

Independent provider alliance responds to government paper 'Putting Children First' and Sir Martin Narey's review into residential care.

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The Children's Services Development Group (CSDG) welcomes the publication of the government's paper *Putting Children First*. The paper sits alongside Sir Martin Narey's review of residential care which also highlights the important role of the private sector in delivering quality residential provision.

CSDG spokesperson Lizzie Wills said: *The government's paper, alongside Sir Martin Narey's review of residential care, both acknowledge that a significant expansion of high quality commissioning is needed to tackle poor outcomes and variation in spend in children's services. The process is currently far too cumbersome for what are typically highly complex services for incredibly vulnerable young people.*

Response to Putting Children First paper

For many years, CSDG has campaigned for reform in commissioning to enable local authorities to benchmark providers beyond crude measurements of cost. The government has acknowledged that where authorities tend to deliver the majority of services in-house, it does not consistently deliver excellent practice. We are therefore delighted to see the government will now explore the development of an outcomes framework consisting of the most useful indicators of success and comparator tools, to enable better local authority decision-making.

Response to Sir Martin Narey review

Further to this the Narey review has focused strongly on the private sector's role in residential care. We are hopeful that his conclusion that the sector is not exploitative, nor is it making excessive profits, will end the unproductive discussion in this area that has detracted from the young people at the heart of it. Indeed Narey has highlighted that the sector is overall of better quality. It is hugely important that the children's services sector, including voluntary and local authority providers focus now on how we can improve services and ensure children are placed where their needs can best be met.

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Notes to Editors:

1. For more information, please contact Nicholas Charalambides on 0203 102 3628 or nicholascharalambides@westminsteradvisers.co.uk.
2. [CSDG](#) is an alliance of independent providers of care and specialist education services for children and young people with complex needs. Members include Acorn Care & Education, Foster Care Associates, National Fostering Agency, Options Group, SENAD Group and Witherslack Group.