

**Health and Social Care Select Committee:
Written Submission**



In it will be 10 years in June, since Winterbourne View closed after a TV programme showed the terrible abuse of people with learning disabilities.



Learning Disability England represents self-advocates, families and allies of people with Learning Disabilities.



We are all disappointed and concerned that the pledges, the promises, made by the Government after Winterbourne View have not all happened.



2000 people, including children, are still held in institutions, even though the Government promised to stop people being there who do not have to be.



Some of the reasons we think change has not happened

We are concerned that people are in institutions because of their learning disabilities, or because of they are an autistic person, when they should get better suited, less restrictive, support in their community.



We believe there is a lack of understanding in many parts of the support system of why some people behave or communicate how they do.



Because of that cruel chemical or physical restraint has carried on being used.

We are concerned that people being kept under these restrictive conditions is an abuse of people's human rights.

We are concerned that some care organisations may have an interest in things staying as they are and that worries about risks mean some professionals in reviews will keep people in bad situations.

Commissioners of community support always seem short of cash to help people with real choices outside institutions.



We know there is the Transforming Care programme and Baroness Hollins' review, but we are worried any change is still taking far too long.



Since coronavirus started families and friends have been limited or stopped from visiting loved ones.



Closed cultures have had limited or inspections from CQC or others too, so this is now worse than before and more urgent than ever.



Whorlton Hall (and others) have happened because the promises made after Winterbourne View have not happened. This must not be allowed to continue.



Appendix – Feedback from Experts by Experience

We asked our members who support Care and Treatment Reviews for their feedback to the committee's inquiry and focus on why change has not happened.

We share them in full here

Whole system failure:

- Difficult to obtain assessment & diagnosis
- Near to impossible to get appropriate support (Health, Education and Social Care)
- System only responds to crises. No preventative support available (even though much cheaper to intervene early).
- Lack of training and understanding across all agencies. Persistence of old thinking and attitudes.
- No internal force for change.
- Minimal external force for change (compare number of ASD activists/evangelists/campaigners with number of professionals and other staff in institutions that need to change. Look at whose voices are paid most attention to.)

Concern that this is happening too frequently and that, once individuals with learning disabilities have been sectioned, the review process is cumbersome and unnecessarily lengthy.

Many institutions are the wrong place for people who have been sectioned. Once admitted, their problems are often increased significantly.

Environmental issues:

- Lightning, décor, etc. of institutions
- The close (often enforced) proximity of other people in crisis
- Emphasis on institutional regimes rather than personalised support
- Alarms, food and dining environment and other environmental issues

Therapeutically

- When the only tool that you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail (equally true for psychiatry and psychology)

The buck stops with the RC - making them conservative in their approach

Local services feel no pain (and indeed may benefit in various ways) if discharge is delayed.

Aim to investigate why legal/policy change has not yet occurred.

No-one is losing their jobs (or facing other sanctions) because of it staying the same.

The only people who benefit from a significant change will be the patients.

Autism and LD are still seen as mental disorders, and as intensive support services for people with ASD and LD are still so under-developed or scarce, there are few alternative treatments to restraint and sectioning. It needs families and dedicated professionals to invest

more time in co-designing environments and programmes of intensive support.