

Time for action

Priority actions arising from national consultation



Easy Read

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Introduction



In December 2014 **RTE Primetime** showed people with intellectual disabilities being abused and neglected in the Áras Attracta residential campus in Swinford, County Mayo.

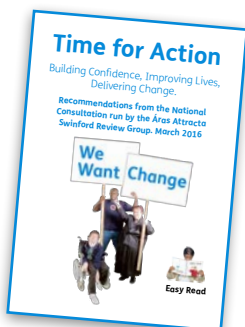
People were shocked and very angry.



The Government set up a **review group** to look at what needs to change in Áras Attracta and all services for people with an intellectual disability in Ireland.



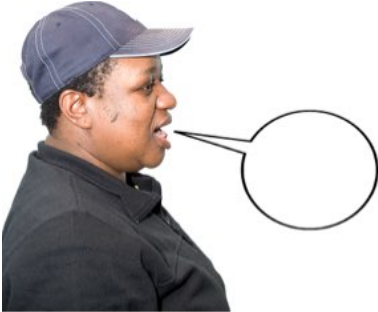
The review group wrote a report.



This is the easy read part of the report which looks at what needs to change.



Making better laws



People with an intellectual disability should be helped to have their say about any changes to the law.



We already have many laws that should be protecting people with an intellectual disability.



But some of these laws do not work properly. Often it is because there is not enough money.



Sometimes An Garda Síochána are not allowed to pass on enough information.



Other parts of the law are not working because some services are not letting advocates have the information they need.

We think that:-



- ▶ We need to look at laws on sexual crimes, so that people with an intellectual disability can have an appropriate relationship - like anyone else.



- ▶ The government should help everyone with an intellectual disability to have an advocate.



- ▶ People with an intellectual disability should be able to use the courts to protect their rights.



- ▶ The guidelines around safeguarding vulnerable people should be made into law.



Getting better at running services

The review group thinks that:-



- ▶ There should be more places that people with an intellectual disability can live in the community.



- ▶ Services should be made to work with the advocates of the people who they support



- ▶ Services should focus their care around what the person wants



- ▶ Plans for the services for people with an intellectual disability should be linked to the plans for other services - like children and older people.



- ▶ The people who plan services should work closely with the people who plan housing.



- ▶ The **Health Service Executive** should make their plans in a way that is more open - so that people can check if they are working.



- ▶ Managers should be better at checking that their staff are working right.



The Review group wants to see more people moving out of large groups to live in smaller houses.



They also want to make it easier for people to get money so that they can choose and manage their own staff and support.



Treating people with dignity and respect



Every organisation that supports people with an intellectual disability should make sure that all their staff have had training in human rights and person centred planning.



Services should help people to speak up by:-

▶ Giving people a chance to have a say in their own support in house meetings, family meetings and advocacy group meetings.



▶ Helping people to question things



▶ Involving people in choosing their staff



- ▶ Involving people and their family members in the management of the service.



Every service should make it easy for people to make a complaint.



Everyone should be able to choose whether they are supported by a man or a woman.



Staff should try to understand why a person has behaviours that challenge.



Services should stop using **physical restraint** except where someone is in danger. **Physical restraint** can mean holding someone to stop them moving.



Better services

The best organisations are ones where:-



- ▶ The senior managers listen to the people with intellectual disability and the staff who care for them.



- ▶ Managers and staff try new ideas and learn from any mistakes.



- ▶ Staff are supported if they report a colleague or one of the managers.



The **Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA)** should get some self advocates who can help them when they inspect services. **HIQA** inspects all care homes in Ireland.



Preventing abuse and neglect



Everyone needs to understand what abuse is. There should be training for all staff and people with intellectual disability.



Staff need to understand that they must report any abuse that they see.



Self advocacy is where someone with an intellectual disability has had some training to help them to speak up for themselves.

Self advocacy helps people to speak up when something bad is happening.



Many services have set up a committee to look at rights in their organisation. This committee can look into any problems with people being treated unfairly.



It is good if people with an intellectual disability spend time in their local community. Everyone should spend time with people who live locally.



There is a risk of abuse during personal care for people with an intellectual disability and complex needs. Services should check that they have good guidelines for these situations.



Better health



Services should help people with an intellectual disability to have good health.

They should organise things like:-



▶ Healthy eating groups



▶ Regular exercise



▶ Stop smoking classes



▶ Regular check ups - at the dentist, and the optician



- ▶ Each person should be registered with their local doctor



- ▶ Good healthy food



- ▶ Access to mental health services for people who need it



- ▶ Access to people who help with behaviours that challenge



- ▶ Support around death and dying



The health of the person should be part of their person centred plan so that everyone can help the person to keep as healthy as possible.



Better managers



Managers should:-

▶ Have good values, and be happy to try new ways of doing things



▶ Visit all their services, teams and the people who they are supporting.



Team meetings should be in the place where people are supported.



Senior management teams should move their meetings around the different services.



There should be a self advocate involved in choosing new staff.



Self Advocates should have training and be supported to be fully involved in choosing the right person.



When they choose new support staff managers should look for people with the right attitudes.



New staff should be committed to human rights, and know how to promote dignity and respect.



They should understand that people need a good social life as well as good health.



Managers should have regular meetings with their staff to talk about how well they are working. Managers should support their staff to work better.



Board of directors

The board of a support agency must:-



- ▶ Make sure that everyone knows what to do



- ▶ Watch out for anything that might go wrong



- ▶ Make sure that everyone understands how things are decided



- ▶ Talk and listen to people who are involved with the organisation



- ▶ Take responsibility for the things that they do

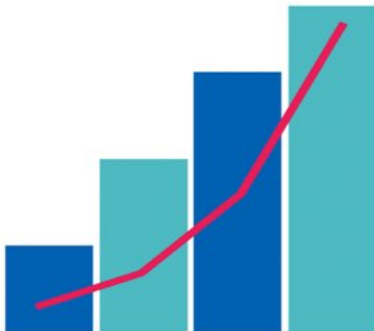
It is good if:-



- ▶ The board thinks about what could go wrong and does something about it



- ▶ They check that the organisation has the right policies



- ▶ They are always looking how the organisation can do better, and give a better service



- ▶ There is someone with an intellectual disability on the board



More information

For more information please contact:-



Health Service Executive
Dr Steeven's Hospital
Dublin 8



Phone: 01 635 2000



Email: infoline1@hse.ie



Website: www.hse.ie

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