

TALKING BOOKS



**Lincolnshire
Talking Books**

Talking Books

The Healthy lifestyle Working group is part of the Lincolnshire Learning Disability Partnership Board. 101 Surgeries where asked to complete a survey about annual health checks for people with learning disabilities. 29 surgeries responded to this and it was from that information the group decided to deliver the talking Books.



What is a talking book?

Talking books is an innovative method designed to promote dialogue, reduce prejudices and encourage understanding. The main characteristics of the project are found in its simplicity and positive approach.

The talking book is a mobile book that can be set up in a space for dialogue and interaction. Visitors to the talking book are given the opportunity to speak to the person on loan in an informal manner.

The purpose of talking books is to breakdown prejudices, challenge stereotypes in a positive and constructive manner. It is easily accessible and can be a very cost effective way to bring about change. It helps to promote tolerance and understanding of other people's lives and what their experience of the world is.

It is a keep it simple approach, "no-nonsense" contribution to social inclusion and acceptance.

This would help your practice to meet the needs of patients with learning disabilities. This would help the surgery to champion disability awareness. A certificate would be sent out to the surgery after they have taken part in the talking books experience.

The background of the Talking Books

The Human library originated in Copenhagen Denmark in 2002. A youth organisation called "stop The Violence" was initiated by five youths after a mutual friend was stabbed. The friend survived and the incident made the five people decide to raise awareness and mobilize youth against violence. Since then the idea has taken off. The first Human Libraries (Talking books) in the United States were held in 2008 by the Bainbridge Public Library in Bainbridge Island Washington.

How it works

The talking book and a nominated person e.g. supporter would attend the surgery on an agreed date and time. Staff would be able to talk to the book at their leisure to ask the book any questions. This is so that staff can get a better understanding of how the book wants to be treated. Staff can communicate better with the book and be more aware of any challenges the book might have in making or attending appointments. This will give Staff a better understanding of what it is like to live with a learning disability.

What the books have to say about their experience

David said “it was a positive experience I am glad I took part in it. The only thing I would have changed was the time I went, if I had gone over a dinner time I would have been able to talk to more people”

Liz said “I really enjoyed the opportunity to talk to people and learn more about their roles. I spoke about easy read information, I think the staff needed to know more about what this is and where to find it.”

James said “it was awesome the way they spoke to me. David was interested in me and what I had to say. He didn’t judge us and showed us around the surgery”.

Surgeries feedback

Parkside Medical Centre

“The session we had with James and Elizabeth was great. I’ve had nothing but positive feedback from the staff”.

“The two books (Elizabeth and James) were delightful”.

“It was a great way of breaking down barriers and I for one will feel much more comfortable with patients with learning difficulties in the in the future”.

“Previously when patients with learning difficulties came into the surgery I use to speak to the carer. Talking to the two human books made me more aware of their capabilities and made me realise how naive I had been”.

“Elizabeth and James were so easy to talk to. Their enthusiasm and openness made it a lot easier than I anticipated”.

“This type of practical training is the best way to learn”.

“Everyone thought the session was excellent. I was really pleased with the way it went and from the comments and discussions afterwards I know the staff enjoyed it”. (David Harding- Practice Manager)

City Medical Practice

“We will try and approach appointments in a more user-friendly way”.

“The way we work and engage with people with Learning Difficulties will change”.

“A big thank you to Liz and James for coming into meets us. We really enjoyed the meeting. Hope to see you again soon”.

David is a member of staff at FocusAbility Care and Support and has a learning disability. Liz and James are members of the Healthy Lifestyle Working group, and part of the Lincolnshire Learning Disability Partnership Board.

Book evaluation

The staff and book are asked to fill in an evaluation sheet and comment on their experience. This helps to get a better understand of new ways of working together and can promote change.

Evaluation of the Talking Books

Please let us know how you found the Talking books. It will help us know if we are doing well or if we need to improve something.

1. What did you find most useful?
2. How can we improve the Talking Books?
3. How else could we support GP surgeries?
4. Any other comments

Consideration

- Doctors to be aware of what is involved in taking part in the Talking Books
- An appropriate time to be arranged when books can speak to as many of the staff as possible
- Staff to look at prompts before hand
- Staff to be willing to take part in the experience
- Staff to have some questions prepared

Thank you for taking time to read the booklet if you have any question please contact Marie O'Sullivan at VoiceAbility;
marie.osullivan@voiceability.org

07769 293729