This is the fourth edition of the *BILD Code of Practice*. The first edition was published in 2001 (BILD, 2001). It follows on from the second and third editions that were published in 2006 and 2010 respectively (BILD, 2006 and 2010).

The frequency with which the *Code of Practice* has required updating says something about the advances in thinking and the pace of change in the development of good practice in reducing restrictive practices in education and care settings for individuals whose behaviour is described as challenging services. However, running alongside the positive developments have been a series of national scandals exposing abuse and poor care practices, most notably the Panorama programme about abuse at the Winterbourne View Hospital (BBC, 2011). One outcome of the documentary and the national outcry that followed its broadcast has been an increased government focus, in England, on the models of care, inspection and regulation systems, standards of practice and guidance underpinning the provision of care to adults and children with learning disabilities, autism and special educational needs (Department of Health, 2012a, 2012b). The impetus for this new edition is, therefore, twofold. First, it incorporates the most up to date thinking within the field, notably the increasing prominence of positive behaviour support approaches. Second, it takes account of the new guidance *Positive and Proactive Care: Reducing the need for restrictive interventions* (Department of Health, 2014) in England that aims to minimise the use of restrictive practices, promote safer application of restrictive practices as a last resort and alternatives in the management of challenging behaviour in health and adult social care.

**Background**

The initial *Code of Practice* (BILD, 2001) was aimed at trainers and was a response to an identified need to clarify the standards relating to training in physical intervention skills. This first edition of the *Code of Practice* was written at the same time as the
Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills were preparing the *Guidance for Restrictive Physical Interventions: How to provide safe services for people with learning disabilities and autistic spectrum disorder* (Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills, 2002). BILD worked closely with the two government departments during the drafting of the guidance and this ensured that there were many common themes in the *Code of Practice*. In 2001, the focus of the first edition of the *Code of Practice* was to address the need to ensure that physical interventions were used safely and within the law.

The first edition set out clear principles including:

- Training in physical interventions must always be provided within a wider context that promotes prevention and alternative ways of responding to challenging behaviour.
- Physical interventions must be planned with reference to the individual's support plan that is produced following multidisciplinary assessments. Blanket approaches that permit the routine use of physical interventions in an education or care setting are unacceptable.
- Only physical intervention techniques that have been assessed as safe and are not based on inflicting pain should be used.
- Physical interventions must only be used in a person's best interests and in the context of an organisation's duty of care to the people it looks after.
- To comply with the law, physical interventions can only be considered as a last resort and must be the least restrictive alternative that will manage the behaviour.
- If a physical intervention is used, it must be at the minimum practicable level to manage the behaviour and be used for the shortest possible time.

All of these principles remain as relevant today as they were in 2001.

The 2006 edition of the *Code of Practice* extended its target readership to include the commissioners, or purchasers, of training as well as trainers. This was an acknowledgement that good quality training, on its own, is insufficient to ensure good support. The revised *Code of Practice* recognised the importance of physical interventions being used within an overall framework of good practice and that a wide range of preventative measures should be put in place to ensure that they are only used as a last resort. This preventative
framework requires care and education organisations to have clear and robust policies that are based on a care planning approach. This will include a gradient of preventative measures to diffuse challenging situations before there is any need to resort to physical interventions. In addition organisations need effective monitoring systems to ensure that members of staff only use physical interventions in this wider preventative context. The 2006 Code of Practice aimed to assist commissioners of training to better understand the links between the training and their organisational context, helping them to make better decisions about what training to arrange or purchase. This edition of the Code of Practice took account of the guidance in England that had been published since 2001 (Department of Health and Department for Education and Skills, 2002). For training organisations and trainers, it also took account of the development of BILD’s Physical Interventions Accreditation Scheme that had been launched in April 2002. Accreditation is conditional on training organisations ensuring that the training they offer meets with the requirements of the Code of Practice.

The 2010 edition of the Code of Practice included a much greater emphasis on:

- the importance of positive behaviour support approaches
- the importance of reducing the use of restrictive physical interventions
- issues relating to poor practice as the publication coincided with a number of widely publicised abuse scandals in Cornwall and Sutton and Merton (Healthcare Commission and Commission for Social Care Inspection, 2006 and Healthcare Commission, 2007)
- examples of good practice and the ways in which vulnerable children, young people and adults could be positively supported
- the importance of appropriate cultures within care and education services

The 2010 Code of Practice represented a progressive movement from an approach that emphasised making training in physical skills better to an approach that emphasised restraint reduction. It included a greater emphasis on training organisations and commissioners of training providing evidence that restraint reduction plans were being developed and implemented.
There was a stronger emphasis on ensuring that training took account of the education, health or social care organisation's values and culture, the context in which the training was being delivered and the assessed needs of the individuals using that service.

**Continuous improvements**

In publishing this fourth edition of the *Code of Practice*, BILD remains fully committed to providing standards for the key individuals and organisations involved in the development and delivery of restraint reduction training that includes training in physical skills. BILD continues to be morally and ethically opposed to the deliberate infliction of pain as a means of control in the care and education of the children, young people and adults covered by this guidance. This updated edition of the *Code of Practice* continues to have application across a variety of settings. It is relevant to education, health and social care organisations that purchase training on minimising the use of restrictive practices including the use of physical skills, for the following:

- children and adults with a learning disability
- children and adults with autistic spectrum conditions
- pupils with special educational needs
- children with additional needs that may result in socially inappropriate behaviour(s)
- children with social and emotional difficulties associated with behaviours that challenge
- adults with a learning disability and/or autism who are detained under the mental health legislation for the country in which they live
- children and young people (up to the age of 19) who are detained in semi secure and secure settings or who are detained under the relevant mental health legislation
- families and family carers, including foster carers, those offering short breaks and support to children, young people and adults with learning disabilities, autism and social emotional and behaviour difficulties

This edition has been published in a national policy context (in England) where there appears to be little or no enthusiasm for the mandatory regulation of training providers. Instead, quality
services are promoted through guidance and good practice guides. In the absence of mandatory regulation, the BILD Accreditation Scheme based on this *Code of Practice*, will remain one of the few available mechanisms to enable training providers to have a focussed external verification of the quality of their service. A growing number of training organisations are applying for accreditation and for these, and the existing accredited organisations, this *Code of Practice* will continue to be a set of standards against which their services can be benchmarked and assessed. For more information on the BILD Accreditation Scheme go to www.bild.org.uk/codeofpractice

However, the use of physical interventions is just one component of the wider training and development frameworks that support children, young people and adults who can experience difficulties in communication or managing their emotions and use behaviours as a means to express themselves. This revised and updated *Code of Practice* will continue to provide an important point of reference not just for trainers but also for training organisations, for the purchasers of training, for those with responsibility for implementing standards and for the family members and advocates of individuals who have challenging behaviours. Information about this *Code of Practice* for regulators, family members, advocates and individuals who use services can be found at www.bild.org.uk/codeofpractice

In addition to continuing to provide a framework for the BILD Accreditation Scheme, the *Code of Practice* also:

- helps training and purchasing organisations to shape the content of bespoke training and create a focus on the essential values, knowledge and skills in relation to risk assessment, prevention and minimising the use of restrictive practices
- supports purchasing organisations to identify the risks associated with challenging behaviour in their services and how to manage those risks appropriately by using available resources in the most appropriate way
- supports purchasing organisations to develop high quality preventative and proactive strategies that include policy development, reporting and recording systems, as well as support arrangements for individuals who use their service, family members and the staff who support them
balances the rights and responsibilities of individuals who use their service and staff members in a framework that acknowledges that their joint safety, dignity and wellbeing is of critical importance

- increases awareness of current relevant legislation, policies and guidance
- supports training and purchasing organisations to agree on the structure, content, frequency and duration of training
- supports the development of individual trainers
- provides a resource within which high quality training in behaviour support and physical skills can be promoted and delivered.

Training and purchasing organisations that fully adopt the principles of the *Code of Practice* are able to:

- demonstrate that they have an appropriate support framework that is underpinned by robust quality policies
- provide evidence that the training, care and education offered reflects the individual needs of the children, young people and adults they support
- demonstrate that they have appropriate assessment processes in place
- demonstrate that they adopt a proactive and non-aversive approach to supporting individuals
- demonstrate a commitment to taking account of and reducing risk in services
- provide evidence of a staff group that has received appropriate training and supervision to enable them to offer care and support, learning opportunities and skill acquisition in a safe environment that is free from abusive practices
- demonstrate a reduced reliance on aversive practices and the use of physical interventions and a commitment to further developing restraint reduction plans

Most important of all, it is hoped that the *Code of Practice* will contribute to improvements in the quality of life and support experienced by the children, young people and adults who come into contact with services.