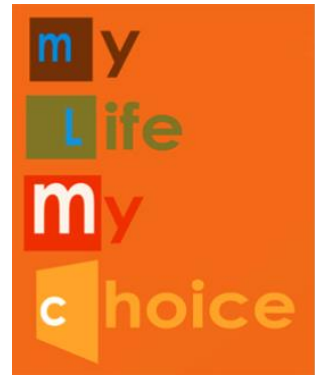


The challenges facing people who have a learning disability.



Hello!



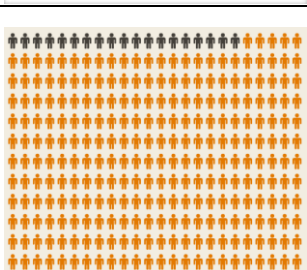
This is our first article for QCS.



We would like to use it to introduce some of the challenges that face people with learning disabilities in the UK today.



Work



Only 7% of people with learning disabilities have a job.



Mencap says that 65% of people with a learning disability want to work.



Many members of My Life My Choice would like to have a job.



Health



People with learning disabilities do not get good healthcare.



They are 58 times more likely to die before the age of 50, and 4 times more likely to have a preventable cause of death



The report "Healthcare for All" says this is because healthcare staff don't know very much about learning disabilities.



My Life My Choice is improving healthcare for people with learning disabilities by providing training for medical staff, and promoting annual health checks. But we think that much more needs to be done.



Loneliness

Being isolated is a big problem for people who have a learning disability.



Mencap have identified that 1 in 4 people with learning disabilities spend less than one hour outside their home each day.



93% of those interviewed by the Foundation for People with Learning disabilities in 2012 said they felt lonely and isolated.



Through our groups and projects, My Life My Choice provides members with opportunities to network with their peers and make friends.



We think that it's important for people with a learning disability to be out and about, and feel sad when we hear that a care manager has decided that this is too unsafe for somebody.

	<h2>Hate Crime</h2> <p>Disability hate crime is on the rise. Hate crimes recorded by police have risen to 2,765 incidents in 2014-15 compared to 1,955 incidents in 2013-14.</p>
	<p>Stephen Brookes from the Disability Hate Crime Network said the figures underestimate the true scale of the problem as many cases go unreported.</p>
	<h2>Freedom</h2> <p>There are currently 3000 people with learning disabilities in Assessment and Treatment Units (ATUs).</p>
	<p>They have not always been diagnosed with a mental health condition but stay in Units for years.</p>
	<p>43% of the people are in Units more than 50km from their homes.</p>



72% are being prescribed anti-psychotic medication as a means of containing them.



30% of people have been in ATUs for more than 5 years.



The average cost of being kept in an ATU is £3500 per week.



We think there has to be a better way of caring for people.

Sources

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- Healthcare for All, Sir Jonathan Michael, 2008.
- Mencap, Stuck at Home, 2012
- Mencap, "Facts about learning disability, 2015
- <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/hate-crime-against-disabled-people-rises-41-per-cent-in-one-year-a6713546.html>
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