



What Dimensions thinks about... Assessment and Treatment Units



Assessment and Treatment Units are special places people with a learning disability or autism can go to get help when their problems are too big to deal with at home. They might need to go to a **unit** to stay safe.



Once a person is safe they can leave the **unit** and move back to their home and into their community. **Community** is a way of talking about the place where you live and the people that live there.



Dimensions thinks there is a problem with the way some of these **Units** work. Dimensions thinks that:



- people with a learning disability or autism are staying longer than they need to



- people in the **Units** are not getting the support they need to do things for themselves



- people in the **Units** are not getting the support they need to get out into the **community**.



Thinking about challenging behaviour



Some people do things in a way that other people find very difficult. This is called **challenging behaviour**.



Challenging behaviour is hurting or upsetting other people. **Challenging behaviour** is hurting or upsetting yourself.



Challenging behaviour might be the only way people can communicate. **Communicate** means being able to tell people what you want and need.



For example, they might want to spend time with someone, to get something nice to eat or to get out of a noisy room.



Dimensions tries to find ways to help people **communicate** what they want so they do not have to use **challenging behaviour**.



Dimensions do this by getting to know the person well.



They think about how they communicate with the person with **challenging behaviour**.



They help the person with **challenging behaviour** communicate with others.



Sometimes people that **communicate** with **challenging behaviour** are held down so they cannot move. Dimensions believes this is wrong.



Thinking about Mental Health



Mental health is about how we feel about ourselves and our lives.



Some people with learning disabilities have problems with their **mental health**. These problems can mean that they feel very sad.



Sometimes people with a learning disability do not get the support they need with their **mental health**.



The Mental Health Act



The Mental Health Act is a law which tells people with **mental health** problems what their rights are and how they can get help from a doctor.



Doctors can use the **Mental Health Act** to say you have to stay in a **Unit** and that you cannot leave until you feel better.



Some doctors think that **challenging behaviour** is a **mental health** problem.



Dimensions thinks it **challenging behaviour** is not a **mental health** problem. Dimensions thinks that **challenging behaviour** is a **communication** problem.



Dimensions thinks that the **Mental Health Act** should never be used with people with a learning disability or autism unless they have a problem with their **mental health**.



Dimensions thinks most people with a **challenging behaviour** can get support at home or in their community. They should not be looked after in hospitals.



Dimensions thinks support workers should get all the help they need from experts such as nurses, social workers and psychologists.



If all these people work together, people will get the right help. They will be able to stay at home.



Dimensions think that doctors must show why a person is better in a **Unit** rather than staying in their home.



Dimensions thinks if someone with a learning disability is made to stay in a **Unit** there should be a care plan for them from the moment they arrive. A care plan is information about how someone needs to be supported.



Dimensions thinks this care plan must say how long a person will stay in the **Unit**.



Dimensions thinks if someone with a learning disability is made to stay in a **Unit**, it should be very clear what that person needs to do to be able leave the **Unit**.