

Conference abstract

Autonomy, belonging and interdependency

Luk Zelderloo, Secretary General, EASPD, Brussels, Belgium

Correspondence to: Luk Zelderloo, E-mail: luk.zelderloo@easpd.eu

Abstract

Introduction: The most remarkable development the disability sector went through over the last 10–15 years is the shift in paradigm. The shift from a medical model, a defect model, towards a social model of disability is made. The approach, today, is based on human rights. Full inclusion in society is the overarching objective.

Description: For ageing people and their services a similar but less visible shift in thinking took place. Ageing people indeed should be empowered to stay active and included citizens, be it senior citizens with very specific needs and concerns. Concepts such as ‘empowerment’, ‘choice’, ‘individualization’, ‘tailor-made support’, ‘support for the changing needs’ are equally important for both people with a disability and ageing people/senior citizens. Another somewhat older concept is ‘belonging’. All human beings seem to have a clear need with regard to being part of something, being part of a group, a social structure, a family. Challenging is how to combine and balance these two sets of concepts; on the one hand ‘autonomy’, ‘choice’, ‘self-determination’ and on the other hand: the need for ‘belonging’, being member of a social entity. Our today’s society and culture (over) promotes individualization, individual freedom and independency. The reality is interdependency. The presentation will introduce ‘inclusive interdependency’ as a bridging concept.

Keywords

autonomy, inclusion, interdependency

Presentation slides available from:

http://www.bridgingknowledge.net/Presentations/Symp1_Zelderloo.pdf