

Press release

BILD – British Institute of Learning Disabilities

Response to “Valuing People Now – A Three Year Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities” Department of Health

BILD welcomes today’s launch of *Valuing People Now* and the government’s renewed commitment to the rights of people with learning disabilities and their families. The emphasis in the document on a human rights approach, strong involvement of family carers, choice and control through the personalisation agenda and including everyone is to be applauded. The emphasis on delivery that Anne Williams as the new Director has brought will concentrate the attention to making the policy a reality at all levels nationally across government departments, regional and locally.

There are many challenges ahead for those committed to turning this new policy into a reality including:

- Truly embedding a human rights approach into all aspects of the delivery
- Getting cross government commitment to the key priorities on health, housing and employment
- Meeting the growing demand for services as a result of the changing demographics and the demand for quality services at a time of economic difficulties
- Seeing through the massive cultural and systems change that the personalisation agenda requires
- Addressing the issues in relation to risk and safeguarding

Keith Smith, Chief Executive of BILD, praises the commitment to ensure that all people with learning disabilities are supported to live full lives as equal citizens. “The emphasis on making it happen for everyone is really positive. This includes people with complex needs, people whose behaviour challenges services, people from black and ethnic minority groups, people on the autistic spectrum and offender. If we can get it right for these groups, then we will be well on the way to improving the lives of all people with learning disabilities.

In addition, I am pleased to see the strong emphasis on family carers being seen as key partners in making the policy happen, alongside people with learning disabilities. The agenda is very challenging but it needs to be successful to ensure that people can have a life and not just services”.

For further information or for an interview about the content of this press release, please contact Keith Smith, BILD Chief Executive on 01562 723025 or email k.smith@bild.org.uk

BILD (The British Institute of Learning Disabilities) is a national charity whose mission is to improve the lives of people with a learning disability.

We achieve this by turning policy into practice and developing the values, knowledge, skills and competencies of those who provide support. We work in partnership with people with learning disabilities and family carers to make sure that high quality person centred support is developed, shared and evaluated.