

Winterbourne View – 10 years on: Families say the government has failed to deliver on its commitments

The abuse of people with learning disabilities or autism at Winterbourne View Hospital was exposed by BBC's Panorama on 31 May 2011. It led to a clear commitment from government to discharge people from inappropriate hospital care into person-centred community services.

Today, more than 2,000 individuals remain in hospital. Many have been there for years rather than months, are at long distances from their families and are often subject to restrictive interventions and poor care.

"Tea, smiles and empty promises" is an account written by some of the families whose relatives were at Winterbourne View Hospital, supported by the Challenging Behaviour Foundation and Mencap. They give their account of what happened to their relatives both at Winterbourne View and afterwards. It tells of sympathy, assurances that things would get better for their relative and the broken promises from those responsible for services.

They describe the effects of untreated trauma on their relative, the fragility of community services and the on-going fear that the person they love will be re-admitted to hospital. One parent says: *"We continue to live life on a knife edge"*, another that *"If Leslie was given specialist support by a care team with the skills, experience and training, we believe he would have a chance of a happier life."*

The Division of Clinical Psychology and the Faculty for People with Intellectual Disabilities support the calls made by these families, and others whose relatives are still in hospital or at risk of admission due to 'fragile' community services. We will continue to work with families and staff, and in both hospitals and community settings, to deliver high quality compassionate care, so that people get to live life like any other citizen.

We support the call made by families for the government to re-focus efforts on discharging people from hospital and developing person-centred community services for both children and adults.

Statement by The British Psychological Society's Division of Clinical Psychology and Faculty for People with Intellectual Disabilities