

# CLAHRC BITE

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A bite-sized summary of CLAHRC research: Supporting young people with learning disabilities and/or autism and 'challenging behaviour'



**Effective local services reduce the exclusion of young people with disabilities and 'challenging behaviour' from their families and communities**



## **Why?**

The national 'Transforming Care' agenda aims to improve the lives of young people with disabilities and 'challenging behaviour' and their families by improving local supports and reducing placements in hospital or full time residential school.

## **Who?**

A collaboration between the families, professional and non-professional support networks, and wider systems that affect this group of young people at risk of exclusion.

## **What?**

Using an evidence-based approach a local intensive support team is working to promote good local support for a group of young people with disabilities at high risk of exclusion. Its success demonstrates that the goals of 'Transforming Care' are achievable.

## Background

As a result of their 'challenging behaviour', young people with learning (intellectual) disabilities and / or autism are often excluded from supports (such as school, respite) that are needed to maintain family life. A significant number of these young people end up living in residential schools or in-patient units, often far from home and at significant cost to local authorities and the NHS. Perverse financial incentives can maintain this situation<sup>1</sup>. The national 'Transforming Care'<sup>2</sup> agenda aims to change this situation but progress has been very slow.

## Research

Our research gained an understanding of the process leading to young people with disabilities from Cambridgeshire being placed in hospital or full time (52 week a year) residential schools and made recommendations about a different approach. As a result, the local authority funded a two-year Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) project, using an evidence-based approach<sup>3</sup>, to work intensively with eight young people with 'challenging behaviour' at high risk of exclusion from local educational, respite and/or other provision. The team demonstrated that inclusion is possible with flexible, person-centred, and responsive support: all the young people in the project remain with their families, close to home.

## Next steps

With CLAHRC E of E support, we are now working with families, practitioners, commissioners, and the Transforming Care Lead to understand how we can provide better local support for children and young people with learning disabilities and 'challenging behaviour' in another area and evaluate the approach.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Lenehan, C. (2017). These Are Our Children. London: Council for Disabled Children (National Children's Bureau). [www.gov.uk/government/publications/lenehan-review-into-care-of-children-with-learning-disabilities](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lenehan-review-into-care-of-children-with-learning-disabilities)

<sup>2</sup> NHS England (2017). Transforming Care: Model Service Specifications. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/transforming-care-service-model-specification-january-2017>

<sup>3</sup> National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (2015). NICE Guideline (NG11). Challenging behaviour and learning disabilities: prevention and interventions for people with learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges. <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng11>

## What is NIHR CLAHRC East of England?

The National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Collaboration for Leadership in Applied Health Research and Care (CLAHRC) East of England is a five year programme of applied health and social care research which focuses on the needs of people with complex problems, often vulnerable, when multiple agencies are involved in their care: young people, frail older people, those with dementia, learning disabilities, acquired brain injuries or mental ill health.

The CLAHRC East of England collaboration encompasses some thirty-six organisations, with research hubs in the Universities of Cambridge, Hertfordshire and East Anglia working closely with individuals and organisations involved in the whole care pathway.

Service users and carers are at the heart of what we do, in parallel with an ambitious public health research programme. Co-production and collaboration at all stages of the research process are fundamental to making a positive impact through applied health research.

### For more information

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