

Summary of Consultation: Excellence and Choice – Learning Disability Services

Guiding Principles

The fundamental principle underpinning reform in learning disability services is **individualisation**. The direction of travel for the service is away from congregated living and large institutional establishments towards services that are flexible and tailored to suit the needs of an individual. In developing the direction, the following principles were agreed in consultation with service users, carers and families and staff.

Guiding principles

- Services will focus on the needs of individuals.
- People with learning disabilities and their carers will be fully involved in the planning and development of their **own** health and social care services.
- People with learning disabilities have the right to experience community living, community presence and participation. Inclusion is a right for all.
- People with learning disabilities in Belfast have the right to experience the same level of service regardless of location.
- Service improvement and modernisation will be based on best practice.
- Staff will be supported in their professional and personal development.
- Services will be delivered in an efficient and effective manner within available resources.

Service Delivery Model for Learning Disability Services

There are three strands to the services that will be delivered to people with learning disabilities in the Belfast Trust. They are:-

1. Somewhere to live and a fuller life.
2. Access to additional support in the community, including specialist community treatment and support services and respite.
3. Access to specialist inpatient assessment and treatment services.

Somewhere to Live:

Whilst the majority of adults with a learning disability are accommodated and supported directly by their parents and carers in the parental home, the Trust currently has the following range of accommodation across Belfast:

Accommodation Type	Places
Trust Residential Homes	38
Independent residential Homes	197
Private Nursing Homes	263
Supported housing tenancies (both Trust and independent sector)	176

A key objective for the Trust's service is to support people with learning disabilities in their own home first and foremost. Therefore, the use of residential accommodation and private nursing home facilities will, in future, only be used in exceptional circumstances where housing with support options are not adequate or available. People who currently live in these types of accommodation will remain there as long as it meets their needs but new admissions will be by exception.

Subject to available resources, the Trust proposes to replace its four remaining residential homes with a range of supported living options. This will range from minimal support to intensive 24 hour support.

Subject to available resources, the Trust, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive and Supporting People, will continue the expansion of supported housing across the city of Belfast.

A Fuller Life:

Having a Fuller Life includes being meaningfully occupied. One of the ways in which the Trust helps with this is through the provision of day services. Within Belfast this consists of:

Service type	People supported
Day centres	620
Employment and training services	100
Community day services	110

The focus for the future will be to move away from large congregated day centres and to continue to build on the more flexible model provided through community day services. This relies less on buildings and more on the provision of individualised support to access a range of activities and opportunities available in local communities. The Trust does acknowledge however, that there are a significant number of individuals who are used to receiving day services in a day centre and who at this time would be reluctant to consider more inclusive community based options.

In the first instance the Trust will focus these developments primarily to meet the needs of school leavers, bearing in mind that these young people are leaving school with different expectations and aspirations than those who have been receiving traditional forms of day service.

There is an understanding that some people with complex needs who are unable to meaningfully participate in integrated community opportunities may still require a building based solution. The provision of centre based day support has already been reviewed by the legacy Belfast Trusts and plans exist to re-provide existing out dated centres with smaller, purpose built facilities providing no more than forty places at a time. This development is however, dependant on capital being made available.

The Trust, in partnership with the voluntary sector, will support the further development of the supported employment model and supported employment opportunities in Belfast. A multiagency partnership approach is already well developed which provides a range of training opportunities and real jobs for individuals with learning disabilities throughout Belfast.

Community support and Treatment:

This strand of the service currently relies on 4 community learning disability teams, supported by a very small specialist service for people with more complex difficulties. The Trust aims to provide this strand of the service through three tiers.

Level 1 – for people with learning disabilities who do not need specialist services and who should be able to access the same health and social care services as the rest of the population with little or no support.

Level 2 – community teams provide this tier of service. Their core role will remain one of providing support to service users and their families, signposting individuals towards appropriate services and fulfilling statutory functions such as assessing and managing risk and vulnerability. Over time, the teams will be expanded to become fully multidisciplinary so that people can more easily access the range of support that they need. Networks to support parents with learning disability and young persons leaving care will also be further developed.

Level 3 – This relates to specialist community services. Existing specialist treatment options will be enhanced/ provided across the city of Belfast. These options will include:

- Development of the existing *Hear to Help Service* which currently delivers psychological therapies and emotional support. The newly developed service will deliver both assertive outreach and psychological interventions.
- Enhanced Behaviour Support Service, a time limited intensive assessment and intervention

service, which reduces placement breakdown and increases capacity of individuals, families and service providers to cope with behaviour that challenges.

- Community Forensic Service, providing risk assessment and offence related intervention services to those with histories of, and at risk of, offending.

These services will be person centred, task focused and offer short interventions based on the need of individuals. They will be developed over time commencing in 2010/11. The specialist community treatment service has a longer term aim of being able to support people in their own homes 24hours a day, 365 days a year.

Respite Services:

Respite provision currently encompasses short stays in residential accommodation, short stays with another family and a range of social and leisure activities. Some of this is provided directly by the Trust and some by voluntary partners.

Residential respite services will be provided in dedicated respite facilities with no more than four beds in any one facility. The first of these is planned for development in East Belfast.

The provision of **community/ leisure - based respite** exemplified by the Caring Breaks service will be enhanced and developed to become accessible to all. The Trust recognises the increasing importance placed by families on this form of non-residential provision; it also aims to increase the opportunities to experience family placement as a form of respite break.

Specialist Inpatient Assessment And Treatment Services:

Muckamore Abbey Hospital provides a regional specialist assessment and treatment service for people with learning disability who require a period of inpatient care. New facilities have been developed which will enable adults who require this level of support to have access to appropriate specialist inpatient facilities. Other adults with a learning disability who require a period of inpatient assessment and treatment for mental illness will receive this in mainstream mental health services. In Belfast, there are plans for a new inpatient mental health unit and the learning disability service will work with colleagues in mental health services to ensure that people with learning disability have access to this facility.

The children's assessment and treatment service will move from the Muckamore site to Belfast in March 2010. A new purpose built centre is being developed in Belfast which will provide 8 beds for children from the Belfast Trust, the Northern Trust, South Eastern Trust and Southern Trust.

The Trust has also started to examine regional care pathways with the other two learning disability hospitals in Northern Ireland and the Health and Social Care Board. The outcome of this work, alongside the future development of community treatment services, will help shape the future bed numbers at Muckamore Abbey Hospital.

There is a Ministerial target which states that no-one should live unnecessarily in hospital beyond 2014. There are a number of people (174) who are living in Muckamore Abbey Hospital because resources have not been made available for them to resettle to appropriate community settings. Belfast Trust, in collaboration with Northern Trust, South Eastern Trust and the Health and Social Care Board, has produced a paper for the Department of Health and Social Services which describes a costed model (resources and actions) necessary to complete the resettlement of patients from Muckamore Abbey Hospital. When these individuals have been successfully resettled to new facilities, their beds will be closed.