



Learning Disability Coalition

Learning Disability Coalition comments on London council's removal of support from vulnerable adults.

- The Learning Disability Coalition is concerned that Harrow council's decision, the first in London, to go to "critical" care only sets a dangerous precedent. The decision would deny vital services to adults who are unable to carry out their personal care or domestic functions and cannot live in the community unsupported.
- Three other councils have taken this drastic step, others have considered it because of the spiralling pressures on local authorities' budgets. There is just not enough public funding to meet the basic needs of some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people in the country.
- Going to "critical" care is likely to give only short term savings. Without proper care, people with a learning disability with substantial needs may quickly develop critical needs.
- The Learning Disability Coalition calls upon the government to review its funding of learning disability services.
- Any review that is carried out should take account of the demographic, social, economic and health trends that affect the demand for services and identify funding needed to meet this demand. The review by Sir Derek Wanless into social care for older people provides an excellent model .

Dame Jo Williams, chief executive of Mencap and co-chair of the Learning Disability Coalition, said:

"These are the forgotten people of our country. I find it inconceivable that learning disabled people with substantial needs can be deprived of the care they

need. As an advanced, democratic and affluent society, how can we tolerate this neglect?"

Karen Flood, also co-chair of the Learning Disability Coalition and the National Forum for People with Learning Disabilities added:

"If this trend is allowed to develop I am worried that we will see more abuse of people with learning disabilities. We have heard recently about three recent horrific murders and we have had the Healthcare Commission's reports into abuse in Cornwall and Sutton and Merton, and Mencap's report into Death by Indifference. This is a disaster waiting to happen."

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