Dear Ms Hillier

I am writing to update you on the progress made in 2017/18 to reduce the number of beds in mental health hospitals, as we committed to do in the Treasury Minute on local support for people with a learning disability.

The data as of March 2018 shows that the number of people with a learning disability and autism in a facility registered by the CQC as a hospital providing mental health or behavioural healthcare fell by 7% from 2,670 in March 2017 to 2,480 in March 2018. This represents an overall decrease of 14% from 2,880 in March 2015 to 2,480 in March 2018. Early indications show that as of October 2018, this number has fallen further to 2,350, representing an overall reduction of a fifth (19%).

Our last update also included information on the total number of bed closures of the same type in 2017/18 against the planned number. As reported by local Transforming Care Partnerships (TCPs), during 2017/18 277 beds were decommissioned against a plan of 419. Over the course of the programme a total of 413 beds have been decommissioned.

To support accelerated delivery in 2018/19, NHS England has provided additional investment of £22.2m during 2018/19 and is improving and accelerating cross-system financial flows and targeting additional support in those TCPs facing the biggest challenges. In addition, as part of the reconfiguration of services now underway as a result of Building the Right Support, £53m has already been transferred from NHS England to CCGs in 2018/19 as we decommission NHS England-funded beds, and CCGs invest more in community-based initiatives. Further work is underway to embed and sustain the achievements of Building the Right Support beyond March 2019 as part of the NHS long term plan.

We will write to the committee in October 2019, as we committed to, with a final update.

Yours sincerely

Ray James CBE
National Learning Disability Director