



Investing in Resilience and Inclusion

Briefing 2

Briefing 2:

A whole life, whole family approach to integration (Mohammed's story)

This briefing is the second of four we will publish in the coming months.

Briefing 1:

Explaining person centred integration

Briefing 2:

A whole life, whole family approach to integration (Mohammed's story)

Briefing 3:

Delivering a person centred approach to integration

Briefing 4:

A simple guide to person centred integration

In our first paper we have set out the key elements of what we see as being a 'person centred approach to integration', in this briefing we focus on Mohammed Aaqil, his family and what person centred integration would mean for him and his family members.

Any system redesign has to be centred on what it would mean for the individual and those closest to him or her, there needs to be a fundamental change in our current approach to how services view their relationships with people who approach them needing support.

Services need to reclaim their role as 'servers' i.e. as those who work to support people to live a life that works for them, as opposed to what too many people frequently report of being made to 'fit into services' that do not provide them with the support that they need or want.

Underpinning this we (that is people and services, working together) need to understand that a much wider and inclusive view is required of both what 'support is' and what we mean by 'whole life'. The ever decreasing resources available to services together with the ever increasing demand clearly means that we cannot continue to manage our approach by simply restricting eligibility or bulk buying services which people don't value.

Our approach, set out in Briefing 1 provides the foundation for a more personalised and efficient offer of funding and support; this paper shows how it might work for one family.

Introducing Mohammed and his family¹

Mohammed Aaqil is a Moslem man of Pakistani origin in his late 40s, born and bred in the city of Wolverhampton. He is the father of three teenage daughters, one of whom, Zahera has a rare neurological condition which affects her speech, her eating and drinking and her mobility.

Mohammed used to be a boilermaker in a medium-sized local company, but eight years ago he was laid off and is now a taxi driver; he attends Friday prayers and is well connected to his faith community.

He is also a member of his local Labour party. He supports Wolverhampton Wanderers and gets to most home games, sometimes taking Zahera, who loves the atmosphere and regards herself as a fan. He has a wife, Madiha who worked in Tesco for many years and although she still does a few shifts each week she now mainly spends her days at home caring for Zahera. Mohammed also has an elderly mother, Mrs Aaqil in the next street and who is increasingly frail. Zahera and Mrs Aaqil Snr have a very special relationship. Money is short and Mohammed worries about the future.

One of his main worries is about what will happen to Zahera when she can no longer live at home. Currently Zahera attends the local special school, where she receives one-to-one support in the classroom. The family has lots of people around them, friends and members of the extended family, some of whom help a great deal; possibly could help more and in different ways, but the family feel stuck and unsure how to approach or guide people. There is no doubt that they need a steer. They particularly need to think about how mum will be cared for and what the options are for Zahera.

So the family needs help in making some decisions, in coming to terms with their future, both jointly as a unit and individually as they move to new phases. It is critical that these decisions take full account of their culture, their relationships with extended family and friends and their participation in the wider community.

They also need to weave in the help of professionals, doctors and nurses who can help manage Zahera's symptoms, speech and language therapists for her communication needs and perhaps the wheelchair service or podiatrists who can help with her mobility. They need to take account of Mrs Aaqil's increasing frailty, and what she can and cannot expect from her extended family, so perhaps professionals in older people's services and agency workers will be involved too.

These professionals are part of the picture and to be effective they need to work together, whether they are employed by the NHS, the local authority or by neither. They also need to work with the community and with the family's 'real wealth.'

¹ This story is a compilation of many experiences shared with In Control over the years. Elements will be familiar to many. Instead of Wolverhampton we could have inserted Westminster, Weymouth or Wigan.

Mohammed and his family

Continued

The challenge, if we start from the position of 'person centred integration' is to see the family as a whole, to acknowledge and respect the interdependence of the family members, the different support needs they may have and to build a plan of support that values their life as a unit, that enables Zahera to begin exploring a more independent future, that values the importance of family elders and that builds on Mrs Aaqil (snr)'s relationship with her granddaughter, enables Mohammed and Madiha to continue providing for their family and supports them to maintain their part within their local community.

Support and opportunity based on wealth

Revisiting our graphic about wealth we can think about what such an approach may mean for the support offered to Mohammed, Zahera, Madiha and Mrs Aaqil (snr).

Thinking about Mohammed, Zahera and Madiha; they have a home, skills and knowledge, an income, extended family and friends, work colleagues, their faith is incredibly important to them, as is local politics and for Mohammed and Zahera Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club.

Their identity shapes their real wealth and it also shapes their participation in their local communities; communities of faith, shared passions, local politics and geography.

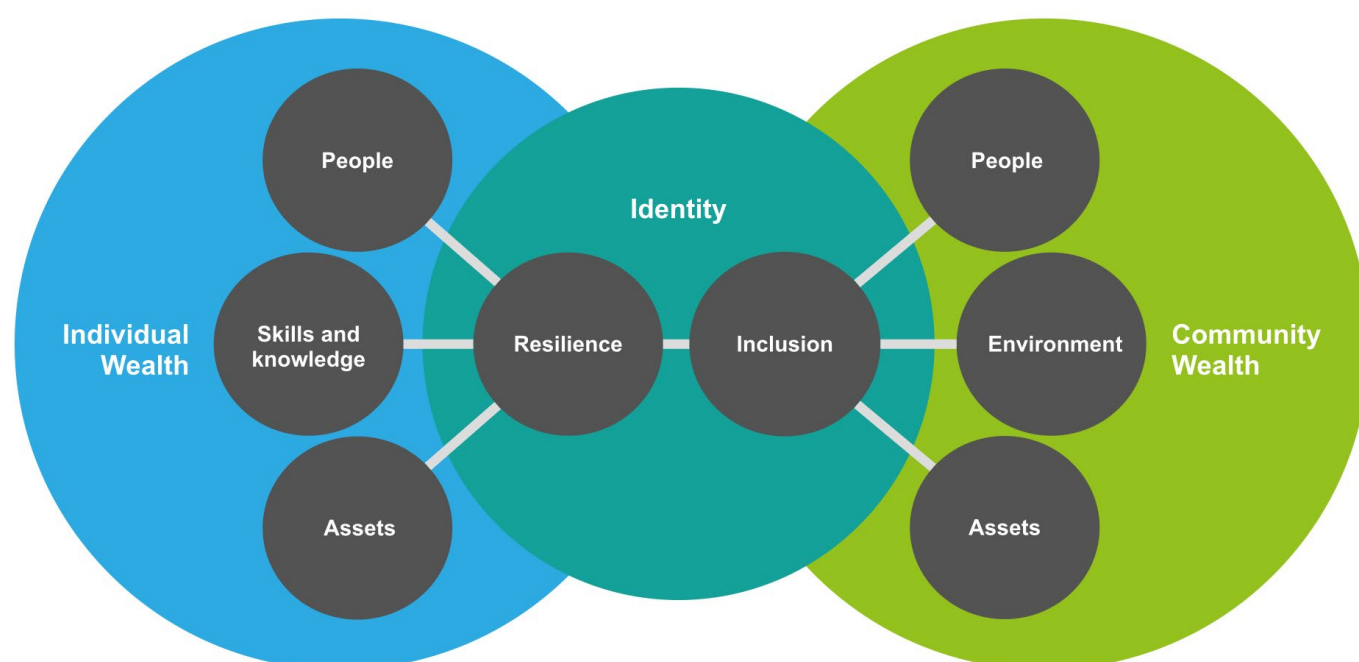


Figure 1: The real wealth of the nation

Support and opportunity based on wealth

Continued

We can see here a number of key 'strengths' or elements of real family wealth and community wealth on which support can be built:

For example:

- How accessible is the family home? Can all of Zahera's support needs be met easily and by family members? And similarly, is Mrs Aaqil's home accessible and easy for her to get around independently?
- How can both Mohammed and Madiha be supported to maintain/ resume their employment, to continue paying taxes and making a contribution whilst also maintaining relationships with work colleagues and benefitting from employment in terms of improved mental and emotional well being?
- How can the families' links with the local community be fostered, seen as a source of strength and their participation encouraged, welcomed and valued?
- Thinking about how the relationship between Mrs Aaqil (snr) and Zahera can be supported, cherished and valued and also exploring Mrs Aaqil's wider network of peers and people of her generation.
- How can relationships important to all family members be built upon and encouraged? Who are the important people to Mrs Aaqil from her generation?
- How support can be linked between home and school for Zahera?
- How can the family be supported to find solutions to all of their challenges that draw upon the particular strengths of their faith community?

Person centred integration offers the potential to invest in an individual's real wealth and it also offers the possibility of exploring ways in which community wealth can grow; in both areas the concept of 'investment' is becoming prominent, so the question of how we spend public money and how we register the 'returns' or the 'benefits' comes very much into view, as it affects both individuals and communities. Clearly recent thinking around Social Return on Investment is highly relevant here.

Support and opportunity based on wealth

Continued

When thinking about Mohammed, Zahera, Madiha and Mrs Aaqil (snr) such investment in community wealth could include:

- Creating and improving the accessibility of local transport, the environment and accessible facilities such as 'changing places'
- Wolverhampton Wanderers becoming more accessible and welcoming of disabled people and their family members
- How the local mosque can be supported to welcome the whole family should they all wish to participate in worship and community events
- Thinking about the support from services to the family and what training and support may enable the whole and extended family to feel more confident about supporting both Mrs Aaqil (snr) and Zahera.

These are just examples of what such an approach may mean, some or all of these different examples may well be common place already in parts of the country.

For In Control it's about seeing these diverse and disparate approaches coming together under a single local strategic approach which centres support on the family, the individual and those most important to them, in short, in finding new and imaginative ways to invest in real and community wealth so that families like the Aaqils reap the rewards.

This then calls for a step-change in our methodology for writing strategy, setting budgets and measuring impact with communities and across agencies.

We have now to invest in people's own wealth and that of local communities. Richer, more inclusive communities will help with issues of isolation and loneliness, both the isolation and dependence Zahera and Mrs Aaqil feel, as well as the isolation and worry experienced by Mohammed and Madiha as carers. Less isolation contributes to a more resilient family better able to support each other and make a contribution to their wider community.

Real personal wealth and community wealth are closely linked, by placing them at the centre of a transformed Public Offer we will deliver a person centred approach to integration.





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