



STOCKPORT
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL



Pennine Care
NHS Foundation Trust

Stockport Learning Disability Strategy 2024 – 2029

Adult Social Care
Stockport



Ambitious Stockport, creating opportunities *for everyone*

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Stockport's 5 year Learning Disability Strategy 2024 to 2029

Vision

This strategy sets out Stockport's vision to enable people with Learning Disabilities to have happier, healthier and more independent lives over the next 5 years. We know through our engagement with people with lived experience, their carers, health and social care professionals that there are things that are working well for people with Learning Disabilities but also areas we need to work on to improve the lives of people with Learning Disabilities.

We understand that there are local and national challenges which impact the lives of people with Learning Disabilities such as the cost of living crisis, housing and feeling connected with the community.

Learning Disabilities is one of the six priorities in our One Health and Care Plan. This sets out our commitment to work together as One Stockport to deliver our Learning Disability and autism strategies, aiming to improve the mental and physical wellbeing of our residents and the responsiveness of our services.

This strategy also sits alongside the Pennine Learning Disability Strategy, Stockport Autism strategy and the commissioning strategy.

Unpaid carers play a vital role in supporting people with Learning Disabilities for this reason our vision to support carers is detailed within the Carers Strategy and both strategies will complement each other as we strive to support people and families in a holistic way.

This strategy has been developed alongside the Learning Disability Partnership Board and the Speaking Out Group. The feedback and continued work following Learning Disability Conference 2023 and 2024 has shaped our vision for what a good life looks like for people with Learning Disabilities.

What is a Learning Disability?

The Department for Health and Social Care defines a learning disability as

“a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with a reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning), which started before adulthood”.

A learning difficulty is not the same as a learning disability, a learning difficulty is a specific difficulty in an area for example dyslexia.

In Stockport we work towards the social model of disability which encourages us to understand what people can do for themselves and reduce barriers to people having an ordinary life.

The National Picture

Within living history the way we support people with learning disabilities has changed for the better however there is still progress to be made towards supporting people with learning disabilities to have ordinary lives. Valuing People Now was a policy document in 2001 which set out the aspirations for support people with Learning Disabilities to have an ordinary life.

Since then, The Care Act 2014, is the law that the council, including Adult Social Care follows. At the heart of The Care Act 2014 is the wellbeing principle and enabling people to be as independent as possible.

In 2022 Building the Right Support guidance was reviewed and emphasised the importance of people with Learning Disabilities and Autistic people having the right support in their communities. Building the Right Support's objective is to uphold people with Learning Disabilities and Autistic rights as equal citizens, with the right health and social care support to meet their needs. At its heart the policy is ensuring that people are enabled to fulfil their potential.

Learning from lives and deaths of people with a learning disability and autistic people (LeDeR). LeDeR is a national improvement programme with a focus on improving care, reducing health inequalities and preventing early death of people with Learning Disabilities and Autistic individuals. Locally our LeDeR reviews are reported Greater Manchester wide.

LeDeR enables us as a system to improve the lives of people with Learning Disabilities. The reviews have shown that across England people with Learning Disabilities face significant health inequalities when compared to other groups. A health inequality is where a person or group of people experience differences in the health care they receive compared to other groups. As part of this strategy we want to continue to reduce health inequalities across all health settings.

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Stockport's Picture

The Community Learning Disability Team

The Community Learning Disability team has within it: social workers; specialist nurses; physiotherapists; physiotherapy assistants; speech and language therapist; psychology assistant and psychologist. The Learning Disability team works to support people with Learning Disabilities to live an ordinary life, supporting people to be as independent as possible.

The health workers are managed by Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust and the Social Workers are managed by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council.

The Community Learning Disability Team works alongside the Safeguarding team at Stepping Hill Hospital to support people with Learning Disabilities when they are well enough to come home as safely and quickly as possible. The Community Learning Disability Team can provide advice and guidance if someone is an inpatient in Stepping Hill Hospital.

Stockport NHS Foundation Trust deliver services at Stepping Hill Hospital.

Mental Health Support

Community Mental Health Team (CMHT)

The CMHT offer support to all adults, aged between 16 and 65, for a wide range of mental health conditions, including severe and enduring mental illnesses.

Reasonable adjustments are made within the service to ensure that adults with a Learning Disability are able to access the support they need. The CMHT is delivered by Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust.

Inpatient Settings

In Stockport we have two inpatient wards they are Norbury and Arden.

Arden Ward is a 24-bedded adult acute in-patient ward for males between the ages of 18-65. Reasonable adjustments are made on the ward for people with Learning Disabilities to enable them to access the support.

Norbury ward is a 23-bedded female acute inpatient ward for people between the ages of 18 and 65. Reasonable adjustments are made on the ward for people with Learning Disabilities to enable them to access the support.

Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust deliver the service on Norbury and Arden Wards.

In Stockport we are passionate about enabling people to continue to live in their own homes and not in hospital settings. We work collaboratively as an Multi Disciplinary Team to ensure people receive the support they need within their own homes and communities with hospital settings only used when people really need them and for the shortest period of time.

Preparing for Adulthood

The Early Adulthood Team

The Early Adulthood Team is a social work team supporting young people turning 18 into adulthood and for those who are Autistic or have a Learning Disability up to 25 where they have an Education, Health and Care Plan. The team is part of the Preparing for Adulthood virtual team supporting young people to develop their skills and independence as much as possible.

The Preparing For Adulthood Strategy is currently in development please see this document for further details on our vision for promoting young people's talents, skills and independence.

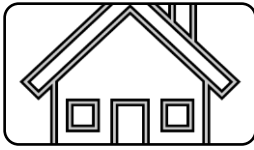
Stockport's Five Pillars of an Ordinary Life for People with Learning Disabilities.

During the Confirm and Challenge "Manchester Conference" people with Learning Disabilities told us what they wanted as their priorities. We have used these to shape our vision for the next 5 years and how we will work with people with Learning Disabilities to support to improve their wellbeing.

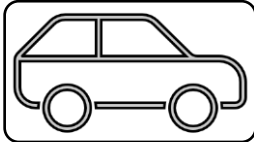
As well as the Five Pillars people with Learning Disabilities told us that more generally belonging was important to them. For people with Learning Disabilities to be and feel connected with their friends, families and local communities. People with Learning Disabilities told us that they needed communities to understand, see and value how they enhance and make Stockport's communities better. Our vision is that people with Learning Disabilities in Stockport feel belonging whilst understanding that this is a deeply personal experience and will mean different things to each person.

Each Pillar of our strategy sits under our vision for people with learning disabilities to feel belonging in all areas of their lives.

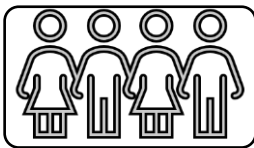
The Five Pillars identified were:

**Pillar 1 - Gets Me out of the House:**

Employment, Life Long Learning, Day and Night Opportunities, Holidays, Overnight Short Breaks.



Pillar 2 - Getting To Where I Need to be: Transport, walking, cycling, getting the bus and trains, using taxis.



Pillar 3 - Are The People who support me “wise” and “kind”: Support in all areas of someone’s life, including paid and unpaid

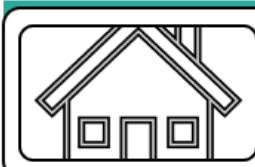


Pillar 4 - Living a Healthy Life: Having a healthy lifestyle, annual health checks, improving health inequalities and access to health.



Pillar 5 – Home, Family and Friends: Where someone lives and who (including pets) they live with. This includes romantic relationships and friendships.

Gets Me Out of the House



Pillar 1 - Gets Me out of the House:

Employment, Life Long Learning, Day and Night Opportunities, Holidays, Overnight Short Breaks.

We know from people with Learning Disabilities and our social work teams that Stockport's current offer to support people to have meaningful ordinary lives are not as creative and dynamic as we would like them to be. As part of our consultation people with Learning Disabilities rightly raised if they are skilled part of a voluntary workforce why are there not opportunities for paid employment. Through the consultation it was also raised that opportunities at the moment are focused around mornings and early afternoons.

The One Borough Plan for Stockport has at the heart of it that we want a skilled and confident Stockport. Our vision to support people have meaningful lives starts with valuing the skills and attributes that people with Learning Disabilities have, seeing them as equal valuable citizens who make our communities better and more vibrant. We are aspiring that all people with a learning disability have opportunities for life long learning, being employed, opportunities to access what is happening in their local area and services have a key focus on independence building. We want to develop a road map for opportunities so that people with Learning Disabilities understand what is available in their communities and how to access them.

People with Learning Disabilities also told us that they wanted more opportunities to go on holiday, go to the spa or a weekend away at the seaside but that it can often be difficult to know if they could afford the trip and what they need to do to make this possible. Our aspiration is for people with learning disabilities to have ordinary experiences which means that they need to know what they need to do to understand if their hoped for trip is possible.

What are we doing now?

Over the past few months, we have been working alongside Stockport Advocacy and Healthwatch to review what are currently called "day services" to find out what is working really well for people and what could be improved to enhance peoples lives. We also have been working with Pure who run our employment support to understand what is working well and what we can support to improve the employment opportunities.

After feedback from people with Learning Disabilities about how they wanted opportunities outside of the morning and early afternoons we are working closely with people and providers to support them to develop "Independence Opportunities".

We are hoping that by rebranding what we currently call “day services” to “independence opportunities” will broaden the scope, aspirations and personalisation of people’s choices.

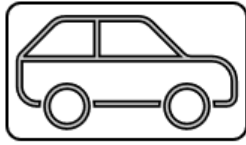
We have been working with our providers to ensure that they have a Holiday Policy which is accessible for people with Learning Disabilities, our hope is that we will be able to achieve a Stockport wide guidance which is adopted by each provider.

What are we going to do? (Our Commitments)

Our commitment is to develop a road map of “Independence Opportunities” so that people with learning disabilities and their carers can understand what opportunities are available to them, understanding that at different points in someone’s life they will need different opportunities. This roadmap will contain Independence Opportunities with different focuses:

1. Our commitment is to have a key focus on developing skills such as pre employment courses and employment opportunities for people with Learning Disabilities.
2. We will work to develop a Life Long Learning: understanding that no matter what someone’s level of need is there are opportunities to try new things (such as different sensory experiences) or learn a new skill such as a cookery or joinery course.
3. We have relaunched the Provider Forum to better enable us to work with our partners and providers to where possible break down barriers and “red tape” which is preventing people from knowing if they can afford to go on holiday, seeing or developing friendships or romantic partners.

Getting to where I need to be.



Pillar 2 - Getting To Where I Need to be: Transport, walking, cycling, getting the bus and trains, using taxi's.

At all the events that we have been to throughout the past few years transport has consistently been a challenge for the people attending the event or discussed by the individuals. People with Learning Disabilities have consistently told us that getting to where they need to be is difficult and expensive. This is especially apparent for people who are wheelchair users as they told us that they struggle to find transport which they're able to use. Our vision is that people are able to get to the places they need to as independently as possible.

People with Learning Disabilities also told us that sometimes it can be difficult to travel with their friends or go on a day out with friends if their friend is supported by a different provider. Our aspiration is that the provider who is supporting a person does not control which friendships someone can grow and develop.

What are we doing now?

In Stockport there is travel training available for people to increase independence on specific routes, for example from home to college or work. There are also different schemes available to those who are unable to travel independently such as Ring and Ride, Stockport Care Scheme (provided through Stockport Support Hub) and people utilise mobility cars through their Personal Independence Payments.

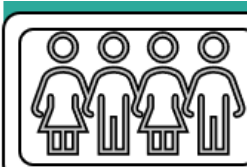
We understand that there is more work to do to understand how people get to where they need to be and ensure that we are empowering people to travel as independently as possible. We also need to understand better what our transport providers such as bus companies, rail stations and taxi companies know about how to improve the experiences of transport for people with Learning Disabilities.

What are we going to do? (Our Commitments)

1. We need to understand better how people get to where they need to be and develop different models of support to enable people to be as independent as possible.
2. Through our Provider Forum support providers to reduce barriers or red tape when friends or acquaintances might like to travel together to reduce the cost to individuals.

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Are the people who support me “wise” and “kind”



Pillar 3 - Are The People who support me “wise” and “kind”: Support in all areas of someone’s life, including paid and unpaid

People with Learning Disabilities have told us that they feel restricted in what they’re able to do and told us that there is “never enough staff either at home or at day service” and that they struggle with the number of agency staff supporting them. During the Learning Disability Conference it was clear that some people with Learning Disabilities have developed good relationships with the people who are supporting them which was great to see.

We also heard from people with Learning Disabilities that “Social workers are a waste of time, you only see them when something happens.’ We also know from individual feedback that there have been some positive experiences such as feedback from one family said that the social workers “caring focus” and “Your empathy is taking on board my worries [...] Your tenacity in bringing about a resolution to the problem”. We know that in recent years we have not reviewed how support is working for people with Learning Disabilities on an annual basis, this is one of our priorities to ensure that people with Learning Disabilities support is reviewed at least annually, this will enable us to ensure that people are getting the right support at the right time.

Our vision is that people with Learning Disabilities feel that those supporting them from all areas including social work, support services, health and their local connections and communities develop good working relationships to enable us to achieve a good ordinary life.

What are we doing now?

We have been working on ensuring that all staff social work and social care officers across Adult Social Care have completed the Oliver McGowan training. We have also been working with providers to support them to deliver good services through our quality team.

We know that during the COVID 19 pandemic this changed how services operated and ran and we have been making efforts to strengthen links between the Learning Disabilities Team and community groups. We have recently developed our Making it Real board enabling us to regularly listen to communities we service to strive to make improvements.

What are we going to do? (Our Commitments)

1. We know that we need to continue to build trust with our communities and as we develop improvement programmes continue to discuss and co-produce these where possible.
2. Continue to establish the Making it Real Board
3. Develop a Person with Lived Experience co-chair for the Valuing Peoples Partnership Board.
4. Establish the Provider Forum to support our providers to deliver good services.
5. We will continue to embed our culture of compassion across all professionals

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Living a Healthy Life.



Pillar 4 - Living a Healthy Life: Having a healthy lifestyle, annual health checks, improving health inequalities and access to health.

A key focus for the Council's One Health and Care Plan is a Healthy and Happy Stockport: People live the best lives they can, happy, healthy and independent and this is no different for people with Learning Disabilities.

The national and local data from the LeDeR reports tells us that people with Learning Disabilities continue to face health inequalities and barriers to accessing health care. One of the National Health Service Executive (NHSE) objectives is to ensure that 75% of people aged 14 years and over on GP learning disability registers receive an annual health check. The performance from Stockport primary care shows a high proportion of people on the learning disability general practitioner (GP) records receive their annual health checks. In 2022/23, 80.6% of people with a learning disability on local GP records received an annual health check and in 2023/24 this increased to 85.2%, which was within top five in the country. However, it has been reported by people with Lived Experience at the Learning Disability Partnership Board that the quality of these health checks can be inconsistent some people and carers reporting good quality conversations and others reporting that it felt like a tick box exercise. We need to understand this more and build on good practice.

People have also told us that they wanted access to yoga, Tai-chi and other group exercise sessions to enable them to be healthier. People with Learning Disabilities also told us that they enjoy learning to cook healthy meals but that opportunities can be limited on who is supporting you.

People with Learning Disabilities and their carers also told us that their experiences as inpatients at Stepping Hill Hospital had not been as positive as they would have liked. As a Multi-Disciplinary Team we are committed to ensuring that when someone is in hospital that they receive the right care and support for them.

Stepping Hill Foundation Trust are committed to improving people with Learning Disabilities experience when they need to use one of their departments both for planned appointments and emergency care.

What are we doing now?

Our specialist Learning Disability Nurses have continued to work closely with the GP practices to support them with ensuring their Learning Disability register is up to date and that annual health checks are completed. This supports our work to ensure that adults with Learning Disabilities have equal access to vaccinations and health screenings (for example breast, testicular, bowel cancer). We are continuing to work with GP practices to remove barriers to accessing these screenings. Our

commitment is to continue to work to reduce barriers to people accessing vaccinations and health screenings.

The ICB and Adult Social Care are working closely together to continue to reduce hospital admission under the Mental Health Act 1983. We are continuing to explore through collaborative commissioning alternatives to hospital for people who require more bespoke support and accommodation options. We are committed to homes not hospitals and ensuring that people with Learning Disabilities have access to the support they need in their communities.

We have recently started working with Stepping Hill Hospital to improve people's experiences both as planned and unplanned inpatients. We have made a good start with all members of the group committed and keen to improve people's experiences.

We have also been linking in with the Inclusion Officer at Life Leisure and would like to build on these relationships to improve people with Learning Disabilities knowledge and understanding of what is on offer as well as discuss any challenges that people face.

What are we going to do? (Our Commitments)

1. To improve information available to people with Learning Disabilities around living healthy lives and ensure that providers are aware of this information.
2. We will continue to work with the GPs to continue to improve the number of annual health checks and also to build on good practice around quality of the annual health checks.
3. We will build on the relationships with Life Leisure to promote the use of exercise groups and access to their facilities.
4. We will continue to review and explore ways to improve the experiences of people with Learning Disabilities when in Stepping Hill hospital. This includes as outpatients and inpatients (acute and Mental Health wards). The next stage in this piece of work is to involve people with Learning Disabilities and their carers so that any proposals are co-produced.
5. We will continue to learn from the recommendations following any LeDeR and ensure learning is implemented.
6. We will establish the "Good Health Group" which will have people with Lived Experience and their carers as members.
7. We will work with the ICB to review services that are in place to prevent hospital admissions and continue to explore other alternatives for people who need bespoke accommodation.
8. Stepping Hill Hospital's ambition is to give people with Learning Disabilities the opportunity to visit unscheduled care setting such as the Emergency Dept, theatres and out patients by providing regular tours so they have an insight into the environment should they ever need to visit in a crisis.

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One Future

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Home, Family and Friends – Where I Live



Pillar 5 – Home, Family and Friends: Where someone lives and who (including pets) they live with. This includes romantic relationships and friendships.

People with Learning Disabilities told us ‘My family just want to know I am safe & happy’, People at the Heart of Care is all about ensuring that the person is the centre of all planning and our vision for the future is that our community feel safe and happy. People with learning disabilities also told us that housing felt too complicated and that they didn’t know where to start. Not only did they not know where to start but once they had no choice.

Finding a home can be difficult, stressful and complicated to navigate for all people in Stockport. Our vision whilst understanding the current housing challenges nationally is that people with Learning Disabilities can live in their own homes and feel safe and happy there. We know that there are different needs for accommodation, and we work alongside Stockport Homes to help achieve people finding their own home. We understand that like the rest of the population people with Learning Disabilities accommodation needs may change through the life course, such as needing more or less space or ground floor living. Within the Commissioning Strategy it details the types of accommodation (including Shared Lives, supported accommodation) that are available to people who need that level of support. Our vision is that within Stockport there is accommodation available which meets people’s needs with the right level of support. We are currently developing a supported housing action plan and strategy to ensure that we have the right supported accommodation for the future. This will include a review of our current offer and where this is not working for the people of Stockport, recommissioning provision.

People with Learning Disabilities also told us that they valued having accommodation which has outdoor space, the internet and allowed pets. We understand the importance that building a relationship with an animal can have for someone’s wellbeing but also the ordinary balancing the needs of all people living within the home. Our vision is that people with Learning Disabilities will be supported if they wish to build a relationship with an animal, this can take lots of forms from having a cat, dog or budgie living in your home to making use of apps such as “borrow my doggy” or volunteering at an animal shelter.

It is important to support people with Learning Disabilities to be as independent as possible and over the next 5 years we would like to build on our current technology offer to promote people’s autonomy, choice and control.

People with Learning Disabilities have also told us that having access to “Overnight Short Breaks” previously called “respite” was really important to them. We aspire for our overnight short breaks provision to be a “home from home”. We want our overnight short breaks provision to support people as a steppingstone to their own home by promoting and building their independence skills. Our vision is that

overnight short breaks will be part of our independence opportunities to increase people with Learning Disabilities confidence in their abilities to live as independently as possible.

We want to support parents who have a Learning Disability to have the right support to enable them to flourish as parents. Stepping Hill Hospital is committed to getting prenatal and postnatal support right for parents including utilising the “Think Family Approach”.

People with Learning Disabilities are valued members of their families and can become carers themselves supporting a loved one. We want to better understand who is providing support as an unpaid carer and ensure that they have the support they need in their caring role.

What are we doing now?

In November 2022 Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council was awarded funds from the Department of Levelling up to develop and run a Supported Housing Improvement Programme (SHIP). The funding has enabled Stockport to create a specialist team to look in depth at supported living for working age adults. More details on this programme is within the Commissioning Strategy for 2023 to 2028.

We have also started through the provider Forum having the conversations about how to reduce the barrier to people having pets or building a relationship with an animal.

What are we going to do? (Our Commitments)

1. We will undertake a review of all Overnight Short Breaks provision across the borough, with an aim to have a more inclusive and responsive offer of overnight short breaks that promotes the well-being of carers and individuals and is flexible in its approach.
2. We will be creative and bold in reviewing current housing with support options for people with Learning Disabilities and Autistic Adults, listening to what individuals want and need and working to create a vibrant and mixed economy of provision which is future proofed, offers value for money for all and offers choice and flexibility.
3. We will strive to further develop our Shared Lives provision in Stockport, our aim to increase the number of shared lives placements by 50% year on year, recognising that Shared Lives could be an option for people with a range of support needs, we aim to expand our offer over the next 5 years to other groups, including care leavers and individuals with Mental Health needs
4. For the SHIP programme to work closely with those involved with Supported Living to drive up standards.
5. To run an event for carers about Future Planning and what we mean by Supported Living.
6. To reduce barrier and red tape for people with Learning Disabilities to be able to build relationships with animals where they want to. We will produce a Good Practice guide together.
7. To strengthen our technology offer to support people with Learning Disabilities choice, control and independence.
8. To better understand how many people with Learning Disabilities are unpaid carers and what support they need now and in the future .
9. We will continue to support people to find out about things happening in their local communities to enable them to make the right choices for them about friendships and meeting romantic partners.
10. Stepping Hill Hospital alongside Adult and Children's Social Care will create resources and develop pathways to ensure that parents with Learning Disabilities are supported in developing the skills they need to give them the best possible start to parenthood.

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Thank you to the Speaking Out Group and Stockport Advocacy for their time and commitment to helping us get our joint vision right.



Useful Links

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learning-disability-applying-all-our-health/learning-disabilities-applying-all-our-health>

The Current Legislation and Guidance

[Care Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

[Children and Families Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

[SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Autism Act 2009 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

[National strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

[Mental Capacity Act 2005 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

[Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

[NHS England » Where can I find out more about LeDeR?](#)

[The Capabilities for Social Work with Adults who have Learning Disability | BASW](#)

[Autistic Adults PCF \(basw.co.uk\)](https://www.basw.co.uk)

[Building the right support for people with a learning disability and autistic people - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Appendix 1 – Actions Plans

Our Action Plans

These plans are developmental, they will change overtime as we gain more insight from people using and delivering service and involve others in the design and delivery of our ambitions. We know that new opportunities may arise over the next 5 years, and we acknowledge that the financial standing of adult social care is less predictable than in previous years.

Pillar 1- Gets Me out of the House

Commitment Number	Actions	Expected date	Lead	Comments

Pillar 2- Getting to Where I need to be

Commitment Number	Actions	Expected date	Lead	Comments

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Pillar 3- Are The People who support me “wise” and “kind”:

Commitment Number	Actions	Expected date	Lead	Comments

Pillar 4 – Living a Healthy Life

Commitment Number	Actions	Expected date	Lead	Comments

Pillar 5 – Home

Commitment Number	Actions	Expected date	Lead	Comments