



Ein cyf/Our ref - MA-SM-2790-25

Dawn Cavanagh, Janis Griffiths, David Abbott
Stolen Lives Wales
Dawn.cavanagh@yahoo.com
Janisgriffiths14@outlook.com
d.abbott@bristol.ac.uk

3 December 2025

Dear Dawn, Janis and David,

The Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group (LDMAG) has submitted your From Hospitals to Homes Report to me on 7 November.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to each of you for your dedication, insight, and commitment throughout the duration of the Homes Not Hospital Task and Finish Group, a vital sub-group of the LDMAG. I have also written to LDMAG in a similar vein.

Since its inception in September 2024, your collective expertise and lived experience have been instrumental in shaping a thoughtful and robust report and set of recommendations for improving the experiences of people with learning disabilities who access adult specialist inpatient and community services.

Your work has helped to shine a light on the challenges faced by individuals and families and has laid the groundwork for meaningful change. I know that the highly emotive subject area and the sometimes harrowing stories shared during these meetings have been both challenging and eye-opening for all involved and we welcome your candour and passion in outlining your experiences.

The group was established following a powerful meeting in May 2024 between campaign members, Senedd politicians and the then Minister for Mental Health and Early Years, Jayne Bryant MS with the Welsh Government's commitment to this cause continuing under my own tenure as Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing. Your contributions have honoured the concerns raised in that initial meeting and have helped ensure that the voices of those most affected are heard and respected.

The final meeting of the group in August 2025 and the submission of the final report marked the culmination of a significant journey.

Canolfan Cyswllt Cyntaf / First Point of Contact Centre:
0300 0604400

Bae Caerdydd • Cardiff Bay
Caerdydd • Cardiff
CF99 1SN

Gohebiaeth.Sarah.Murphy@llyw.cymru
Correspondence.Sarah.Murphy@gov.wales

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and responding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

As you know, reducing the number of people with a learning disability who receive their care long-term in a hospital setting is a key priority for this Welsh Government and I will again reiterate our commitment to the principle that a hospital bed is not a home and people with learning disabilities should be cared for in the community, at home or as close to home as possible.

I note that your report contains a number of key recommendations which you believe will help significantly reduce the number of people with a learning disability entering hospital from the community and will help those currently receiving their care in hospital to return to their local communities. Whilst there are some potential 'quick-wins', which we can and will pursue, the majority of these recommendations are likely to require significant preparatory work, resources and investment ahead of decisions about implementation. I will, therefore, be looking to the LDMAG and its invaluable, continuing expertise and advice over the coming months to help understand and address the issues and challenges raised in the report.

Further detailed scoping is required to fully explore all 8 themed recommendations and all 54 individual asks within these recommendations, and I can assure you that we will be referring to the content of this report and the suggestions within it to shape our policy and delivery priorities moving forward, including the vital work that will be required to accommodate forthcoming changes that will arise from the new Mental Health Act. It is though clear that our ambitions for the future align closely in that we all wish to see the emergence of a fully integrated learning disability community and inpatient service, working across health and social care and the recommendations you make can clearly inform and contribute to this approach.

Through your work in the Task and Finish Group I hope that you will have seen that we are already taking action to achieve our transformation goals, though we know that there is a great deal more that needs to be done. This year we are placing particular focus on four specific priority areas. These are improving learning disability data & standards, reducing restrictive practice, increasing the quality and uptake of learning disability annual health checks and reducing length of stay for learning disability inpatients in hospitals.

The availability of accurate, robust and up-to-date national data in relation to inpatients with a learning disability has been a challenge for a number of years and has adversely impacted our ability to drive change. Through the introduction of our regular patient audits, we now have detailed information about all individuals who are in-patient services, and are tracking their progress, and we are working closely with health boards to ensure their transfer of care into the community as quickly as possible. We are also working through the process of making this data available publicly so the progress we are making can be seen more widely, while always ensuring that this patient data protects and safeguards the identity of individuals.

Looking to the future, as the current Learning Disability Strategic Action Plan comes to an end in March 2026, we want to build on the achievements and momentum made to date, and to set out future priorities for a future incoming government to consider. We are working closely with the Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group to take a broader view of transforming learning disability services across Wales.

Our approach will be to propose re-focussing care into the community and closer to home and to ensure the building blocks of high-quality support are in place.

We are nearing completion of an integrated Learning Disability Quality Statement, which will set the standards for models of service delivery. We also want to improve integration, encouraging partnership working across health, social care and the third sector and to seek accommodation-based solutions enabling preventative step up and step down support to be established in the community.

People with learning disabilities are a high priority within my portfolio as Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing and in line with one of the key themes from your report, I am considering appropriate mechanisms to achieve the oversight and scrutiny you believe is required. This includes the potential for an enhanced role for the current Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group during the next government term, which is currently being explored ahead of submission of a formal options appraisal for the next administration.

As we look towards the future you can be assured that this current Welsh Government, remains committed to improving the lives of people with learning disabilities and to taking action to ensure everyone receives the best possible care to meet their needs. The work you have undertaken in the task and finish group and throughout your involvement in and engagement with services will stand us in good stead to make the right decisions for the future.

Over the next six months we will continue to deliver on our commitments to improve services and develop a baseline from which we can deliver future service reform. This includes:

- Stakeholder engagement and promoting cross sector integration and collaborative working.
- Alignment of learning disability third sector grant holders' activities with Welsh Government priorities.
- Promotion of inclusivity and co-production across service areas.
- Investing in a dedicated learning disability programme team to work with RPBs and their partners to support future programme delivery and improvement
- Completion of the Integrated Learning Disability Quality Statement
- Improved safeguarding and developing new models of integrated care for children and adult services
- Securing publication of learning disability inpatient census data.
- Considering an enhanced role for the LD Ministerial Advisory Group in supporting our transformation journey

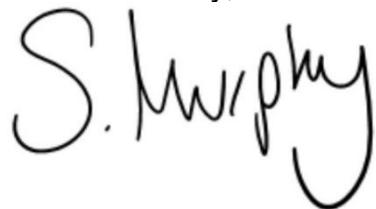
I appreciate that this response may not directly address all the specific issues and concerns you raise in your report but hope you will recognise the value we place on the lived experiences of people with learning disabilities and our commitment to transforming our system to support better outcomes and help people get the support they need at, or closer to, home. The considerable amount of work that you have put into the completion of your report provides us with a valuable reference point for appreciating individual experiences. I can assure you that should Welsh Labour form the next Welsh Government, this work will play a key role in informing our ambitious plans for service transformation in this area.

I know you are keen to see your report published and I can confirm that we are now making arrangements to do this, alongside this response, in association with a Written statement to the Senedd on learning disability provision and achievements during this current government term, which I anticipate undertaking in January 2026.

My officials will advise you further on these details as they are finalised to allow you to coordinate any activity that Stolen Lives Wales may wish to undertake.

I am also looking forward to attending the next virtual LDMAG meeting on 9 December and having the opportunity to discuss your report, my response and our plans for the future in more detail.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Murphy".

Sarah Murphy AS/MS

Y Gweinidog Iechyd Meddwl a Llesiant
Minister for Mental Health and Wellbeing