

Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability (NI) Learning Disability Committee Newsletter

June 2003

Dear Colleague

As you may be aware in 2002 the Minister announced a Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability. This Review will have 3 strands:

- *Review of Mental Health*
- *Review of the Mental Health Order; and*
- *Review of Learning Disability*

The work of the Review is being overseen by a Steering Committee that has established a number of Expert Working Committees to progress the work. The Learning Disability Committee met for the 1st time in April.

We are committed to ensuring that our work is as inclusive as possible and that the recommendations that we make are fully informed by feedback from all stakeholders. This is the first of a series of newsletters that are one mechanism that we will use to keep people informed of our work. We hope you find it useful and would be pleased to hear what you think about its usefulness and any ideas you have for improvements.

We look forward to working together with all those with an interest in improving the life experiences of people with a learning disability to produce a Review Report that really does make a difference for the better.

Siobhan Bogues
Convenor
Learning Disability Committee

About The Learning Disability Committee Role of the Committee



The Learning Disability Committee was established as one of eight Expert Working Committees of the Review. It has met on 3 occasions and has the following remit:

- ✓ To carry out a review of policy and services for children and adults with a learning disability
- ✓ To take into account the evidence base, national and international, for best practice and emerging trends in concepts of learning disability, assessment of need, planning of support services, the delivery of services including interagency, collaborative working and empowerment of people with a learning disability.
- ✓ To comprehensively research the issues for consideration
- ✓ To work collaboratively and consult widely with all relevant stakeholders
- ✓ To liaise with and inform the work of the other Review Expert Working Committees on interface issues.
- ✓ To bring forward to the Steering Committee a comprehensive and prioritized set of recommendations giving due consideration to costs, workforce issues and infrastructure needs.

Who's who?

The Learning Disability Committee is made up of the following:

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|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Andrew Bailey | PSNI | Brendan Mullen | Ulster Hospitals & Community |
| David Bamford | Review Chairperson | Maureen Piggot | MENCAP |
| Siobhan Bogues | ARC Northern Ireland | Moira Scanlon | Craigavon & Banbridge Trust |
| Kieran Downey | Sperrin Lakeland Trust | Oliver Shanks | Psychiatrist |
| John Hunter | Department of Education | Eileen Sherrard | Down Lisburn Trust |
| Mary Lunny | Parent | Tom Smith | SHSSB |
| Agnes Lunny | Positive Futures | | |
| Roy Mc Clelland | QUB | | |
| Roy Mc Conkey | University of Ulster | | |
| Colin Mc Minn | DHSSPS | | |
| John Mc Eleney | Foyle HSS Trust / RCN | | |
| Catherine Mc Guigan | Service User | | |



Values and Principles

At the June Committee meeting members shared views on the values and principles on which the work will be based. The statements below will be refined at the next meeting but this draft will give an indication of how we propose to go about our work-

✓ **Citizenship**

People with learning disabilities are individuals first and foremost and each has a right to be treated as an equal citizen

✓ **Person – Centred**

People with learning disabilities should be supported in ways that take account of their individual needs

✓ **Participation**

People with learning disabilities should be consulted about the services they want. They should be actively involved in making choices and decisions affecting their lives

✓ **Interdependence**

People with learning disabilities should be valued and encouraged to contribute to the life of the community

✓ **Equality**

People with learning disabilities should be able to use the same services and have the same entitlements as everyone else

How will we involve people with learning disabilities and carers?

In addition to ensuring that people with learning disabilities and carers are on the Committee we will support two advisory groups to be set up. The Service Users Advisory Group will be made up of 12 – 15 people with a learning disability and they will be supported to find out the views of service users across Northern Ireland. These views will be shared with the Review Committees who will have to take them into account in their work. Nominations to this group have been requested from advocacy groups across NI.

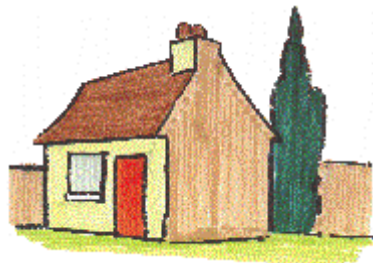
We will also support the establishment of a Carers Reference Group, which will prepare a report on the priority issues for carers. This Group will also be consulted by the Review Committees and will advise us on issues that will need to be addressed to ensure that carers' needs are properly considered in the Review. An initial meeting on 1st July was very well attended and those present agreed that a further meeting should be held on 3rd September to progress this work.

How Will We Carry Out The Work?

The scope of this Review is very broad and we will want to ensure that key areas are fully covered. In order to achieve this we will set up 6 Task Groups, each of which will produce a report to advise the Committee on what should go into the final report. Each Task Group will be made up of people with a special interest in that area.

| Task Group | Convenor Details |
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| Accommodation and Support | Professor Roy Mc Conkey |
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| Ageing Issues | Moira Scanlon |
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| Children And Young People | Maureen Piggot |
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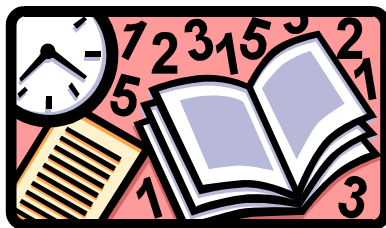
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|-------------------|---------------|
| Day Opportunities | Kieran Downey |
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| Physical Health | John Mc Eleney |
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| Mental Health | Dr Oliver Shanks |
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In addition to these Task Groups we will be liaising closely with the other Working Committees in the Review including the Social Inclusion Committee and the Legal Issues Committee. We hope that the task groups will all be up and running by September 2003. When all the Task Groups have completed their work we will produce a Review report in June 2004 that will be circulated widely for consultation. We will then present our report to the Review Steering Committee, which will decide if any changes are needed before presenting it to the Minister.

Committee Programme 2003



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|---|--|--------------------------|
| Wednesday 20th August: | Lisburn Families Project, Positive Futures | Supporting Families |
| Wednesday 17th September: | Ballybot House, Newry | |
| Wednesday 15th October: | Camphill Community, Glencraig | Camphill Users Forum |
| Wednesday 19th November: | Triangle Housing Association, Ballymena | Triangle Priority Issues |
| Wednesday 17th December: | Clanabogan, Omagh | Strathray Recycling |

At each of these meetings a 20 -minute slot will be held at the start for presentations as detailed above. Please contact us if your organisation would like to host a meeting or make a presentation in 2004

How Can I Get Involved?

We are keen to ensure that the views of all those who have an interest are heard. There are a number of ways in which you can contribute to the Review:

- ✓ Make a presentation to either the Committee or one of the Task Groups.
- ✓ Put your thoughts in writing to the address below and your views will be shared with the Learning Disability Committee
- ✓ Nominate a representative to join one of the Task Groups, the Users Advisory Group or the Carers Reference Group. We expect that these opportunities will be particularly popular. If we receive a large number of nominations for a group we will seek to ensure that the group is as representative as possible. **Regrettably in order to keep the size of the groups manageable we may not be able to accept all nominations.** Nominations to the Groups should be sent to the address below to arrive before Friday 11th July 2003

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON ANY ITEM IN THIS NEWSLETTER CONTACT

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