

## REGIONAL ROUND-UP

### WALES: Gaps in Learning Disability Care

Support for people with learning disabilities in Wales is fragmented, leaving some living far away from their families, according to a new report.

The Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) review said there were major gaps in the system, especially at school leaving age. Patients should be offered the chance to live near their families, said HIW, which made 27 recommendations in all.

About 60,000 people in Wales have some form of learning disability. The HIW review came in the wake of a 2006 English report which found "significant failings" in learning disability services provided by Cornwall Partnership NHS Trust.

Inspectors visited units, wards and residential establishments and discussed care provision with staff, service users, their families and carers. The HIW found that young adults are often left at a dead end when they left the education system and their families had to struggle for the right support. Concern was also raised about the number of people being placed in residential care far away from home, often at a huge cost to local authorities. Inspectors found in 60 cases people were placed in residential care across the border in England.

Among the HIW recommendations were to improve the quality and depth of activities and therapies available to people. It also called for more investment in speech and language therapy and better policies to aid a smooth transition for children with a learning disability into adulthood. The quality and availability of training for staff also need to be improved, said the report.

#### **BBC News**

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/7139308.stm>