IN BRIEF

An inclusion and diversity research centre is due to open this week at the University of Bradford. Staff at the centre will focus on workplace diversity, equality in health and social care and developing community cohesion. Nurse Uduak Archibong, left, who will be the centre’s first director, said: ‘Our aim is to develop a world class centre of expertise in applied research, policy and programme development on inclusion and diversity.’

Many parents who have learning disabilities are missing out on the support they need because they are deemed ‘too able’ to qualify. A study undertaken at the University of Bristol’s Norah Fry research centre says eligibility criteria for services need to take into account the additional needs of parents who have learning disabilities. A report on the study can be found at www.baringfoundation.org.uk

A new guide on diabetic foot care will be launched next week by the National Diabetes Support Team. The guide sets out the requirements of the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) and the Department of Health’s National Service Framework for Diabetes. It is due to be launched on May 17, when it will be available at www.diabetes.nhs.uk

Forty girls have started to attend school thanks to the International Council of Nurses’ (ICN) girl child education fund. The fund, which is also supported by the Florence Nightingale International Foundation, is helping girls in Kenya, Swaziland, Uganda and Zambia. ‘Girls still account for 60 per cent of the estimated 113 million children who do not attend school in sub-Saharan Africa,’ said ICN president Hiroko Minami.

A framework of competences, skills and role descriptions relating to child protection that are required of all health professionals who work with young people have been spelled out by nursing and medical organisations. The move is in response to the Laming inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié. For copies of Safeguarding Children and Young People: Roles and Competences for Health Care Staff go to www.rcpch.ac.uk

A self-assessment tool designed to help practice nurses ensure they are meeting the needs of children has been published by nursing organisations, GPs and two government departments. Getting it Right for Children and Young People says that practice nurses should receive an annual update in child protection and basic life support skills for infants, children and young people. For copies call RCN Direct on 0845 772 6100 and quote publication code 002777.

NHS Connecting for Health has developed a clinical engagement toolkit that includes a scenario-based board game, known as the Table-Top Challenge. Using the Table-Top Challenge, groups of staff will be able to understand what Connecting for Health is going to deliver in the National Programme for IT, and how it aims to improve both staff and patients’ experiences and support service improvement. For more information on the toolkit and details of how to become a Table-Top Challenge facilitator, email: etdevents@cfh.nhs.uk

POLICE INFORMED OF NURSING HOME ELDER ABUSE FEARS

A nursing home run by a primary care trust (PCT) has been reported to the police over fears that residents were being ill treated by staff.

A recent inspection by the Healthcare Commission of the 40-bed Frank Lloyd Nursing Home in Sittingbourne, Kent, raised concerns about suspected abuse of patients, most of whom are over the age of 75 and have dementia.

The commission’s visit, which was carried out after Swale PCT identified problems at the home, resulted in the PCT putting in a new team of registered mental health nurses to cover each shift.

In addition, a member of the PCT’s executive team will visit the home during each shift until the patients’ safety can be guaranteed.

A PCT spokesperson said it had originally investigated the home after an increase in falls was noticed. Staff found evidence of harassment and bullying, the wrong balance between adult and mental health nurses, and low staff morale.

The commission has raised a ‘blanket adult protection alert’, which has prompted Kent County Council’s social services department to refer the matter to the police under section 127 of the Mental Health Act, which covers the abuse of patients.

Student drop out rate too high in Northern Ireland

One in five nursing students in Northern Ireland fails to complete their courses, the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety admitted last week.

RCN Northern Ireland director Mary Hinds said: ‘The drop out rate is unacceptably high. The figures reflect the financial difficulties that many of our students experience and the government and universities must take this on board. There is also a need for more nurses to support students during clinical placements.’