

## **6.10 PROVISION OF SERVICES AND IDENTIFIED GAPS - PHYSICALLY DISABLED AND SENSORY IMPAIRED**

### **LOCAL AUTHORITY PROVISION**

A range of services are offered to people with physical disabilities and their carers, that are age appropriate, and that are designed to help them live as independently as possible in their own homes, for example, through the Direct Payments Scheme. Services are arranged including home care, day care, and residential care, from in-house providers and the independent sector. It is important to ensure that services are age appropriate. For example, people are supported in work, or to have ordinary family lives. The service also addresses the needs of people with sensory impairments, such as hearing or sight impairment. People with these impairments have their needs identified and addressed by specialist social workers.

A significant number of people will have more than one disability. The prevalence of disabilities, severity and likelihood of having more than one form of disability increases significantly with age.

### **Sensory impairment**

Visual and hearing impairment have been separate services in Cardiff until recently. In March 2002 the visual impairment team and social workers for the hearing impaired were relocated together at Heol Don Centre in Whitchurch, Cardiff, in order to form a new sensory impairment team. During 2002/3, work will be undertaken to develop the new team, to deliver an appropriate consistent service for people with sensory loss. The benefits of bringing this team together are that a full range of rehabilitation services will be provided including daily living skills, communication, mobility and orientation skills. The team aims, through its social work and rehabilitation services, to maximise the opportunity for visually and hearing impaired people to lead independent lives. Hearing impaired people will benefit from the provision of an equipment demonstration area which has not been available until now.

For those users who have both visual and hearing impairments, a specialist service will be more readily available with staff located together working closely to provide a service tailored to users with a dual sensory loss. Services for people with dual sensory loss will be commissioned more effectively as a result of this service.

## **Disabled Facilities**

The Disabled Facilities Service provides a one stop shop in enabling disabled service users and carers to receive a complete package of assistance, from an assessment of their need to the provision of equipment or adaptations to their home.

The three main sections within Disabled Facilities are:

- Occupational Therapy Service
- Grants Service
- Small works and community equipment loan service.

The grants regime has been reviewed by central government and as a result, Disabled Facilities Grants remain mandatory and fundamentally unchanged. Everyone who has been assessed by an OT and satisfies the assessment criteria is eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant.

With increasing pressure on capital allocations, the service area is looking at a number of value for money projects, for example, extended warranties on stair lifts, the recycling of disability aids provided through grants, and leasing arrangements for stair lifts and other equipment.

Funding is available through the Welsh Assembly Government via the Cardiff Accessible Homes Project to encourage local authorities to adopt information systems that enable them to identify accessible and adapted properties and to match them with the needs and choices of disabled people. The Disabled Facilities Service is represented on the steering group for the project.

At present both the NHS and Local Authority have their own independent equipment services. However, using the flexibilities encouraged by the NHS Act, and the guidance which provided arrangements for joint working between health, local authorities and the voluntary sector, a successful bid was made for 2002/3 to test the feasibility of a joint equipment service between the NHS and Community Services in Cardiff and the Vale.

The bid will be used to commission a consultant to review the provision of disability aids and equipment by health and local authority services and to make recommendations for a new joint service. This will provide an invaluable equipment service to the most vulnerable people of Cardiff.

## **Current Service Gaps (Headline level only)**

### **Council Services**

## **Residential Care**

- Lack of specialist provision
- Need for placements that can cope with complex needs

## **Respite**

- Lack of provision
- Service users and their carers don't like current provision
- Current provision disabling

## **Day Care**

- Lack of clarity about purpose of day care
- Provision from one only 'in-house' centre that causes transport problems
- Provision for returning to work
- Lack of flexibility around opening hours

## **Direct Payments**

- Re-launch and expand service

## **Other**

- Transition from children's services to adult
- Need for residential re-ablement unit
- Extra provision for community based re-ablement and crisis intervention
- Provision of services to regional units