

THE GUARDIAN

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Sir, – Ann Shearer's account of the CMH conference *of* and not *on* the so-called mentally handicapped, challenges our patronising assumptions about such people. It also has important implications for anyone who genuinely wants to help other disadvantaged groups. For instance, practically every sentence in her article could apply with equal force to the severely physically handicapped, many of whom also find themselves in isolated and unsuitable institutions, where their views are ignored and they are subject to authoritarian and often cruel regimes.

I am proposing the formation of a consumer group to put forward nationally the views of actual and potential residents of these successors to the workhouse. We hope in particular to formulate and publicise plans for alternative kinds of care. I should be glad to hear from anyone who is interested to join or support this project. – Yours faithfully,

Paul Hunt.

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