



## The Disability Forum for Suffolk

### News release from the Suffolk Disability & Health Action Group

#### **A passport to smoother and easier care**

People living with a disability or long-term health condition are being encouraged to sign up to 'About Me' – a health passport that can be used to share information with health and care professionals involved in their care.

'About Me' is an easy to use document which is completed and owned by the person receiving care. It can be shared as and when they wish to help those involved with their care better understand their needs and to prevent having to tell them about themselves over and over again.

'About Me' can be accessed at:

<http://midsuffolkaxis.onesuffolk.net/news/about-me>

The 'About Me' initiative has been co-produced with disabled people, their family carers and representatives of disability and NHS organisations in Suffolk. The need for its development was identified at the annual disability focus events held to provide opportunities for disabled people to make their needs known to statutory organisations.

Linda Hoggarth, Chair of the Suffolk Disability & Health Action Group, said "Health passports for people with learning disabilities have been available for some time. People with other disabilities wanted to have the same opportunity to provide information about themselves in a simple format. They get very tired of having to tell 'their story' over and over again when in

hospital or when they access other health services. We are very pleased to have successfully developed 'About Me' for use by any disabled person.

"It is important that health professionals read and take note of 'About Me' to help them provide a better understanding of the needs of their disabled patients."

The Suffolk Disability & Health Action Group has been instrumental in developing 'About Me'. The initiative has been supported by all NHS organisations in Suffolk including the NHS Ipswich & East Suffolk, NHS West Suffolk NHS Gt Yarmouth & Waveney clinical commissioning groups and Ipswich and West Suffolk hospitals.

## **Ends**

### **Suffolk Disability & Health Action Group**

The Suffolk Disability & Health Action Group has been established since 1996 and is set up to promote the good health of disabled people and to improve outcomes by ensuring services that affect the health, well-being, and independence of disabled people are fully accessible to them. It is supported financially by the Ipswich & East Suffolk and West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups. Membership includes Patient Leads from the Ipswich & East Suffolk, West Suffolk and Gt Yarmouth & Waveney Clinical Commissioning Groups, the Ipswich & West Suffolk Hospitals, Suffolk Community Healthcare, individual disabled people and their family carers and representatives from disability organisations. It is part of the network of the Disability Forum for Suffolk.

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