



Getting Curious About Language of Social Care

Why words matter

The words we use in social care are important.

They affect how people feel and how they are treated.



Sometimes social care language sounds cold, confusing, or very "official".



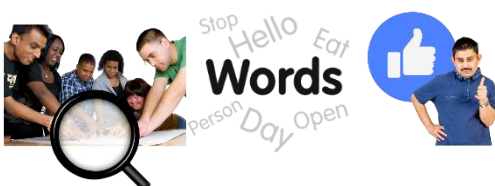
This can make people feel judged or uncomfortable.

Our Workshops

Newcastle City Council (with Inclusion North's help) wanted to hear what people thought about the language we use in social care.

Over 3 workshops we talked about:

- The words we use
- What words we liked





- What words we didn't like



- How we can make the words used in social care better

Words to think about

Some words can make people feel uncomfortable or upset

These include:

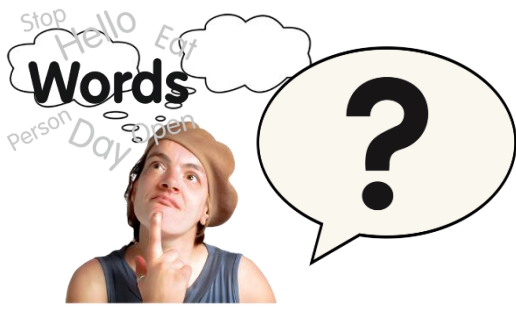
- Labels that describe people by one thing
- 'Us and them' words like "service user" or "case"
- Blaming words like "challenging"
- **Acronyms** (shortening words to letters like "LD" for learning disability)

These words can:

- Make people feel sad and confused
- Create power differences between people
- Be hard to understand

Acronyms are often especially confusing and can feel disrespectful.





This is about curiosity, not blame

We are not saying people are 'wrong'.
We are asking everyone to pause and think about the words they use.

You could ask yourself:

- Would I use this word with family or friends?
- Does this word label someone?
- Does it sound kind?
- Does it really explain what I mean?



Language shapes culture

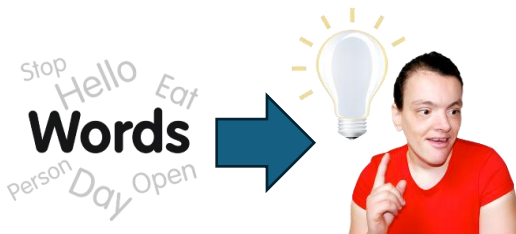
The words we use shape how we think and act.

If language focuses on problems:

- People may be seen as problems

If language is kind and clear:

- People are seen as individuals
- Better relationships grow





How to question the language of social care

Start with yourself:

1. Notice your own words
2. Talk kindly with your team
3. Share good examples
4. Challenge language respectfully, one-to-one



Our aim

We want language in social care to:

- Be clear, kind, and human
- Reflect real lives
- Cause less harm
- Create hope and possibility



Being curious about words helps make social care better for everyone.