

Forced marriage of people with learning disabilities is abuse too

June 17 2014, by Emma Thorne



New measures brought in to tackle forced marriage have been welcomed by a national charity based at The University of Nottingham.

However, the Ann Craft Trust (ACT) has warned that the growing number of victims with learning disabilities should not be forgotten. ACT also highlighted the importance of both criminal and civil aspects to the act which afford victims of [forced marriage](#) a choice based on their need and circumstances.

From today, [social workers](#), police and policymakers need to include the needs of people with learning disabilities when considering how the new legislation will impact upon their practice.

Victims are now in a position to choose either the civil remedy of obtaining a Forced Marriage Protection Order or the criminal route.

However, many people with learning disabilities will need support in order to make the right decision to meet their needs.

Deborah Kitson, ACT's CEO, commenting on today's announcement and media response said: "Continued education, training and balanced media coverage will be crucial in both raising awareness and giving professionals the information and skills they require to properly safeguard those at risk."

The University of Nottingham's Rachael Clawson, who has worked closely with ACT on a number of forced marriage projects and has conducted research in this area. She added: "The [new legislation](#) sends out a clear message that forced marriage is an abuse of [human rights](#) and will not be tolerated. It remains to be seen, however, how people with learning disabilities will be supported to make use of it."

Provided by University of Nottingham

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