

## **Real and immediate action needed -- Mencap and The Challenging Behaviour Foundation response to the Learning Disability Census report**

Mencap and The Challenging Behaviour Foundation comment on the Learning Disability Census report, which was published today (29 April 2014). It was commissioned in the wake of physical and psychological abuse suffered by people with a learning disability at Winterbourne View Hospital, exposed by a Panorama investigation broadcast in 2011.

In particular it has been revealed that: out of 3,250 people with a learning disability in units:

- 64% (2,064) had been given anti-psychotic medication on a regular basis leading up to Census day.
- 56% (1,841) had experienced self harm, an accident, physical assault, hands-on restraint or been kept in isolation during the 3 months preceding the census
- 86% (2,795) costing up to £4, 500 per week
- 71% (2,2 97) don't have a plan in place to move them out

Recent NHS data shows that over the 3 month period between September and December 2013: 247 patients with a learning disability were admitted to in-patient care and 124 patients were transferred out of in-patient care.

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

"In December, we were told that two and half years on from the Winterbourne View scandal, 3,250 people with a learning disability were still stuck in similar institutions. This was shocking enough, but what we have heard today about the actual circumstances of these individuals is profoundly worrying.

"That some of the most vulnerable people in our society are in settings where they are regularly restrained, over medicated and kept in isolation is utterly disgraceful.

"In addition, the fact that this appalling 'care' is costing the public purse, in many cases, up to £4,500 per week demands that urgent questions are asked and answers provided.

"It is not enough for the government to say it should not be happening. It is happening to people's sons and daughters, brothers and sisters and, what's more, people are continuing to go into these places faster than they are coming out. The failure to stop this happening is an utter disgrace. We demand that the government takes urgent action and we expect to see immediate and real progress."

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

"It is devastating to hear that this is still happening. 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."

For more information, or to speak to a spokesperson or Steve Sollars, please contact Jonathan Caleb-Landy, PR Lead at Mencap, on 020 7696 6937 or [Jonathan.CalebLandy@mencap.org.uk](mailto:Jonathan.CalebLandy@mencap.org.uk).

### **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**

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.

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

