

## Hearing from the Seldom Heard – a new resource

People with learning disabilities face many barriers in being able to complain about the services they receive. Nationally there is a drive to improve access to complaints procedures in both health and social care through **'Making Experiences Count' (Department of Health 2007)**. However people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and other complex communication needs are not going to be greatly helped simply by the production of an integrated complaints procedure or an 'accessible' complaints leaflet, however well designed. The **Hearing from the Seldom Heard project** which ran from April 2008 until March 2009 was funded by the Department of Health and undertaken by the British Institute of Learning Disabilities. It aimed to look at how to overcome barriers and create listening cultures within organizations to hear from those who are seldom heard. Six areas of good practice were identified

1. **Getting to know people really well**
2. **Better communication**
3. **Raising awareness of the human rights of people who are seldom heard**
4. **Improved access to advocacy**
5. **Ensuring everyone has their own complaints buddy**
6. **Effective complaints procedures.**


The project has resulted in a resource pack containing practice recommendations, resources and links to examples of innovative work. The pack contains information on each of the key areas identified by the project with examples of good practice, and perhaps most importantly real life stories about people's attempts to hear from people who are seldom heard. There are a limited number of hard copies of the CD Rom available (at a cost of £3.50 to cover postage and packing) from BILD or you can download the information freely direct from the BILD website.

[http://www.bild.org.uk/humanrights\\_seldomheard.htm](http://www.bild.org.uk/humanrights_seldomheard.htm)

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**Hearing from the Seldom Heard**

Supporting complaints from people with learning disabilities and complex communication needs

**The good practice recommendations**

1. Getting to know people really well
2. Learning to communicate better
3. Raising awareness of human rights
4. Access to appropriate advocacy
5. Access to complaints buddies
6. Making effective use of complaints procedures

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The Department of Health has provided funding for this project