

Sarah Murphy MS
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing
Welsh Government
Cardiff Bay

20 October 2025

Dear Minister

Stolen Lives Wales. From Hospital to Homes Task and Finish Group Report 2025

We enclose for your attention the Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group, Learning Disability Specialist Services Task and Finish group - From Hospital to Homes Report.

The task and finish group met between September 2024 and August 2025 and included members from the Stolen Lives Wales campaign and individuals and organisations from the Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group. It was also supported by officials from the public sector including Social Care Wales, Welsh Government and NHS Performance and Improvement.

The report was drafted by members of the Stolen Lives Wales, Homes Not Hospital Task and Finish Group and is a reflection and testament of family's experiences in securing care and support for their loved ones. We would like to thank the campaign for their participation and commitment in delivering the report.

It is the view of the Stolen Lives Wales campaign group that 'people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people are being admitted to hospital inappropriately because the right care and support in the community is not available. Also, once admitted, many people stay too long in these settings and are subject to unnecessary restrictive practices, denying their human rights.'

The report highlights the reasons why people are admitted to hospital, why they are kept so long in these hospitals, and the delays in returning them to their communities. It makes several comprehensive recommendations on how the group believes these issues can be addressed and hospital inpatient numbers reduced.

We acknowledge that for many people directly affected by these issues, especially lead members of the Stolen Lives Wales campaign group, their experiences have deeply impacted their lives and the lives of their loved ones. This is understandably reflected in the tone and language used by the authors within the report and as such LDMAG wanted to make sure that their experiences and views were not diluted through any revisions to the text.

We also acknowledge that these experiences are not shared by all people accessing learning disability inpatient services.

Whilst the LDMAG may not endorse every point raised in the report, we strongly support the overarching aim of reducing inappropriate hospital admissions and improving community-based care.

We agree that the lack of consistent, high quality, 24-hour community learning disability services across Wales frequently leads to placement breakdown and/or home support needs not being met, with the lack of available support far too often resulting in admission to hospital.

We also know that once in hospital, people with learning disabilities face increased challenges and barriers to a speedy return to community living and therefore experience unnecessary extended hospital stays.

The LDMAG are conscious that improvements to adult learning disability inpatient services are a key long-term priority for this Welsh Government, and we recognise that the changes of approach highlighted within this report fully compliment a long-held ambition to transform learning disability community and inpatient services.

We recognise the significant challenges that would arise in delivering every element of every recommendation as outlined in the report and understand that in some cases this may not be either desirable or possible. However, we are committed to working with Welsh Government ministers and officials to develop approaches and solutions that can achieve the desired outcomes of these recommendations.

As we approach the end of the current government's Learning Disability Strategic Action Plan 2022-2026, we are working on recommendations for the next phase in this policy development and improvement journey to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities.

Our early development work this year acknowledges this ambition and highlights the need for any future Welsh Government to commit to a full learning disability transformation programme that will bring genuine change through a fully integrated health and social care system that will fulfil the dual ambitions of reducing the number of people with a learning disability leaving community care and entering a hospital, while simultaneously ensuring those patients currently being cared for in a hospital setting can return to their local communities.

We will shortly be providing recommended proposals for the Welsh Labour Government to commit to, for inclusion in your planning for the next Senedd election and as part of your future Programme for Government during the next Senedd term, should you be successfully re-elected.

We understand that you will now formally respond to the Hospitals to Homes report and recommendations and will consider the feasibility of issuing a written or oral statement in the coming months. We would be very happy to support any future activity in this area and look forward to seeing your formal response in due course.

Yours sincerely

Kate Young, Wayne Crocker, Sophie Hinksman

Co-Chairs, Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group

cc. LDMAG and Task And Finish Group Members