Urgell Ferran * Developing Independent Living Services for newly identified Adults with Acquired Deafblindness and long-term Communication Deprivation

Communicative abilitation of long-term sensory-deprived persons

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In 2014 a residential project was set up for deafblind adults with complex needs as a joint project between APSOCECAT, a charity, and IMD - Barcelona Council (Disability Institute of Barcelona), with independent living being the primary focus.

One client, deaf from birth and blind for the last 10 years, has never undergone any program aimed at his development (any field of interaction, communication skills). This case involves immigration, poverty, social exclusion and lack of family support. Specific medical issues caused by Behçet syndrome need addressing. Long-term inadequate interaction and communication have proven to be devastating. This initiative would provide an opportunity for development, including ability, social, cognitive and communication skills.

This program is based on the construction of both a high and low level communication system (sign language, communication book) and community support (people of reference).

This person lives in a low-level sensory adapted apartment with support regarding cleanliness, hygiene and nutrition. He attends the APSOCECAT Day Centre where a specific program for deafblind people is being developed (including medical issues, schedule, travel, etc.).

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