

New Models for Learning Disability Day Support Collaborative

Design Persona: Miss L

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Improvement Hub
Enabling health and
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Introduction

Miss L is 33 years old and lives in a housing support service with 3 others. Together they are supported by a team of staff. Before Covid she attended a day service 5 days a week but now receives and outreach service from the day service in her own home. She visits her family home at least 3 times a week to spend time with her mum, dad, older sister, her husband, and their sausage dog.

Miss L has a profound learning disability. She has little concept of danger and requires 1:1 support at all times. She is non-verbal so communicating can be very hard. She is also double incontinent and needs helps with everything she does. Miss L also has complex epilepsy and experiences focal and tonic seizures on a daily basis, while taking a lot of medication to manage the condition. Her focal seizures usually last for around 5mins. During seizures Miss L is aware but they can make her grab people and dig her nails in. Sometimes she will fall to the ground so it's important that she is looked after while experiencing a seizure. Every few weeks Miss L will have a seizure which lasts more than 15mins which needs emergency medication to make it stop.

My communication

Miss L is non-verbal so communication can be really difficult. She uses a little bit of PECS and signing but mainly people work out what she is telling them by understanding what her face and body are trying to say. That's why it's so important that she is supported by people who know and understand her, and recognise her ways of communicating.

Even though Miss L cannot tell you something, she wants everyone to know that she is still thinking and feeling and remembering and understanding much more than they realise.

My motivations

The things that motivate Miss L are the same as everyone else – the things she likes and enjoys. It might be music, or TV, or going out in the care, or chocolate, or sausages. But she also needs to do different things that she hasn't tried before because otherwise how will she know whether she likes them or not?

Because Miss L cannot tell people what she might be interested in, or even know about what she might be interested in, she needs others to suggest things for her. She needs people to use their imagination to think of new things and then to share them with her. People also need to remember that it might take her a bit longer to realise that she like something and not to give up to too quickly

My frustrations

Miss L likes to have a routine so that she knows what is likely to happen and when. Covid has made her life much harder because all of her routines stopped or changed and it took a long time for her to work out what the new routines were going to be.

She does not like it when people are impatient with her and do not take the time and effort to work out what she wants or doesn't want.

Miss L likes to be busy and active doing things that she enjoys but she also like to have down time as a chance to relax so it is frustrating hen this does not happen in her day. She also does not like to be rushed or hassled when moving from one activity to another as she needs time to think about things.

My short-term ambitions

Miss L would like to attend the kind of day service that would be best for her. She feels this would involve a safe and welcoming building suitably equipped for her, her friend's, and her staff's needs. She would like to have options of both indoor and outdoor activities that are interesting, stimulating, worthwhile and fun. Miss L would like activities that help her to learn new skills and allow her to exercise so that she can be as healthy as possible, and also activities which are more challenging or even adventurous. For days where she is feeling a bit low or tired, she would like the space to be able to be on her own. Miss L would also like to have transport to do activities outwith the day service building as public transport is not safe nor appropriate for her or her friends.

My long-term ambitions

When Miss L left school her mum was told that there were no college courses suitable for someone like her and she was considered very lucky to eventually get a full-time day service place. Miss L has always loved going to her day service, but she doesn't understand why she can't go to college too. Even though she have a profound learning disability, she is still able to learn.

My experience of how I spend my day

Miss L feels her introduction might sound a bit scary and glum but she still likes to have fun and there are lots of things that she enjoys doing with her day. On a going out day she likes to go swimming (which is her top favourite), out in the car, for a walk in the woods or the park, sitting on her swing in her garden, meeting up with friends, or having a picnic. On a staying home day she likes to watch her favourite programmes, listening to her music, sharing her picture books, or playing singing games.

Sometimes Miss L's staff take her on special outings and events as a treat and they have a great time together. She really likes to go to her mum and dad's house at the weekend and sometimes they also go to her sister's house which is great because Miss L always get sausages for lunch.

Before covid, Miss L used to go to her day service 5 days a week. She would be picked up and brought home on their bus which she really enjoyed. While at the day centre she would go out on the bus to all sorts of different places like bowling, a disco or a ceilidh, for SOMA classes or music sessions. If she stayed in the centre then she would have fun with everyone else, playing games, singing songs, using the computer. Lots of different things really.

Miss L has not been back to the day service yet. She finds it good to have a member of staff visit her at home and they do go out in the car together, but she feels its not the same as going to her centre and seeing her friends, all doing their activities together. She misses the day service.