



# Joint Committee on Human Rights

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Rt. Hon Harriet Harman MP, Chair

The Rt. Hon Matt Hancock MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London, SW1H 0EU

9 January 2019

Dear Matt,

## **Re. Conditions in detention for people with learning disabilities or autism**

Thank you for your letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> November in which you explained the scope and timetable of the Care Quality Commission's investigation into issues at Assessment and Treatment Units.

On 12<sup>th</sup> December, the Committee heard from people with learning disabilities who have been detained, and from family members of people with autism who have been detained. We heard evidence of two perverse incentives that contribute to people being detained in institutions that are inappropriate for their needs, and we would like your views on these issues:

- We were told that the division between NHS funding and local authority funding continues to inhibit placement in, and transfer to, community-based care. This is also not a good use of public money, given that community-based care is often less expensive than inpatient care.
- We were told that private providers have a vested interest in retaining individuals in detention, in preference to care arrangements being made that are more appropriate for the individuals and more cost-effective for public funders.

We will be raising these issues with the CQC and NHS England on 9<sup>th</sup> January. It will also be helpful to have your views, so I ask that you reply to this letter by Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January.

We will continue to monitor the issues with the care of those with learning disabilities and / or autism, and we will press Government to ensure that their human rights are upheld.

Yours sincerely,

**Rt. Hon Harriet Harman MP**  
**Chair, Joint Committee on Human Rights**