

# THE CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR CHARTER

*"I was at an assessment and treatment unit for about 12 years. It was not nice being there. Now I'm in my own home and I am much happier!"*  
Michael, Out of Sight



## Introduction

This charter, concerning the needs of individuals with learning disabilities who are perceived as challenging to services and others, was compiled in 2008 and published in 2009. Since then many individuals and organisations have signed up to the charter. You can find out who they are on the Challenging Behaviour Foundation website [www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk](http://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk). Following the Panorama programmes on the Winterbourne View abuses and reports flowing from that, we are republishing this charter in 2013. There is still so much to be done.

Challenging behaviour is often perceived as a 'problem' or 'illness' to be 'treated', 'cured' or 'stopped'. The problem is seen as being part of the person rather than focussing on what needs to change around the person, such as their environment or how people support them. This is unhelpful and potentially damaging for these individuals. We need to look beyond the behaviour, understand what the behaviour is communicating and then provide appropriate person centred, holistic support to enable individuals to achieve their full potential.

We know that much better support and services could be provided for children and adults who are perceived as challenging. This charter sets out the rights of these individuals and the action that needs to be taken.

By signing up to this charter you endorse the rights of these individuals and commit to working in partnership with the National Strategy Group to influence real change.

## In this charter we are adopting the following definition:

"Behaviour can be described as challenging when it is of such an intensity, frequency, or duration as to threaten the quality of life and/or the physical safety of the individual or others and it is likely to lead to responses that are restrictive, aversive or result in exclusion".

(Challenging behaviour - a unified approach: RCPsych, BPS, RCSLT, 2007)

The charter is a living document and we are happy to receive comments and views.



*"Our job is not to fix people but to design effective environments"*  
(Rob Horner)

# Rights and Values:

- 1) People will be supported to exercise their human rights (which are the same as everyone else's) to be healthy, full and valued members of their community with respect for their culture, ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, sexuality and disability.
- 2) All children who are at risk of presenting behavioural challenges have the right to have their needs identified at an early stage, leading to co-ordinated early intervention and support.
- 3) All families have the right to be supported to maintain the physical and emotional wellbeing of the family unit.
- 4) All individuals have the right to receive person centred support and services that are developed on the basis of a detailed understanding of their support needs including their communication needs. This will be individually-tailored, flexible, responsive to changes in individual circumstances and delivered in the most appropriate local situation.
- 5) People have the right to a healthy life, and be given the appropriate support to achieve this.
- 6) People have the same rights as everyone else to a family and social life, relationships, housing, education, employment and leisure.
- 7) People have the right to supports and services that create capable environments. These should be developed on the principles of positive behavioural support and other evidence based approaches. They should also draw from additional specialist input as needed and respond to all the needs of the individual.
- 8) People have the right not to be hurt or damaged or humiliated in any way by interventions. Support and services must strive to achieve this.
- 9) People have the right to receive support and care based on good and up to date evidence.

# Action to be taken:

- 1) Children's and adults' services will construct long term collaborative plans across education, social and health services and jointly develop and commission support and services to meet the needs of children and adults with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- 2) Local Authorities and the NHS will develop and co-ordinate plans to:
  - Reduce the exposure of young children with learning disabilities to environmental conditions that may lead to behavioural challenges.
  - Promote the resilience of young children with learning disabilities who face such environmental conditions.
  - Provide early intervention, support and services that will meet the individual needs (including communication needs) of young children who are showing early signs of developing behavioural challenges.
- 3) Active listening to the needs of the family will lead to the provision of appropriate and timely support, information and training.
- 4) People will be supported to have a good quality of life by individuals with the right values, attitudes, training and experience.
- 5) The NHS and services will proactively plan to ensure that people receive the same range, quality and standard of healthcare as everyone else, making reasonable adjustments when required. People will have an individualised health action plan and be supported to have access to annual health checks to ensure all health needs are met.
- 6) People and their family carers will receive support and services that are timely, safe, of good quality, co-ordinated and seamless. They will be proactively involved in the planning, commissioning and monitoring of support and services including both specialist and general services.
- 7) A person-centred approach that enables and manages the taking of risk will be used to ensure that people have access to family and social life, relationships, housing, education, employment and leisure.
- 8) Local authorities and the NHS will know how many children and adults live in their area and how many they have placed out of area. On the basis of information from person-centred plans all agencies will plan and deliver local support and services.
- 9) Services will seek to reduce the use of physical intervention, seclusion, mechanical restraint and the inappropriate or harmful use of medication with the clear aim of eliminating them for each individual.
- 10) All services and agencies will strive to improve continually, using up to date evidence to provide the best support, care and treatment to deliver positive outcomes for individuals.

# Challenging Behaviour National Strategy Group (CB-NSG) Charter

## Sign-up:

I/We.....(name of individual/  
organisation(s)) endorse the rights of individuals as set out within this charter and  
commit to working with the National Strategy Group to influence change.

All individuals/organisations who sign up to the charter may be listed on the  
Challenging Behaviour Foundation website/other publications (contact details will not  
be listed). I/We give my/our permission to be added to this list.

Signed.....

Print name .....

.....  
(and name of organisation and job title if appropriate)

Date.....

## Contact Details:

E-mail address .....

Tel number .....

Address .....

Anyone who signs up to the charter will automatically be added to the CBF  
database, to receive "Challenge" the newsletter of the Challenging Behaviour  
Foundation, free of charge, three times a year. Please tick here if you do not wish to  
be added to the mailing list.

## Please return to:

CB-NSG Charter, Challenging Behaviour Foundation, The Old Courthouse,  
New Road Avenue, Chatham, Kent, ME4 6BE



**making a difference  
to the lives of people with  
severe learning disabilities**

CB-NSG Charter

# Challenging Behaviour Foundation

The Old Courthouse

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