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Examining the differences in, how residential facilities support people with intellectual disabilities with challenging behaviour and/or mental health problems

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Over the last 30 years, services for people with intellectual disabilities have been transformed with community residential services. This has generally been quite successful and has led to better outcomes for people with intellectual disabilities. However, the development of community living has not been without its challenges, especially in terms of service users who have presented with challenging behaviour and/or mental health problems. The present study was carried out with the aim to investigate potential differences between 2 groupings of residential facilities for people with intellectual disabilities with challenging behaviour and/or mental health problems, one of which has experienced hospital admissions in the last 4 years (Admissions Group) (n=75), and one of which has successfully maintained placements in the community (Placement Maintained Group) (n=35). Staff from across Northern Ireland participated by completing a number of standardized questionnaires (n=9) to assess perceptions and attributions of the behavioural/mental health characteristics of adults with intellectual disabilities, emotional reaction, confidence, and perception of management and leadership support. The results showed that staff perceptions on the behavioural/mental health characteristics of the adults with intellectual disabilities varied across the 2 groups. Staff in the placement maintained group showed a significantly more positive emotional response to challenging behaviour than the admissions group; and was more in agreement that effective resources, organisation, management and leadership support systems were in place. The findings are discussed in terms of features of the most effective residential settings to support people with intellectual disabilities who present with challenging behaviour and/or mental health problems.

Biography

Owen Barr is the Head of School of Nursing at Ulster University. He is a Registered Nurse and worked in hospital and community nursing posts in intellectual disability services in England and Northern Ireland before entering nurse education. He has particular interests in the health needs of people with intellectual disabilities, including access to health services. He has written widely, with over 100 publications covering nursing services for people with intellectual disabilities and support for the families of people with intellectual disabilities. He is the joint Editor of the *Oxford Handbook of Learning and Intellectual Disability Nursing*.

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