

**Failure to meet deadline: Government breaks promise to people with learning disabilities in units like Winterbourne View .**

**Mencap and The Challenging Behaviour Foundation publish new report: *Winterbourne View: The Scandal Continues***

Today, 1 June 2014, the deadline passed for the Government's commitment to ensure that people with a learning disability are supported to return to their communities from units like Winterbourne View and get the right support and services in their local areas. A shocking 3,250 people with a learning disability still remain in assessment and treatment units in England.

In a letter published today in The Sunday Telegraph, families of the victims abused at Winterbourne View assessment and treatment unit, families of people stuck in similar places, and leading charities expressed their concern at the appalling failure of the Government, the NHS and Local Authorities to meet their self-set deadline.

Mencap and The Challenging Behaviour Foundation have also released a report today, *Winterbourne View: The Scandal Continues*, which highlights the shocking situation:

- 3,250 people with a learning disability still remain in assessment and treatment units in England
- More people with a learning disability are going into units than are leaving them. NHS England research shows that over the last 6 months:
  - 544 people were admitted to units<sup>1</sup>,
  - 339 people came out of units<sup>1</sup>, and
  - 90% of the thousands of people in units have no date set when they will leave<sup>1</sup>.
- Units for people with a learning disability were identified in the Winterbourne Serious Case Review as places where people are at "risk of receiving abusive and restrictive practices". The Learning Disability Census 2013 revealed that of the 3, 250 people with a learning disability in units:
  - 64% had been given anti-psychotic medication on a regular basis,
  - 57% had experienced self-harm, an accident, physical assault, hands-on restraint or been kept in seclusion, and
  - 60% have been in a unit for one year or more. One in six has been in a unit for five years or more.
- It costs an average of £4,500 per week for someone to be in a unit<sup>2</sup>. It is entirely possible to develop the right support and services for most individuals within their local community. In many cases it will cost the same or even less.

**Jan Tregelles, Chief Executive of Mencap, and Vivien Cooper, Chief Executive of The Challenging Behaviour Foundation, commented:**

"It is three years since the nation was shocked and sickened to witness the systematic abuse of people with a learning disability at Winterbourne View. The Panorama programme was a watershed moment – there was a clear commitment to ensure that people with a learning disability were able to get the right support and services in their local community as swiftly as possible so they can move away from these oppressive units.

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<sup>1</sup> 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 )

<sup>2</sup> Learning Disability Census 2013

“Today we have seen the appalling failure of the Government, the NHS and Local Authorities to meet their own deadline for moving people with a learning disability out of places like Winterbourne View. Worse still, we know more people are being admitted to these units than are being transferred out. Local areas have just not developed the right support and services. This means they remain in these places where we know they are frequently overmedicated, restrained and are at significant risk of abuse.

“It is entirely possible to develop the right support and services around most individuals within their local community. In many cases this will cost the same or even less. What is needed now is the will and determination to make the changes required - it cannot be beyond government and the NHS to achieve this. The Prime Minister must take personal responsibility and address this failure of national Government, local Government and the NHS.”

**Steve Sollars, father of Sam, who was at Winterbourne View:**

The Government’s failure is unacceptable. My son, Sam, who was at Winterbourne View, was restrained 45 times in a six month period. We will never know how much more he was subjected for the rest of his two year time there. When he came out of Winterbourne View Sam was unrecognisable because of what he had been through. He is now flourishing in the place where he is. Good care is possible and everything must be done to stop abuse and suffering of people who find themselves in similar places to Sam. I am going to keep fighting – along with all the other families whose sons and daughters have been in Winterbourne View or places like it – for every person with a learning disability stuck in a unit to get the support they need close to home..”

**-ENDS-**

For more information, please contact Jonathan Caleb-Landy, PR Lead at Mencap, on 07770 656 659 or [media@mencap.org.uk](mailto:media@mencap.org.uk)

**Notes to editors**

**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](http://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](http://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](mailto: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.. See [www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk](http://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk)

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](mailto:info@thecbf.org.uk)

[www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk](http://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk)