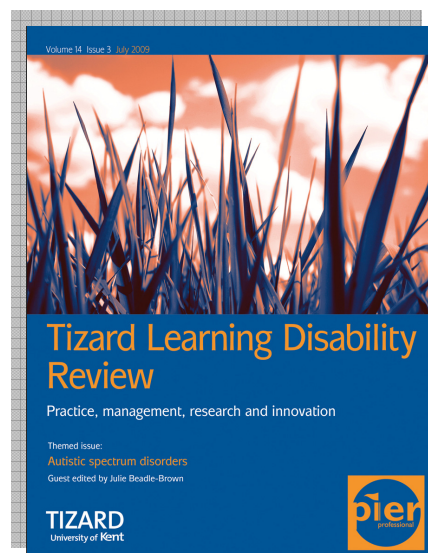


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Health service units for people with intellectual disabilities and challenging behaviour or mental health problems in England

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Introduction

Following allegations of abuse in NHS residential units for people with intellectual disabilities in Cornwall, followed by further problems in Sutton and Merton in London (Healthcare Commission, 2007a; Healthcare Commission & Commission for Social Care Inspection, 2006), the Healthcare Commission (the regulatory body then responsible) carried out a national audit of specialist health services for people with intellectual disabilities (Healthcare Commission, 2007b).

The audit comprised a national survey of health service inpatient units for people with intellectual disabilities, followed by visits to selected services. The results of the survey were not reported separately, but those for services for people whose behaviour presents a challenge or who have mental health problems have recently been published (Mansell et al, 2010). This paper summarises the published results, describing the characteristics of the services studied and comparing the different types of service (assessment and treatment units, low secure and medium secure units). It also compares National Health Service (NHS) and independent sector (IH) units.

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