult by making them central to the planning of their care and support.

Person Centred support involves an Adult contributing to the design & delivery of services. This improves the experience & quality of care given that it's bespoke to an Adult.

To be person-centred, find out and consider an Adult's:

- views to establish and maintain safety from harm
- values & beliefs
- wishes and preferences
- care needs
- support available and views of others involved, including family & friends
- need for information, in a way that is most accessible

[Think Local, Act Personal](#) have some useful recourses, including podcasts & webinars about 'Making it real,' transforming health & care through personalisation & community-based support.

## What are Protected Characteristics?

Protected characteristics are specific aspects of an Adults identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. 'Protection' refers to protection from discrimination.

The practice of person-centered care must consider protected characteristics & how these may impact the Adult's care & their views & wishes. The following definitions of protected characteristics have been taken from the [Equality & Human Rights Commission](#). Within each link is advice and guidance on each category. It is crucial that professionals are aware of these & that your practice does not discriminate against someone because of:

- [age](#)
- [disability](#)
- [gender reassignment](#)
- [marriage and civil partnership](#)
- [pregnancy and maternity](#)
- [race](#)
- [religion or belief](#)
- [sex](#)
- [sexual orientation](#)



**Any discrimination based on the above protected characteristics is against the law.**

## What is Discrimination?

Discrimination can be:

- **Direct:** when an Adult is discriminated against based on the grounds of a protected characteristic & differently to another Adult in similar circumstances.
- **By association:** when an Adult is treated less favorably because they are linked, or associated, with someone who has a protected characteristic.
- **By perception:** when a person is discriminated against because they are thought to have a particular protected characteristic or are treated as if they do.
- **Indirect:** when a condition or requirement is applied equally to everyone but excludes an Adult because they are unable to comply because of a protected characteristic.

## Our Duty as Health & Social Care Workers

The Equality Act places an equality duty on health & social care workers to eliminate unlawful discrimination. We all have a duty to consider the diverse needs of Adults we are working with, minimising disadvantage & ensuring the inclusion of under-represented groups.

## Anti-Discriminatory Practice

Effective health and social care practices recognise & adapt to the diverse needs of individuals and it is essential that services understand the implications of diversity in terms of equality and individual rights. Anti-discriminatory practice is an approach that seeks to reduce or eliminate discrimination and to remove barriers that may prevent people from accessing services.

## Tips to Minimise Discrimination in Practice:

- Respect diversity by providing person-centred support.
- Treat Adults as unique rather than treating everyone in the same way.
- Provide advice, information & support in a way which meets the needs & preference of the Adult.
- Ensure you work in a professional & non-judgemental way, do not stereotype or allow your own beliefs to affect the care & support you provide.
- Refuse to initiate, participate, collude with or condone discrimination & harassment
- Proactively challenge and address discriminatory behaviours and practice.
- Use supervision to reflect on protected characteristics for the adults you work with to identify any issues and unintended/unwitting practice bias/discrimination.

## Health & Social Care Inequalities

Health & social care inequalities can lead to unequal access and experience of health or social care support. These can occur because of where an Adult is born or lives, their job or income or, because of their age. Some examples which may lead to health and social care inequalities are:

- **Protected characteristics**
- **Socio-economic status & deprivation:** e.g., unemployed/low income or people living in deprived areas
- **Vulnerable or hard to reach groups:** e.g., Gypsy, Roma & Traveler communities, rough sleepers & homeless people, sex workers and people with learning disabilities
- **Geography:** e.g., urban, or rural locations

## Safeguarding during operational pressures & crisis

During times of operational pressures & crisis, previous Safeguarding Adult Reviews have shown that the needs of Adults with care & support needs can be overlooked.

It is acknowledged that on the whole, agencies & individual workers make every effort to put people who use services, first. However, Reviews have shown that in some cases, some actions & decisions made, retrospectively could have been different, and led to improved outcomes.

Professionals need to ensure that at all times, including during times of pressure & crisis, that you **'think safeguarding'** & ensure that Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) principals are adhered to. If there is a safeguarding concern during operational pressures & crisis, these must be reported [online](#) in the usual way. If you have concerns about a decision, action or inaction these can be managed via the use of our [Escalation & Resolution Protocol](#).

### Resources you can use to ensure your practice is current:

- [Learning Briefing on Making Safeguarding Personal](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#)
- [SCIE information on the Equality Act](#)
- [Home Office Equality Act Publication, Equality Act Guidance](#)
- [Citizens Advice Discrimination Guidance](#)
- [NHS Definitions of Health Inequalities](#)

From Think Local Act Personal:

- [Personalisation in Black Asian & Minority Ethnic Communities Report](#)
- [Personalisation in Mental Health](#) & 6 minute [Podcast](#)
- [6-minute podcast - Making it Real: How to do it](#) & [Making it Real Webinar](#)

