



Making choices



The way that support is provided for disabled people is evolving rapidly, writes Michele Scattergood.

I'm immensely proud of the work we do at Breakthrough UK, tackling the barriers to independent living that disabled people face across England's North West.

We work with local authorities and other service providers to enable disabled people to achieve their full potential by making their own choices and accessing mainstream jobs.

And thanks to a groundbreaking new government trial scheme called 'Right to control', we are about to take our work to the next level.

The Office for Disability Issues (ODI) has established the initiative with the acknowledgement that disabled people are the experts in their own lives and are best placed to decide what support they require to live independently.

We were delighted to be asked to coordinate this scheme in Greater Manchester, one of eight parts of the country where it is being trialed.

We are now working in partnership with Manchester city, Oldham, Bury, Stockport and Trafford councils - along with other organisations like Jobcentre Plus - to help ensure the outcomes that our clients want.

The new right gives disabled people more control over the social care, housing-related support and the employment assistance and funding they need.

They can choose the support that is offered, ask for it to be delivered in another way from another provider, or have the money paid direct to them and arrange their own support - or a combination of any of these.

Alternatively, if people are happy with the services they currently receive, they won't have to change anything.

If the 'Right to control' scheme proves successful it could be rolled out nationwide by the government.

We want to help disabled people live their lives their own way - and what better way to achieve this than by successfully working in partnership.

Note - Michele Scattergood (pictured) is deputy chief executive of Breakthrough UK, see www.breakthrough-uk.co.uk

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