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Convener  
Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

Via email: ehrcj.committee@parliament.scot

16<sup>th</sup> May 2025

Dear Convenor

## **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**

### **Evidence Session 29 April 2025**

SCLD would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to discuss the particular experience of people with learning disabilities in relation to the Concluding Observations and recommendations to the UK and Scottish governments of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights following its periodic review of compliance with ICESCR.

Further to our evidence at the session, we would like to highlight to the committee the recommendation to the UK and Scottish Government to:

***‘ensure access to adequate housing for individuals with intellectual disabilities, enabling those residing in inpatient units to be discharged and preventing their institutionalisation’.***

This recommendation followed evidence which SCLD presented to the UN Committee highlighting [statistics](#) which show that some people with learning disabilities in Scotland are living in patient hospital units for years without clinical need,<sup>1</sup> the potential harm, trauma and impact on physical and mental health that can result from institutional living, and the need for suitable and sustainable housing and support in the community.

This is an issue of national importance for Scotland. We believe that delivering effective solutions for people with learning disabilities and their families will necessitate accountability, national scrutiny and joint working and innovation across health, social care and housing.

We ask that the Committee pay close attention to this issue moving forward as part its human rights monitoring and accountability role.

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<sup>1</sup> Public Health Scotland (PHS) statistics published in March this year, show that there are 172 people with learning disabilities living in hospital and of these 84 people are classified as a delayed discharge. Nearly a quarter of people with learning disabilities in hospital have been there for ten years or more.

More broadly, we are supportive of the idea from colleagues that consideration of the impact of Concluding Observations from the United Nations could become a standard part of the human rights monitoring and accountability role of the Committee in future.

Thank you again for our invitation to the session and we would appreciate further opportunities to support the work of the Committee to help ensure that people with learning disabilities can enjoy their rights on an equal basis to others.

Yours sincerely

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