



The Regulation and  
Quality Improvement  
Authority

press release

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## **RQIA publishes Review of Community Services for Adults with a Learning Disability**

Today, The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), has published the findings of its review of Community Services for Adults with a Learning Disability, which assessed health and social care trusts performance against the Department of Health's Service Framework for Learning Disability.

Estimates suggest that there are around 13,000 adults with a learning disability in Northern Ireland, and it is anticipated that this figure will increase over the coming years, particularly those with more complex needs. Whilst the review team found staff were generally familiar with the content of the service framework, there was not a standardised approach to its implementation across the five health and social care trusts.

Speaking at the launch of the report, Theresa Nixon, RQIA's Director of Mental Health and Learning Disability said: **"RQIA's review team found significant progress in the provision of services across Northern Ireland for adults with a learning disability since our previous review in 2013. These included improvements in access to a wider range of day activities for adults with a learning disability; assessments by GPs of the health needs of adults with a learning disability; and the establishment of specialist teams within trusts to support carers in managing challenging behaviours."**

Ms Nixon continued: **"The review team considered that further improvement is required in a number of areas, including: the provision of family support services; an increase in the uptake of carer's assessments**

**and direct payments; the development of a single regional community based information system, as access to clear, reliable information continues to be problematic; and provision of easy read materials for adults with a learning disability on trusts' websites."**

Theresa Nixon concluded: **"This review makes a series of recommendations which we believe will support improvements in the provision of services for every adult with a learning disability across Northern Ireland."**

**ENDS**

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The full report can be accessed at: [www.rqia.org.uk](http://www.rqia.org.uk)

## **Editors' Notes**

### **The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA)**

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority, established in April 2005 under The Health and Personal Social Services (Quality, Improvement and Regulation) (Northern Ireland) Order 2003, is the independent health and social care regulatory body for Northern Ireland. In its work RQIA encourages continuous improvement in the quality and availability of health and social care services through a programme of inspections and reviews.

### **RQIA Review of Community Services for Adults with a Learning Disability**

This review, conducted as part of RQIA's Three Year Review Programme 2015-18, examined progress by the five health and social care trusts, in the implementation of the Department of Health's Service Framework for Adults with a Learning Disability, following a baseline review by RQIA in 2013.

## **Terms of Reference**

1. Review the progress made against Phase 1 of RQIA's 2013 report, A Baseline Assessment and Review of Community Services for Adults with a Learning Disability.
2. Review the quality and effectiveness of services for adults with a learning disability against the DHSSPS Service Framework for Learning Disability.
3. Gather the views of service users and carers.
4. Report on findings and make recommendations in a single report for publication.