

# MAKING FAMILIES COUNT

**Kauser Ahmed & Nasreen Ali**

## Making Families Count

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## Whose Life Is It Anyway?

- Being aware of professionals' power, politics and social control
- Inequality /unfairness of power between carers and professionals
- Disempowerment through use of jargon, 'gatekeepers' to information, resources and funds
- Fear of backlash/ reaction against LD individual if confront or challenge professional

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## 'I'm Afraid It Is More Complicated Than That Mrs Khan'

- Whose speaking whose language?
- 'They look after their own, don't they?'
- Professionals loyalty to their own organisation
- Limited choices on offer
- An inferior /lesser service on offer

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## Standing up for Another

- Fear that as carer will be removed from any decision making role
- Not having the language, confidence or know how to challenge
- Coping with stress at home and with professionals may be too difficult
- Low self esteem made worse by encounters with officialdom

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## Promises! Promises!

- Eligibility criteria: critical, substantial, moderate and low
- Carers (equal opportunities) act 2004
  - Work, life-long learning and leisure are considered when a carer is assessed
- Home care services (or lack of)
- Short term respite: few hours / days ?

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## Good Experiences

- Good key workers: social workers or advocates
- True partnership with professionals – (being listened to)
- Good information and appropriate referral

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## What Is to Be Done?

- ***'Say what you mean and do what you say'***
- Expectations: be honest in what is on offer
- GET INVOLVED be part of a bigger group
- Demand better representation

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