



The **Regulation** and
Quality Improvement
Authority

Looking at services for children with a disability in the community



**This report is from The Regulation and Quality
Improvement Authority (RQIA)**

Easy read summary

informing and improving health and social care
www.rqia.org.uk



Who we are

We are **The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority, RQIA** for short.

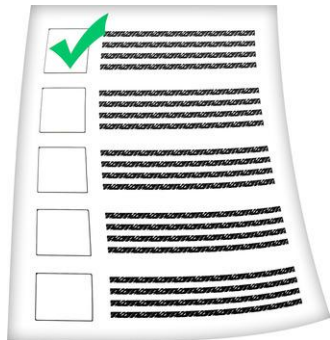
We check up on health and social care services in Northern Ireland. We check:

- how good the services are at looking after children
- how easy it is for children to get the services they need



This report is about what we found out when we checked on health and social services for children with a learning disability.

We checked on services in **5 Health and Social Care Trusts.**



What services should be like

Children with a disability should be able to get **child centred services**.

This means that services should look at what is right for each child.

The services should:

- be easy for children to use
- listen to what the children want and need
- listen to what carers and family say about the needs of their child and their family

What we found out

Money

It was hard to work out how much money is being spent on services for children because staff often work in children's services as well as adult services.



What we found out

Staff

Each Trust has a different way of organising its staff.

Most community services for children are run by social workers and community learning disability nurses.

Other people that work in community services are:

- clinical psychology staff that can help you with your thoughts, feelings and behaviour
- speech and language therapists that can help you with your speech and other issues.

The staff that we met do their best to help children with a disability and their families.



What we found out

Services



We found there were big differences in the services that children can get from one Trust to another.



Services do not have clear ways of working together.

We could not find out how Trusts shared information about good ways of working with children.



Some services had ways to check if what they do helps children with disabilities, but most services have no way of checking.



Each Trust said there are services children need, but that they did not have those services at present.

What we found out

More about Services

A lot of children have to use the **Iveagh Unit**.

There are no services in the community that they can use instead.

This means children can end up having to go back into hospital while staff work out what help and treatment they need.



What we found out

Children with a disability and their families

There is good information about what helps and the treatment given to children.

But, there is not good information to show how the help and treatment is really supporting children to have a good life and do as well as they can.

Each Trust has a way of finding out what children and their families think.





Some families told us that it was hard to get good information.

They were frustrated when it took a long time to get **respite care** - this is when families can get a break from caring for someone.



Families of children on the **autistic spectrum** told us they are worried about their children getting the right help and support.

What should happen next?



It is important that there is good, up to date information about the social care and health needs of children with a disability.

This information should be gathered in the same way in each Trust.



There should be ways of checking how well services are doing in supporting and looking after children.



Staff should get the training they need to do their jobs well.

Staff in all the Trusts should all be working in similar ways.

The Trusts must work with the parents, carers and other people that speak up for the rights of children with a disability.



They must do this to make sure services meet the needs of children and their families.

Services for children have changed and got better since the **Bamford Review**.

The **Bamford Review** is an Independent Review of Mental Health and Learning Disability in Northern Ireland (2008).



But, there are more changes to be made.

This report has been shared with the people who pay for the services.



Thank you to the people with a learning disability
who spoke to us

Thank you to Raincharm for the words

www.raincharm.co.uk

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www.photosymbols.com



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