

# Could we create a National Centre for Independent Living in Wales?





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# About this report



We researched options for creating a National Centre for Independent Living in Wales.

We wanted to know:

- What a National Centre could do.
- What it would be like – for example, a building or online meetings. Or lots of small centres working together.
- What we would need to do to set it up.







The aim of a National Centre would be to support disabled people to live independent lives.



We don't have a National Centre at the moment.



We don't know what a National Centre would look like, or who should run it.



This report is about what we learned.



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# About Independent Living

Independent Living means:

- Living the life you want.
- Having control of your life.
- Making choices about your home, your work, your school and your community.
- Being treated with respect.
- Having the support you need to be fully included, when you need it.





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# What a National Centre could do

A National Centre could help disabled people by:



- Teaching people about their **right to Independent Living**.



- Helping organisations work with disabled people.

- Sharing tips with organisations who work with disabled people to support Independent Living.



- Supporting other centres and organisations that help people with Independent Living.



- Making it easier to get and use **Direct Payments** and find **Personal Assistants**.



**Direct Payments** is money your local authority gives you instead of a service. They pay you the money, and then you use that money to buy care and support. For example, you might pay for your own personal assistant.



A **Personal Assistant** is someone who is paid to help you with daily tasks. They can support with personal care, cooking, cleaning, and other things.



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## What we did



We set up a research team to look into creating a National Centre.

The research team included disabled people.



It is important to include disabled people in decisions that affect them.

People in the research team had different experiences.



Some people knew a lot about disability rights and research.



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Some people had personal experience of the problems disabled people face.



The research team wrote down ideas for a **National Centre**.



We held an online workshop in October 2024.



At the workshop we talked about the ideas.



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And the research team asked people questions like:



- Should the Centre be a physical place?



- Could it be run online?



- Who should run it?



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## Who came to the online workshop



We asked people with different experiences and knowledge to be part of the workshop.



30 people from 19 different organisations took part.



The research team were careful when talking about their ideas. They did not want to change people's views.



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# What we found out

## Ideas for a National Centre

What people said:



- A National Centre must be run by disabled people.

- Charities and community groups could help with this.



- Organisations working together is a good idea.



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It should be easy for everyone to:

- learn about



- take part in

- and use.



People should be able to use services online or in person.



A National Centre should work across Wales.



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If it was in 1 place, it could be harder for people living further away to be involved.



But there also needs to be places people can go to if they do not want to use online services.



A National Centre should be funded to run its main activities. It should not have to rely on volunteers.



It should have control over its own plans and activities.





It would need to be independent  
– this means not controlled by  
government.



It is important to find out what the  
public want and need. Charities and  
community groups could help us  
find out.



# Independent Living

What people said:



We should agree on a definition of Independent Living.



A definition would help people understand their rights.



A definition would also help us understand how to support disabled people.





Independent Living means good social care.



It also includes being fully involved in the community and having a good life.

It is not just doing things by yourself or living alone.



Disabled people must be involved in making decisions.



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There is a difference between what support **should** be available, and what support **is** available.

**Person-centred** support is important.



**Person-centred** means focusing on what each person wants and needs.



Disabled people should be able to make choices about support.

**Charities and community groups** provide important services. They help promote Independent Living.





Many people do not get information in a way they can understand.



This makes it harder for them to make choices.

Services don't always work together very well.



Different services are available in different parts of Wales. This can affect the support disabled people get.



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# What a National Centre could do

What people said:

People liked the research team's ideas, like:



- Including disabled people in decisions to support Independent Living.



- Collecting and sharing information to help make better policies.
- Educating people to change attitudes about Independent Living.





- Making guidance and training about the best ways to support Independent Living.



- Checking the work done by a National Centre to make sure it does what it says it will.



- A National Centre should be led by disabled people.

Disabled people should have a say and be included at all levels.



Disabled people should be included in all decisions and policies that affect disabled people. A National Centre could help with this.





There should be training and coaching to help disabled people to be part of decision making.

This could be through panels or by giving their views.



Disabled people should be paid fairly when they work on decisions. This way, more voices would be heard.

A National Centre could help make change happen for disabled people.



A National Centre would represent what disabled people need and want.





It could also talk about disabled people's experiences and what life is like for them.

This would help the public understand the right to Independent Living better.



## **Equal Services**

A National Centre could help make sure there were more equal services across Wales.

It could collect information and evidence to help make good decisions.



A National Centre could help support organisations that provide services for disabled people.





It could also help organisations work together better. This can be done through things like training and sharing best ways of working.



Funding for charities and community groups is important. Many need volunteers to do the work they do.



A National Centre could provide training where there are gaps in services.



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## More information



This is an easy read version of a Welsh Government report.

You can read the original version here: [www.gov.wales/research-potential-establishing-national-centre-independent-living-wales](http://www.gov.wales/research-potential-establishing-national-centre-independent-living-wales)

For more information about this work, you can:



Email us:  
[EqualityEvidenceUnit@gov.wales](mailto:EqualityEvidenceUnit@gov.wales)

Easy Read Wales wrote this Easy Read text. To tell us what you think about this easy read version, click here.



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# Hard words

## Direct Payments

Direct payments is money your local authority gives you instead of a service. They pay you the money, and you use that money to buy care and support. For example, you might pay for your own personal assistant.

## Personal Assistant

A personal assistant is someone who is paid to help you with daily tasks. They can support with personal care, cooking, cleaning and other things.

## Person-centred

Person-centred means focusing on what each person wants and needs.