

As new allegations of abuse come to light, charities call for tough action

Mencap and The Challenging Behaviour Foundation call for those responsible to be held to account

Dan Scorer, Head of Policy at Mencap and Vivien Cooper OBE, Chief Executive of The Challenging Behaviour Foundation, say:

“We are appalled by the shocking allegations of abuse of people with a learning disability exposed at Veilstone Care Home in Devon. Many people believed that the scandal at Winterbourne View was a one-off, but there are strong indications that the abuse of vulnerable people is more widespread.

“It is of profound concern to us that the allegations of abuse include a resident who had already faced abuse at another institution. This represents a shocking failure to protect the most vulnerable people in our society.

Questions need to be answered about how a person could be abused in one service and then moved to another, where serious concerns have emerged – and the role of the care home, commissioner and CQC in this. Everything must be done to prevent abuse and when it is suspected, immediate action must be taken.

“Together we are calling on the Government to deliver on their commitment to strengthen corporate accountability and ensure Directors in charge of care homes and hospitals where vulnerable people face abuse and neglect are held personally and criminally responsible for these horrific failures. This would send a clear message that abuse and neglect will not be tolerated in our society and all those involved – from front line staff to the board room – will be held to account.”

-ENDS-

For further information or to arrange interviews, please contact **Lisa Gilbert, PR Officer at Mencap, on 020 7696 6950 or Lisa.Gilbert@mencap.org.uk**

About Mencap

There are 1.4 million people with a learning disability in the UK. Mencap works to support people with a learning disability, their families and carers by fighting to change laws, improve services and access to education, employment and leisure facilities. Mencap supports thousands of people with a learning disability to live their lives the way they want.

www.mencap.org.uk

For advice and information about learning disability and Mencap services in your area, contact Mencap Direct on 0808 808 1111 (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday) or email help@mencap.org.uk

About The Challenging Behaviour Foundation

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation provides information, support and training around challenging behaviour associated with severe learning disabilities, and

leads the 'Challenging Behaviour National Strategy Group' which seeks to influence policy and practice nationally on behalf of individuals who challenge and their families.

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation was founded in 1997 by Vivien Cooper, parent of a son with severe learning disabilities and behaviour described as challenging. Today the Challenging Behaviour Foundation is in regular contact with over 5000 families and professionals across the UK. There are an estimated 30,000 individuals in England with severe learning disabilities and behaviour described as challenging.

For more information visit www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk