DoLs applications backlog leaves vulnerable people at risk of being unlawfully deprived of their liberty

Tuesday 12 May, 2015

The Health and Social Care Information Centre on Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) has released quarterly figures for January – March 2015, today (Tuesday 12 May).

The data shows 119 out of 152 councils (78 per cent of all councils) submitted data for quarter 4. The total number of DoLS applications in quarter 4 2014-15 was 36,000. Of these 8,500 (24 per cent) were granted, 2,900 (8 per cent) not granted and 24,600 (68 per cent) not yet signed off by the Supervisory Body or were withdrawn. At the end of September 2014, there were 19,429 applications where the outcome was still not decided.

Alzheimer's Society is warning that thousands of people with dementia may be deprived of their liberty by a bureaucratic backlog. Local authorities are being swamped with applications to restrict the liberty of people with dementia in homes and hospitals.

George McNamara, Head of Policy at Alzheimer's Society said:

'We are deeply concerned that a massive backlog of cases may lead to people being unlawfully deprived of their liberty because the paperwork is yet to be completed.

'Taking away someone's liberty must always be a last resort. It must be closely monitored, legal and only happen in that person's best interests.'

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