

The Rt Hon Wes Streeting MP
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care
Department of Health and Social Care
39 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0EU

Dear Secretary of State,

RE: Delivering the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training at Scale and with Impact

I am writing on behalf of Care England, the leading voice for independent adult social care providers, regarding the implementation of the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism (OMMT).

We are fully supportive of this training and the principles behind it. Everyone working in social care should have the knowledge and confidence to provide care that recognises and respects the needs of autistic people and people with a learning disability. Providers already deliver training and practice that promote this understanding every day, and they see the Oliver McGowan programme as an opportunity to strengthen and build on what they already do well. Across the country, organisations are planning their approach to implementation and want to see this training succeed.

However, there is concern about whether the current model can be delivered safely, consistently, and at the scale required. The intention is right, but the way the training is currently designed could make delivery extremely difficult for providers, and in some cases, for the very people the training aims to empower.

Our members have highlighted four main areas that need attention:

Capacity and delivery

Current capacity to deliver the training simply cannot meet the scale of national demand. Even with an ambitious recruitment drive, the pool of trained co-trainers with lived experience will remain limited for some time. Delivering in-person sessions consistently across thousands of services would be an immense logistical challenge, particularly for providers operating multiple sites or services in rural areas.

Safeguarding and wellbeing

The inclusion of people with lived experience is fundamental to the training's success, but their participation must always be safe, supported, and meaningful. Without consistent preparation, supervision, and debriefing, there is a genuine risk that involvement in large or repeated sessions could become distressing, tokenistic, or even harmful. Safeguarding and welfare arrangements must therefore be embedded in every stage of implementation.

Quality and flexibility

A single, prescriptive delivery model risks prioritising compliance over quality. Many providers already deliver training that meaningfully involves people with lived experience and achieves the same learning outcomes envisaged by the Code. Allowing flexibility for accredited, equivalent approaches would uphold the training's purpose while enabling proportionate, high-quality implementation across different provider types and sizes.

Funding and workforce impact

We welcome the Department's announcement of £11.98 million to support delivery of the Oliver McGowan training. However, this funding falls far short of what is required to deliver the training safely and sustainably at scale. Even when limited to services supporting people with learning disabilities and autistic people, the costs of release time, backfill, and support for lived-experience trainers will exceed available funding many times over. The allocation is also not backdated and applies only to one approved training package, excluding other accredited programmes that meet the standards set out in the Code of Practice. Without adequate and flexible funding, the financial pressure on providers will increase at a time when resources are already stretched.

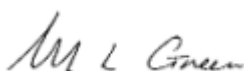
These concerns should not be mistaken for opposition to the training; they reflect the practical realities that must be resolved if the programme is to achieve its objectives. The sector is ready to deliver the Oliver McGowan training successfully, working collaboratively with Government to ensure it has the intended impact.

A meeting between DHSC officials, Care England, and the Chief Executives of our Working Age Adult Board must now take place to ensure this vital reform is delivered in a way that is achievable, safe, and true to its purpose. Given the scale of change and the providers represented, this discussion is critical to shaping an implementation plan that works in practice as well as in principle.

This has been developed through Care England's Working Age Adult Policy Board, which brings together a wide range of national, regional, and specialist providers. The Board is fully behind the aims of the Oliver McGowan reforms and is committed to working with your Department to make them deliverable in practice.

We look forward hearing from you, and to working with you and partners to finalise this approach and to communicate it clearly to the sector.

Yours sincerely,





CARE ENGLAND

The voice of care



Professor Martin Green OBE

Chief Executive, Care England

