



## Everyday Impact Award – New Enterprises

### Name of organisation or individual nominated

The Twisting Ducks Theatre Company

#### 1. What were you trying to change? (maximum 200 words)

Help us understand the vision, aims and objectives

The Twisting Ducks Theatre Company are a group of 8 artists with learning disabilities who use theatre to campaign for change, to raise awareness about the barriers people with learning disabilities face, to involve more people with learning disabilities directly in the arts, and to create a stronger voice for the learning disabled community in Newcastle and beyond. One of the major aims we wanted to achieve this year was to raise awareness about the health inequalities that people with learning disabilities face across the country, to try and improve the quality of service they receive, and to help other adults with learning disabilities have a better understanding of their health rights, and to feel more comfortable talking about their own health and wellbeing.

#### 2. What did you do to make change happen? (maximum 200 words)

Tell us about what actions you took, who you worked with, what resources you had to use etc.

To achieve the above aims, we devised 2 accessible multi-media performances called 'What's Up Doc' and 'Person First', based upon the Ducks own experiences of accessing health services, and the experiences of other people in the learning disabled community who we consulted with. We worked with other local artists to create music and to direct films for the two pieces. 'Person First' explores equality and diversity in a hospital setting, highlighting the discrimination that the various characters face, and 'What's Up Doc' explores issues such as mental health, disclosure and confidentiality, and lack of accessible health information. Working closely with the Newcastle Learning Disability Partnership Board and the Newcastle, Northumberland, and South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trusts, as well as local Universities, we rolled our performances out as part of a training package to train health professionals and health and social care students, and to provide accessible information about health rights for adults with learning disabilities.

#### 3. What were your tangible results? (maximum 200 words)

Outline what happened as a result of the work and the impact it had

Through our performance based training packages, we have trained over 3000 health professionals, and health and social care students. Our awareness raising performances on health, toured at events across

the Northeast, and showcased at our own theatre nights, have reached over 2000 people with learning disabilities in the Northeast and beyond. We have had extremely positive feedback from professionals and people with learning disabilities. Evaluation sheets from training events indicate an increased understanding and awareness of the health and communication needs of adults with learning disabilities. Evaluations and press reviews can be found on our website: <http://www.thetwistingducks.co.uk>. The positive impact of our work has been enormous, and we continue to receive commissions of our disability awareness training. Our short films on health and wellbeing are freely available to view on our website, which increases the opportunity for thousands of people with learning disabilities to explore the issues we have raised, and to feel less isolated with the problems they face.

#### **Additional Nomination comments from others**

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