

# National inspection of care and support for people with learning disabilities

## Merthyr Tydfil County Council

Easy Read

June 2016



This report is also available in Welsh. If you would like a copy in an alternative language or format, please contact us.

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This Easy Read is very long.



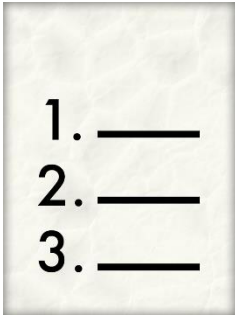
This is because it is important that people with learning disabilities get the full information about the inspection of their services.



If you just want to know about good things, look for the green boxes.



If you just want to know what needs to change, look for the pink boxes.



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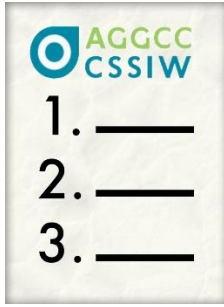
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## Introduction



We are looking at services for adults with learning disabilities.



We are checking if local councils are helping people with learning disabilities to have the life they want.



We are checking if care and support services are:



- working well



- good quality



- safe



We asked questions about all 22 local councils.



We visited 6 local councils.



We have written:



- an all-Wales report



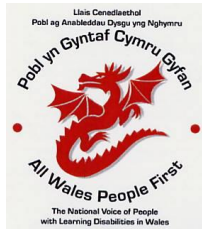
- a report for each of the 6 local councils



**This is the report about Merthyr Tydfil**



We worked closely with:



- All Wales People First and the All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers. They helped us listen to people with learning disabilities and their family carers.



- Healthcare Inspectorate Wales. They helped us check how Social Services and health are working together.



This report says:



- what we found out.



- what we think Merthyr Council and Cwm Taf University Health Board need to do.





## How we did the work



We wanted to find the answers to 3 questions:



1. Do Merthyr Council and the two Health Boards understand what people with learning disabilities and their family carers need?



2. How good are Merthyr Council and the two Health Boards at:



- giving information, advice and helping people to use services



- checking if someone needs support from the Council



- care planning



3. Do Merthyr Council and the two Health Boards have a clear vision, and do other people agree with that vision?



This is what we did to find the answers.



CSSIW looked at Merthyr Council.



- Merthyr Council filled in questionnaires for us.



- We looked at inspection reports about services in Merthyr.



- All Wales People First and the All Wales Forum of Parents and Carers talked to their members and other people in Merthyr. They told us what people said.



- We spent 2 weeks in Merthyr.



- We looked at 20 people's files.



- We found out more about 8 of those people.



- We talked to staff, councillors, service providers and voluntary organisations.



- We visited day centres, supported living projects and care homes.



- We went to a talk by Merthyr Council and the two Health Boards about how they work together.

Healthcare Inspectorate Wales looked at the two Health Boards.



- We found out about 4 people who get support paid for by health and social care, or just by health.



- We looked at their files.



- We talked to professionals.



- We met the people and their families.



- We talked to health staff and managers in both health boards.



- We held a meeting with the community learning disability health team.



- The two Health Boards and Merthyr Council gave us a presentation about how they work together.



# Thank you

A lot of people gave their time, help and ideas. We want to say thank you to:



- people with learning disabilities



- parents and carers



- staff and managers at Merthyr Council



- staff and managers at Cwm Taf and Abertawe Bro Morgannwg health boards



- service providers



- voluntary organisations and other partners



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# Merthyr Council

## About Merthyr Council



About 59,000 people live in Merthyr.



We think there are about 1,095 adults with learning disabilities in Merthyr.



In Merthyr, social workers work with people based on where they live. They do not have a specialist team that only works with people with learning disabilities.





x222

Merthyr Social Services knows about 222 adults with learning disabilities, and 153 of these people have a case manager or a review.



Social Services have known most of these people for a very long time.



153

Of the 153 people who have a case manager or a review:



65

- 65 people live with families



18

- 18 people live in supported accommodation



- 28 people live in care homes



- 7 people live outside Merthyr



- 78 people go to a day service



- 47 people get home care



## Good things about what Merthyr Council does

Here are some good things about Merthyr Council:



- People who need to use different health and social care services get good support.



- 2 group homes were replaced by supported accommodation. Staff worked well together, listened to people, checked what was best for people and made sure people could visit their new homes.



- The Council is good at planning how to spend money.



- The Council is good at checking if Social Services as a whole is working well.



- The Director of Social Services meets with the people who run Merthyr Council.



Here are some good things about staff:



- Staff work hard and care about the people they work with.



- Staff stay for a long time, so they get to know people well.



- Senior managers know their staff well.



- Senior managers know the people with learning disabilities well too.



## Organising and planning



Staff know what people need.

They think about what the person will need in the future. The senior managers hear about this. This helps senior managers to plan for the future.



We think senior managers make sure that people with learning disabilities generally get good and safe care.



Merthyr Social Services wants people to be independent and have good lives. They have ways to check if Social Services is doing this.



But no-one has worked out a vision for people with learning disabilities in Merthyr.



Senior managers say they want people to live more independently and do more. We think this means more people should use direct payments.



Merthyr Council needs a vision for services. They need a plan for how to achieve this vision.



They need to do this by working with people with learning disabilities, their family carers, staff, the two Health Boards, other service providers and voluntary groups.



Planning for the future and agreeing a vision is hard because:



- funding cuts mean there are fewer senior managers



- none of the councillors is a learning disability champion



- the Council is not focusing on people with learning disabilities
- there is no system for working with people with learning disabilities, their family carers and voluntary groups



Merthyr Council, Rhondda Cynon Taf Council and the two Health Boards have started to work together.



- They have not agreed a shared vision for the future for people with learning disabilities.



- They have started working together on a way to choose, buy and check services together. It will be hard work to make this happen.



Staff believe that information and advice can help people so they do not need help with more serious problems later on. Staff worry that they will not be able to give advice and help to everyone who phones up.





## Having a voice



There have been big changes to some services. People, their families and service providers have been involved in making the changes.



The Council does not have



- a way for people to work with them to develop a vision for the future



- a way for people with learning disabilities and their family carers to say what they think about the services they use



- a way for people with learning disabilities and their family carers to help plan new services



Staff try to listen to people with learning disabilities about the care and support they want.



People with learning disabilities can have an advocate to help them speak up or to speak up for them. People's files have a record of what advocates have said and done.



## Working together



Social Services and health staff manage to work well together. But there are some barriers:



- Health and social care teams have offices in different places.
- Senior managers talk with senior managers in Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, Cwm Taf University Health Board and Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board.

But the 2 Councils and 2 Health Boards do not share money, share services or make detailed plans for the future together.

- Merthyr's Health Board is Cwm Taf. But people in Merthyr get learning disability health services from Abertawe Bro Morgannwg.
- Merthyr Council also works with other South East Wales councils.



## People's plans



People's assessment, care plan and review are almost always done well and at the right time.



Staff know people well, so staff are good at thinking about what will work for people.

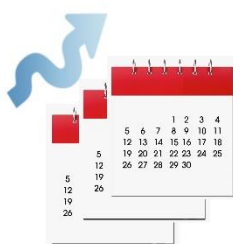


Staff are good at working together to co-ordinate people's care and support.

Plans need to:



- look at how people can become more independent



- plan for the future, especially if the person lives with an older family carer



## Day services



Day service staff like the people who use day services.



The day services have changed. This has been good and bad:



- The Bothy is good.



- Activities at Ty Gwyn need more structure.



- The Keir Hardie Health Park day centre building is not suitable because:



- there is no room for people to get out of their wheelchairs



- the corridors are blocked with empty wheelchairs. This is not safe



We asked for a health and safety risk assessment for the Keir Hardie Health Park day centre. The Council has not given us one.



## Keeping people safe



The Council seems good at keeping people safe and dealing with any incidents.



People's files do not always say if they have been at risk in the past.



Staff have training so they know what to do if someone may not be able to make their own decisions, or if someone may need their freedom limited.



## Information for the public



There are gaps in information for the public about learning disability services.



There are gaps in information about opportunities to get involved in community activities.

Cwm Taf  
**Carers A-Z Guide**



The Cwm Taf Carers A-Z Guide is good. But the only information about Social Services is how to contact the social work team.



Social Services does not have any leaflets about learning disability services.





## Staff



There have been some staff changes and some people have been off sick.



Staff get a lot of supervision on checking cases. They do not get as much support to think, reflect and learn.



Managers need to make sure staff are challenged to do what the new Act says.



Council staff get training. Social care staff working for other organisations can go on the training too.



Merthyr Council has a new way to check how staff are getting on. Managers need to start using this with Social Services staff.



## Communication



Very few people in Merthyr speak Welsh.  
So almost no-one wants a service in Welsh.



About 10 staff speak Welsh.



The Council offers classes to staff in:



- Welsh



Hello

- British Sign Language



- English as a second language



## Family carers



Voluntary Action Merthyr Tydfil has a project to improve services for family carers. But they do not have a group just for family carers of people with learning disabilities.



Family carers can phone someone they know in the social work team to get information and advice. Family carers said they get helpful replies. Family carers can phone up whether the person has a case manager or not.



Family carers say they are fully involved in decisions about a person's care plan and services. Family carers seem to be in charge of sorting care, with support from Social Services.



Most family carers feel well supported.



A few family carers have had good carer's assessments.



There is no carers network or group.



## Community support



Relying less on the Council means relying more on other community support. This means:



- making Merthyr communities stronger



- having more support for family carers, including carers networks



- having a clear way for family carers and people with learning disabilities to be part of developing new types of service



- supporting and challenging staff to change how they think



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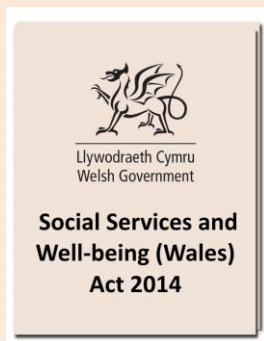
## What Merthyr Council needs to do



- Have a clear vision for the future for people with learning disabilities in Merthyr. This vision must:



- be developed with people with learning disabilities, their family carers, staff and service providers



- be based on the new Act



- Write a detailed plan for how to choose, buy and check learning disability services.



- Provide clear, user-friendly information to people who ask for information and for the general public. The information should be about:



- services



- ways to get involved in community activities



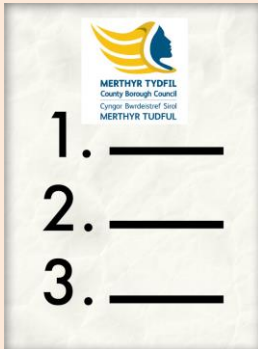
- Make sure Keir Hardie Health Park day centre is safe and suitable.



- Work to make the community stronger so there are more community opportunities for people with learning disabilities and their family carers.



- Make sure staff get an annual check on how well they are doing their job.



**Merthyr Council must write an improvement plan saying how they will do these things.**



**Merthyr Council should send us a copy of their plan.**



**We will check if Merthyr Council is doing what it says in their plan.**



# The Health Board

## About the Health Board



Most places in Wales only have one Health Board involved in learning disability health services. But Merthyr has:

- one Health Board in charge of services (Cwm Taf)

- another Health Board running the learning disability health services in Merthyr



This means a person with learning disabilities in Merthyr would use:



- Cwm Taf services when they use the same health services as everyone else in Merthyr



- Abertawe Bro Morgannwg services when they use learning disability health services



Cwm Taf is still in charge, even if another Health Board runs services for them. We can tell Cwm Taf what they need to do.



Health services for people with learning disabilities include:



- a community health team



- a specialist behaviour team



- specialist learning disability dieticians

The staff and managers running the learning disability health services are part of the Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Division of Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board.



## Good things about health services in Merthyr

Here are some good things about health services in Merthyr:



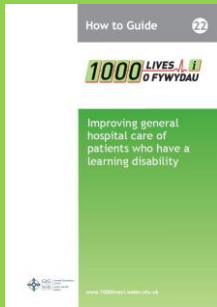
- staff are good at helping people with learning disabilities to be healthier and to have healthier lifestyles



- staff understand the challenges in meeting people's health needs



- staff make it easier for people to do things like go to the GP and have annual health checks



- Cwm Taf is using the 1000+ Lives guidance to make sure people with learning disabilities get better care if they need to go into hospital



- staff from different teams work together to make sure people with profound and multiple learning disabilities get great health support



- staff understand people's needs, and work together to think about what someone may need in the future



- staff really want people's lives to get better because of what the staff do



- there is some good accessible information in people's files.



## Organising and planning



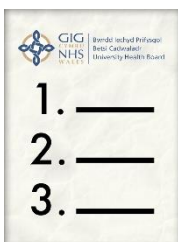
There is no clear vision for the future for people with learning disabilities.



Both the Health Boards need to work together well. At the moment, the Health Boards do not plan together much.

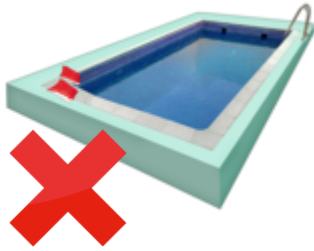


Cwm Taf is paying Abertawe Bro Morgannwg to run learning disability health services in Merthyr. But Cwm Taf has not said clearly what services Abertawe Bro Morgannwg must provide.



Neither of the Health Boards knows what services people need.

People told us:



- there is not enough hydrotherapy



- it can be hard to get equipment when you need it



- there are problems applying for Continuing Health Care



Cwm Taf has a plan saying they will start planning learning disability health services.

Staff are not sure what the Health Boards are doing.



The Health Boards have made changes without talking enough with the staff.



It is hard to be employed by one Health Board and run services for another Health Board.





## Working together



The Health Boards are starting to plan for the future. They are starting to think how to work with others to choose, buy and check health services for people with learning disabilities.



Health and social care staff work well together.



Some things make it hard for them to work together:



- the teams are in different places
- when health and social care staff both work with someone, Social Services doesn't always tell the health staff what is happening



- the teams have different computer systems



- health keep people's files on paper, not on computers



Sometimes the community health staff find it hard to get GPs and hospitals to work well with people with learning disabilities.



The Council are good at telling the health team if someone will need health support.



## People's plans



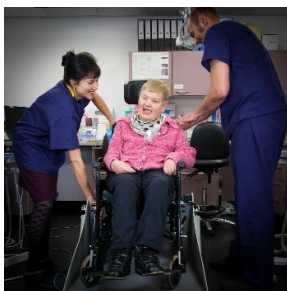
Health staff involve people and their family in decisions.



Health staff tell social workers what they are doing.



Sometimes social workers do not invite health staff to people's review meetings. This makes it harder to make sure people have the right care plan.



People with profound and multiple learning disabilities get good support. The professionals all work together to support them.



## Voice



Health staff work hard to make sure people who do not speak can have a say in their own services and support.



Health staff told us that:



- family carers had a say in the changes to day services



- they will listen to people with learning disabilities when they plan for the future



The Health Boards do not have a plan that says how people with learning disabilities and their family carers will have a voice in plans for the future.



We are not sure that services are planned around what people with learning disabilities and their family carers say.



**Staff**



Staff feel valued by the team manager and each other.



The Health Boards need to get better at communicating with their staff.



## Keeping people safe



Health staff are good at keeping people safe.



Managers in Health Boards do not always know what the community health team are doing to keep people safe.

# What Cwm Taf Health Board need to do



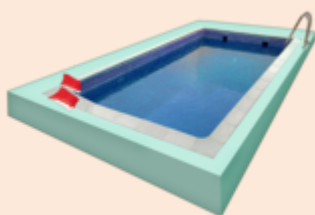
- Cwm Taf **must** make sure they plan properly. They must:



- make their plans with Abertawe Bro Morgannwg and Merthyr Council



- make sure everyone has a vision for the future for people with learning disabilities



- Cwm Taf **must** make sure there is enough hydrotherapy for people.



- Both Health Boards **should** find out what services people need.



- Both Health Boards **must**:



- make sure people can get equipment when they need it



- make sure Social Services include health staff in people's assessments, care plans and reviews



- make sure there are clear systems so they know if health staff are worried about someone's safety





- make sure staff know what is happening and feel part of the Health Boards



- work with people with learning disabilities and their families to plan for the future



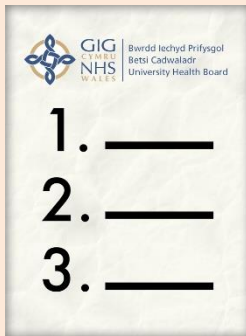
- make sure the system for applying for Continuing Health Care works better



**Cwm Taf has 2 weeks to write an improvement plan saying how they it will do these things.**



**Cwm Taf must send the plan to Healthcare Inspectorate Wales.**



The plan must say



- what the Cwm Taf will do about the things in this report



- when they will do it



Cwm Taf should check that the same problems are not happening in other parts of the Health Board.



Cwm Taf must tell Healthcare Inspectorate Wales when they have done what the plan says.