



## Is healthcare “Getting Better” for people with a learning disability?

### What is it about?

A report was made by **Mencap**, **BILD** and the **Department of Health**

We worked together to find out what people with a learning disability and their families thought about how people with learning disabilities are looked after by healthcare staff.

To do this, we asked questions about healthcare to people with a learning disability and their families.

We held a meeting where people with learning disabilities and their families and carers could come and tell us what they thought.

### Why did we do this?

We wanted to know if people thought healthcare for people with a learning disability had got better since the Six Lives progress report in 2010.

We wanted to know what things still need to change.



Department  
of Health





## What is going well?

- **Reasonable adjustments** were being made.

This means that things were being changed so that a person with a learning disability could get healthcare in the right way for them.

For example some people with a learning disability were sent Easy Read appointment letters.

Some people with a learning disability were given longer appointments.

- People with a learning disability said healthcare staff had a good attitude.
- People said that healthcare staff involved people with a learning disability, their families and carers.
- **Learning disability nurses** are trained on how to care for people with learning disabilities.

People said that when there were learning disability nurses at hospitals people with a learning disability were cared for well.

- Lots of people said that healthcare staff were following the **Mental Capacity Act** when it comes to asking people to sign forms about their care.

Mental capacity means being able to make your own decisions. People with learning disabilities should be allowed to make decisions about their healthcare if they are able to.



## What isn't going well?

- People said that when they had annual health checks they were not very good.
- People said that information they got about their healthcare was hard to understand. It was not in Easy Read.
- Most people said that healthcare staff did not ask how they should communicate with the person with a learning disability.
- People said that healthcare staff did not always see that a person with a learning disability was in pain.
- People said that healthcare staff did not help the person with a learning disability when they were in pain.
- People said that people with a learning disability were not part of deciding about their healthcare.
- People said they were not happy with how long the person with a learning disability had to wait to be told what was wrong with them.



## What needs to change?

- When something goes wrong, it should be easier for people to complain.
- Complaints should be taken seriously and something should be done quickly.
- People with a learning disability and their families should be treated with respect.
- Healthcare staffs feelings towards people with a learning disability should be good.
- Healthcare staff should be trained about learning disability better.

*The training should be done by a person with a learning disability*

- **Advocates** for people with a learning disability should be easy to get.

*Advocates are people that speak up for people with a learning disability.*

*They can help healthcare staff listen to what the person with a learning disability wants.*

- Information should be easy to understand. For example it should be in Easy Read.



## What we think should happen?

We think that if people with a learning disability, their families and carers ask questions, healthcare will get better for people with a learning disability

Questions people with a learning disability and their families and carers should ask –

1. Can I get an annual health check?
2. Is there a learning disability nurse?
3. Can I have a hospital passport?
4. Can I have a longer appointment?
5. Can you give me information in easy read?

We think that if healthcare staff ask questions, healthcare will get better for people with a learning disability

Questions healthcare staff should ask –

1. How should I communicate with you?
2. Are there any reasonable adjustments I can make?
3. Would you like any extra support such as advocacy support?
4. Do you have a health action plan and/or hospital passport?
5. Do you understand what I have told you?



*We hope everyone listens to what people with a learning disability, their families and their carers have told us.*

*We think that this will help to get healthcare right for people with a learning disability*



### **For more information**

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