

## Have your say on proposed changes to charges for Council-run day opportunities

Healthwatch Solihull welcome the opportunity to share our views on the proposed changes to charges for Council-run day opportunities. Our key role is to make sure that patients, the public, service users, and carers are at the heart of service improvement in health and social care. In line with our role, we have focused our comments on:

- Patient and Public Involvement and engagement
- How the plans meet the needs of Solihull residents

We would like to note that as the subject matter of this consultation impacts many individuals with additional needs within Solihull it is disappointing to see that this consultation has not been provided in more accessible formats such as easy read. Providing this consultation in a range of more accessible formats would have enabled more individuals with additional sensory and language needs to share their views on these changes and understand the impact it may have on them as well as enabling those who require the support of a carer to work together with them to understand how these changes may impact their lives.

Whilst we are pleased to see that engagement work has been conducted to inform many of those who currently use these day opportunities how these changes will affect them we would have liked to have seen this information expanded. We would be interested to see how this engagement was conducted and whether feedback received from those directly impacted has fed into the changes being proposed. If this was not the case further engagement with these people may be required to truly understand how the proposed changes will impact their ability to attend these opportunities. Many of the people these changes impact such as those with learning disabilities may be unable to access this online consultation in the current format. It is therefore important to ensure that their feedback is recorded through other engagement opportunities in order to represent their views and ensure that the changes made truly consider the impact on the people who attend these day opportunities.

We would also like to see information presented regarding how a person's support needs as determined by the council is communicated to attendees and carers and whether a process will be in place for people to dispute this decision. Some people may feel that they do not require the level of support they are assigned and cannot afford to attend as a result of this decision which makes this service less accessible to Solihull residents. Further to this concern we feel the need to ask how assessments will be handled for individuals with variable levels of support need. An individual may be assessed as requiring high levels of support but this may not be the case year round. This could potentially lead to increased costs when they do not require higher levels of support for an opportunity they attend. We would therefore like to see information presented regarding how these varying needs will be taken into consideration when determining level of support required.

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