

11 July 2007

The Learning Disability Coalition

Decisions:

- 1) Members will receive a presentation from the Learning Disability Coalition seeking support for their funding campaign. Subject to discussion at the meeting it is proposed that the Board supports the campaign.

Actions required:

- 2) As determined by the board following discussion.

Action by: Secretariat as directed.

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The Learning Disability Coalition

Summary:

- 1) The Board will receive a presentation from Dame Jo Williams (Chief Executive of Mencap and co-chair of the coalition) and Carol Boys, CEO of the Downs Syndrome Association and Board member of the Learning Disability Coalition, representing the Learning Disability Coalition seeking support for its work. This brief reports sets out a short background to the coalition.

Background:

- 2) The LDC was launched in June 2007 with the straightforward aim of ensuring sufficient public funding for people with a learning disability so they might secure the same life chances and choices as others. To achieve this the coalition wants to:-
 - a. Raise awareness of the financial pressures on services for people with learning disabilities and campaign for better funding;
 - b. Gather evidence of cuts to services at a local level;
 - c. Provide a unified voice to government and other key stakeholders;
 - d. Achieve an evidence based assessment of the long term resource requirements for people with learning disabilities.
- 3) The LDC has ten member organisations: Association for Real Change (ARC); British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD); Downs Syndrome Association; Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities; Mencap; People First; Sense; National Forum for People with Learning Disabilities; Turning Point and United Response.
- 4) The pressures in learning disability services have now been identified in a number of places, not least in the LGA /ADSS and Treasurers Report in 2005. Further detailed work by ADSS identified a number of factors including:
 - a. Many more children surviving into adulthood with major disabilities and complex needs and adults living longer and surviving into older age;
 - b. Limited capacity of family carers to care for the extent and diversity of these "New" needs;

- c. The move to modern, non institutionalised models of care and a reduction in the numbers of people now living in long-stay hospitals with a consequent growth in local authority spend and decrease in NHS spend.
- 5) The impact of the overall resource shortfall – not least given additional shortfalls in other service areas – means that despite the intention and aspiration to modernise services, in particular through “In control” and Direct Payments and other initiatives, improvement in line with the direction set out in “Valuing People” and subsequently in the White Paper “Our Health Our Care Our Say” is variable due to the amount of resource tied in to “traditional” models of support which need additional (albeit potentially short term) resource for development.

Recommendation

- 6) The modernisation of services and support to people with learning disabilities is fundamental to securing equity for large and increasing numbers of people, and will be key to the ability of authorities and their strategic partners to meet the needs of the whole community.
- 7) Resources to maintain even current levels of service have been demonstrated to be under considerable pressure and significant resource – as in other areas – will be needed to secure change. Subject to discussion at the meeting and responses to member views, it is recommended that the Board supports the campaign.

Implications For Wales

None.

Financial / Resource Implications

None at this point.

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