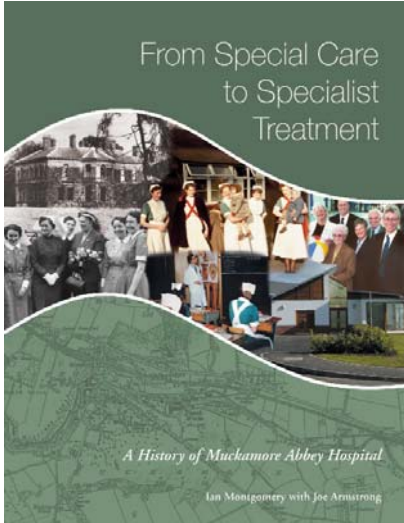


From Special Care to Specialist Treatment

A History of Muckamore Abbey Hospital



Authors: **Ian Montgomery** with **Joe Armstrong**
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When Muckamore Abbey Hospital first admitted patients in 1949, services in Northern Ireland for people with learning disability lagged far behind those in the rest of Ireland and the United Kingdom. By the 1960s, however, this had been replaced by what was considered to be a model service. This book tells the remarkable, indeed heart-warming, story of the central role that Muckamore Abbey played then in the positive transformation, not only of the services provided, but of the lives of many hundreds of people, patients and staff alike.

It highlights the role that parents played in setting up some of the first community day services, supported by

the professional dedication and innovation shown by nursing, medical and administrative staff. This history also describes how developments in the hospital reflected the changes in philosophies and attitudes over time so that what was once a cradle-to-the-grave service has become one that provides greater dignity, respect and independence for people with learning difficulties, one that they and their carers not only deserve but now expect.

Apparent throughout is the care with which this book has been researched as it honestly tells the story of the hospital and its community. While at times this is a sobering tale with struggles for funding for even basic services, most encouragingly it shows the recent involvement of people with learning disability in shaping their own specialist services into the twenty-first century.

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