

Mencap and CBF - Questions for JCHR evidence session with CQC and NHSE (18th May 2020)

- CQC and NHSE are both aware (and there is lots of evidence) that inpatient units for people with learning disabilities and/ autism are high risk environments- and those with closed cultures are a greater risk. Given that the pandemic lockdown (with reduced access to these environments by families and advocates) increases the risk of these closed cultures – why has CQC decided via a blanket decision for all services to suspend unannounced visits- that LESS scrutiny is needed, rather than MORE?
- Can you (CQC) describe exactly how you would find out if a patient with a learning disability who has communication difficulties in an inpatient unit was being subjected to abuse or human rights violations?
- Given the reduced inspection schedule during this pandemic, can the CQC provide guarantees on how it intends to ensure that people with a learning disability and/ or autism are not subject to misuse of restrictive practices including chemical restraint and seclusion, and poor treatment? What particular arrangements have been made to protect people who cannot communicate verbally and/or have a reduced capacity to raise the alarm?
- How (via what evidence and from whom) are CQC and NHSE assured that people with a learning disability in patient units are getting appropriate and timely access to healthcare treatment for COVID-19?
- The pandemic has seen the social care and health sector rightly focus on the pandemic, however this focus cannot lead to more delayed discharges of people with a learning disability and/ or autism from in-patient units or the unnecessary admission of people to these settings. – What is NHSE’s assessment of current capacity to support people with a learning disability and/or autism who display behaviour that challenges in the community? (Note: NHSE has set out what community support should be available in each local area in their building the right support service model)
- What impact do the witnesses expect this pandemic to have on the progress to discharge people from inappropriate in-patient settings in line with Transforming Care?
- How does the CQC intend to ensure that social care provision is monitored effectively given the reduction to their day-to-day monitoring?