

Jeremy Hunt MP
Minister for Health and Social Care

....

8th May 2018

Dear Mr Hunt,

Re. Learning Disabilities Mortality Review

We are writing on behalf of 750 members of Learning Disability England who are made up of people with learning disabilities, families, housing and care providers and health and social care commissioners.

We want to strongly express our concern and dismay about the findings of this review and the manner in which the review report has been issued.

The fact that 28% of people with learning disabilities will die before they turn 50 in comparison to 5% of the general population is a shocking and shameful statistic. The LeDeR review exposed the fact that 13% (1 in 8) of the deaths of people that were reviewed had experienced delays in care or treatment, gaps in services and/or abuse and neglect. The fact that the life expectancy of a person with learning disabilities dies appears to have decreased in the last 10 years whilst the life expectancy of the rest of the population has increased is a terrible indictment of how the health and social care system treats people with learning disabilities.

To add to these scandalous findings, the report was issued without a press release or comment from the government or NHS England. In contrast, the news of missed cancer screenings was dealt with promptly. We have been contacted already by many families of people with learning disabilities who are extremely worried about these findings and angry that the government seems not to be concerned about the lives or deaths of people with learning disabilities.

The lives of people with learning disabilities matter to us. We live in a prosperous country where there is no place for such institutional discrimination. We pride ourselves on being an inclusive and progressive society yet we seemingly allow those who can least speak up suffer such inequality. This gross inequality that people with learning disabilities experience needs tackling urgently.

We request a meeting with you to discuss how the government and NHS England will respond to the LeDeR report. The learning from the report echoes that of previous reports of deaths of people with learning disabilities and it is clear that learning is not taken forward.

We believe that a properly resourced National Learning Disability Mortality Review Board is required and that the government and NHS England detail how they propose to reduce premature deaths in people with learning disabilities.

Yours sincerely,



Karyn Kirkpatrick
Chair
Learning Disability England