

PRESS RELEASE

We welcome the Department of Health's final report about Winterbourne View, and the Concordat.

We look forward to working with the National Forum of People with Learning Disabilities to monitor the progress of the stakeholders who have pledged their actions in the Concordat.



We also welcome the Minister's clear vision of a drastic reduction in the numbers of hospital placements. We look forward to excellent supports and services being developed locally with the involvement of individuals and families, and wherever these are not available by 2014, we expect commissioners and providers to be held accountable.

Over a year ago, in response to the Department of Health's Interim report, NVFF members said:-

"Commissioners need to stop buying the wrong services ... people with learning disabilities requiring any assessment and treatment should be able to access this as close to home as possible. Families expect this to be provided by appropriately skilled and trained professionals and staff. We need to have confidence in the people who are supporting our family members.

However, even after the recent criminal convictions of staff at Winterbourne View, some of their innocent victims, the vulnerable people who were tortured and abused, have continued to be held in locked services.

We echo the Minister's call that now is the time to work purposefully together, towards positive outcomes for individuals and their families. Improvements must be made to the attitudes and culture around services and support systems for people with learning disabilities and autism who may display behaviour described as challenging as a form of communication of unmet need.

We will scrutinise these outcomes, nationally at the Learning Disability Programme Board alongside our National Forum colleagues, and also locally via our Learning Disability Partnership Boards, Health & Wellbeing Boards, and Healthwatch.

ENDS

Note to Editors:

The National Valuing Families Forum (NVFF) was established in 2007 as part of the Valuing People programme. It provides representation for families of people with learning disabilities to the Department of Health's Learning Disability Programme Board. It brings together a network of family carers across England who represent local grass-roots families, and the following key national bodies: Carers Trust, the Carers with Learning Disabilities Network, the Challenging Behaviour Foundation, Dimensions, the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities, HFT, Mencap, the National Family Carer Network, Partners in Policymaking, and the Standing Commission on Carers. Further information about the NVFF is available from the Co-ordinator, Jo Hough (Email: jo@inclusioneast.co.uk, Mob/Txt: 07976 644068)