



**LEGAL SERVICES
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The legal needs of individuals with learning disabilities

We (Legal Services Board, Legal Services Consumer Panel and Mencap) are publishing on Monday a report by the Norah Fry Research Centre on the legal needs of individuals with learning disabilities. I have included a copy of the research with this letter. We commissioned this research as we believe in a rapidly changing legal environment, it is essential to hear the voice of those who face greater challenges responding to their legal needs. Indeed, recently the LSB's Board joined the Legal Services Consumer Panel in incorporating lessons from the British Standard on the treatment of vulnerable consumers (BS18477) to support our work. We would encourage the Solicitors Regulation Authority to do so too.

This research on individuals with learning disabilities has suggested the following recommendations:

- Develop accessible information for people with learning disabilities about the purpose of legal services and how they can be used
- Develop information and resources to clarify the routes that family carers and others can take to access specialist legal services on behalf of others
- Strengthen the awareness legal professionals have about learning disabilities through professional training and guidance
- Promote collaborative working between legal services and the social care sector

All regulators should consider as part of their response to the Legal Education and Training Review (LETR) what they can do to learn from this research and improve the availability of effective, approachable and affordable legal services for individuals with learning disabilities.

We believe that this report significantly enhances our understanding of the legal needs of people with learning disabilities and we hope that you will find it helpful. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this research with you further should you find that useful.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Kenny
Chief Executive

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