

Salford CVS Annual Conference – Note Takers Template

Justice for Disabled People: The Role of the VCSE Sector in Salford

Name of workshop	Intersectionality
Facilitator	Jeremy Engineer, Salford CVS
Panel members	Owen Power, Campaigner Hamid Khalid, African Rainbow Family Gemma Roberts, Bolton CVS
Panel speaker notes	<p>Owen Power</p> <p>When you are an intersectional disabled person, you can have many different identities that interact. For example, Owen has three complex identities which all interact in different ways :</p> <p>Living as a D/deaf man in the Jewish world Living as a D/deaf man in the LGBTQ+ world Living as a gay man in the Jewish world Living as a gay man in the D/deaf world Living as a Jew in the LGBTQ+ world</p> <p>Some examples of these interactions - The struggles navigating synagogue services that are largely the spoken word, the struggles navigating loud music and often very dark inaccessible social spaces in 'The Village', the struggles navigating a culture that seems to be obsessed with youth, perfect bodies, alcohol, and money.</p> <p>Hamid Khalid</p> <p>Hamid explained his story of coming to the UK to study, being outed in Pakistan, living alone and vulnerable in the UK and finally seeking support. "People Seeking Asylum are often not told about the support that is available to us, leaving us feeling isolated and scared" "We are treated like criminals (put in detention) just for seeking safety as LGBTIQ people, which causes complex physical and mental health issues as a result of the trauma (e.g. PTSD, depression, anxiety, chronic pain)"</p> <p>Not everyone has the drive or strength to fight for themselves. For so many LGBTIQ+ people seeking asylum, they lose their fight to mental health issues because their sexuality is not considered when they are being housed, relocated or put into detention."</p> <p>Gemma Roberts</p> <p>Barriers faced as a disabled person:</p>

	<p>Assumptions, ableism, micro aggressions, discrimination, ALWAYS having to explain “what’s wrong”, lack of facilities, lack of leadership positions, being an afterthought.</p> <p>Barriers faced as a disabled woman:</p> <p>Misogyny, staring, expectation to share voice, Over-emphasising achievements, imposter syndrome, patronising comments.</p> <p>Intersectionality:</p> <p>The combined barriers can lead to an extremely volatile environment. To truly understand barriers to engagement we need to think smarter. It is not one person's responsibility to ensure equal access; it is everyone's. Need to engage more with your disabled peers, colleagues and family. Don't patronise!</p> <p>Create inclusive consultation spaces at the beginning of projects. Don't leave us as an afterthought! Create and build access budgets into projects from the beginning. You need to anticipate disabled people using your service. Create more leadership positions that are accessible to disabled people.</p>
<p>Q&A</p>	<p>Q</p> <p>When considering disability and LGBTQ+, how difficult is it to have to take on the breadth of issues and campaigns that are involved in each element of the LGBTQ+?</p> <p>A</p> <p>The panel agreed that it is difficult to keep up-to-date knowledge and understanding of the breadth of campaigning of your respective identities.</p> <p>Owen P responded to the question saying that he believed that it is always easier to make a difference from within an organisation or community. Even within the disability campaigning community, there are substantial disagreements.</p> <p>Q</p> <p>What practical actions could our organisations take *today* to improve our accessibility for deaf people?</p> <p>A</p> <p>Owen answered, stating that Deaf Awareness Training, provided by the RNID is a positive start, but also understanding how clients / customers utilise our services and what challenges they face in accessing our services will give everyone a better understanding of how we can improve.</p> <p>It was also mentioned that a significant amount of persons with hearing loss will not admit that they have hearing impairments due to the stigma around it. Organisations need to be proactive in telling staff that people might not openly admit to having a disability.</p>

Practical actions (2-3)

- Review how our organisations contact members, clients, etc to ensure that it is disability accessible. For example, ringing by phone is not disability accessible for deaf persons.
- Have a review of why people don't access our services – if we can find the cause we can often find the solution