

For release 30th June 2014

Norman Lamb Visits Assessment and Treatment Centre

The Minister for Care and Support Norman Lamb has visited an Assessment and Treatment Unit to meet 17 year old Fauzia, a teenager with learning disabilities who has spent over 20 months in the service.

The service Fauzia is living in has been judged by the Care Quality Commission as not meeting essential standards of quality and safety. Fauzia has been repeatedly restrained and heavily medicated. Fauzia's Aunt, Dr Shahana Hussain, says "These experiences have not only been intensely traumatic for Fauzia but on admission to this unit resulted in a catastrophic deterioration in her mental state. I hope that today's meeting will not only highlight the urgent need to develop more evidence and community based, appropriate local services so that in the future Fauzia can live near her family again but also the need to ensure action is taken nationally to support the other 3249** people in similar situations."

The service is intended as a high intensity short term in-patient service, but Fauzia has been there for over 20 months and has only recently been given a plan to move out.

Three years ago appalled by the abuse uncovered at Winterbourne View, a private hospital in Bristol, the Government and a range of organisations providing and managing services for people with learning disabilities made a commitment to move people out of inpatient units and back in their local communities by the 1st June 2014.

Norman Lamb commented:

"People with learning disabilities have the right to lead their lives like anyone else, to have the same opportunities, the same rights and the same aspirations. It is absolutely unacceptable for people to be left in institutions if they are able, with the right support in place, to live in their own community. NHS England has put in place changes to address the lack of progress. The pace must be stepped up. We will receive data regularly on progress which will tell us if the re-focused programme and renewed efforts are working."

Vivien Cooper, CEO, of the Challenging Behaviour Foundation and Jan Tregelles, CEO of Mencap, commented:

"It is appalling that Fauzia and her family have been failed over the last 18 months. Promises made three years ago have been broken leaving vulnerable people like Fauzia stuck in institutions a long way from their families.

We welcome that the Minister has taken the time to see first-hand what life is like in an assessment and treatment unit. We are pleased to have been able to support this visit and the insight it will provide. We hope that this will be an opportunity to move things forward for Fauzia and for the 3,250 people currently in in-patient units like this one.

It is unacceptable that three years on from the abuse at Winterbourne View people remain far from their home and families, heavily medicated, restrained and with little

or no plans for a move home. We must act now to support the development of good local support and protect the most vulnerable members of our society from this shameful treatment.

We look forward to working in partnership with others to make the changes required to ensure Fauzia and others in similar situations get the right support in the right place in the right time.”

ENDS

For more information, please contact Catryn Ladd on 01634 838739 or Catryn.ladd@theCBF.org.uk

Notes to editors

* Out of the 2,615 people in units which NHS England have identified, 2358 do not have a discharge date (note NHS England are still not managing to account for the full 3,250 identified in the Learning Disability Census, 635 people remain unaccounted for)

** Learning Disability Census 2013

About Out of sight

Out of Sight is a campaign report by Mencap and the Challenging Behaviour Foundation and tells the stories of James, Chrissy, Joe, Emmanuel and Victoria. In the report, their families talk about the terrible neglect and abuse their loved ones have experienced in institutions like Winterbourne View, often far away from home.

Mencap and The Challenging Behaviour Foundation are two of the voluntary organisations who were asked to sign a Concordat agreement with the Department of Health, to hold the government to account.

The charities will continue to work to ensure people with learning disabilities and their families have a strong voice in all of the Winterbourne View Joint Improvement Programme work, as well as providing support to families fighting to bring their loved ones back closer to home.

www.mencap.org.uk/campaigns/take-action/out-sight

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 (CBF)

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation is a charity providing information, support and workshops around challenging behaviour associated with severe learning disabilities to families and professionals. The CBF leads the 'Challenging Behaviour National Strategy Group' which seeks to influence policy and practice nationally and has developed the Challenging Behaviour Charter.

The Challenging Behaviour Foundation was founded in 1997 by Vivien Cooper, parent of a son with severe learning disabilities who displays 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.

Contact 01634 838739 or email: info@theCBF.org.uk

www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk