



## **BBC Panorama – the abuse of people at Whorlton Hall – a response from Inclusion North**



On Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May the BBC showed an undercover investigation, done by the Panorama TV programme, that showed staff physically and psychologically abusing people with a learning disability and autism at Whorlton Hall in County Durham.



The team at Inclusion North worked together to create this statement.

The programme made us feel angry, upset, rage, horror and it left us feeling tremendous sadness.

We think about all of the other people living in institutions and how fearful their families must be feeling.



We believe all people are citizens with rights, who deserve dignity and respect.

The people who were shown being abused are sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, neighbours and friends.

They are not 'other' people who are less than the rest of us.



People are treated this way, because they are seen as less important than others and less than human.

We live in a society where some people are not included and not visible.

They are marginalised and made to feel unworthy and unimportant.



That this can happen, 8 years after Winterbourne is a failing on our whole society.

This happened in our area. We sit in the meetings and contribute to the work that was meant to stop this happening again.



We are all asking ourselves, what difference our work is making.

This is not about people's needs being complex or difficult. This is not about training. This is about the most basic human rights that we all deserve.



It is about receiving the right support in the community, close to the people who care about us the most and who know us best.

We don't want to be part of a knee jerk reaction to this.



What happens next needs to be well thought through, with an approach that will actually lead to change within the whole system.



People with a learning disability and autism and their families need to be at the heart of this right from the start.

This is about community and citizenship. About people coming together to make change happen.

People, partnerships and organisations need to stand up and unite to make change happen.



This takes more than money - it takes united voices and values.

We believe there is a better way.



We will continue to work with self advocates, families and local organisations to speak up and take action.

We have seen some good work by good people make a difference over the past 8 years.



We will continue to work to put people and families' voices at the centre of every conversation about what good support looks like.

Because being sad and angry will not change the fate of many but hope and action might.