



## **Learning Disability Professional Senate**

### **What is the Learning Disability Professional Senate?**

The aim of the Learning Disability Professional Senate is to provide an independent professional voice through which we can lead and inform commissioners, government organisations, families, providers and people with learning disabilities about the needs of children and adults with learning disabilities and the services required. It brings together professional leaders from across the UK, to provide a collective voice of specialist health and social care practitioners. The Senate provides cross-professional collaboration, strategic advice and innovation to develop mainstream and specialist services for children and adults with learning disabilities. The Senate recognises and works with the range of professionals working with children and adults with learning disabilities to champion inter-agency, multi-disciplinary, holistic approaches.

### **Who makes up the Senate?**

The Senate is made up of members of the various Colleges and Societies that represent groups of clinical professionals who provide specialist health support to children and adults who have learning disabilities. It covers the jurisdictions of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Professional bodies / groups that are full members of the Senate representing both children and adults include:

- College of Occupational Therapists
- British Psychological Society
- Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
- Royal College of Nursing
- Royal College of Psychiatrists
- Royal College of General Practitioners
- Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists
- Learning Disabilities Consultant Nurse Forum
- British Association of Social Work
- Royal Pharmaceutical Society
- British Association for Music Therapy
- British Association of Art Therapists
- British Association of Drama Therapy
- British and Irish Orthoptic Society
- British Association of Dietetics

Key stakeholders are also invited to provide support and advice to the Senate. These include:

- The views and experiences of children, young people and adults with LD and their families, and organisations who support them including the Challenging Behaviour Foundation
- Health and Social Care commissioners
- NHS England
- Department of Health
- Learning Disabilities Public Health Observatory (IHaL)
- Care Quality Commission

- Health Education England
- Public Health England
- Providers networks

### **What are the aims of the Senate?**

The overall aim of the Senate is to support the development of excellent health and social care services in the United Kingdom for adults and children who have learning disabilities. The Learning Disabilities Professional Senate will:

1. Provide advice and briefing papers to NHS England, Department of Health and the commissioning organisations on issues that are relevant to the strategic delivery of high quality services.
2. Provide advice on the clinical aspects of proposals for large scale service change or reconfiguration where commissioners feel a broader strategic view would be useful.
3. Respond to national strategy consultations that have an impact on the needs of people with learning disabilities.
4. Provide information to NHS England, Department of Health and other national organisations about policy that may improve the lives of people with a learning disability by better meeting their health needs.
5. Participate in national working groups to represent the professions of the Senate to improve the health and social care of people with learning disabilities
6. Provide a forum for the different professional bodies to develop consensus views about a range of policies and developments that can improve the lives of people with learning disabilities.
7. Provide leadership and an effective two way channel of communication between NHS England, Department of Health and other key organisations and all the professional bodies and their members that make up the Senate.
8. Work to promote and improve best practice in the delivery of health and social care for all staff in the professional bodies that make up the Senate.
9. Ensure that the members of the Senate promote the needs identified by families and carers.
10. Support professions to develop collaborative working relationships to improve pathways and commissioning arrangements to ensure both children and adults with learning disabilities receive the services they need at the right time ensuring.
11. Provide advice regarding the role and function of health and social care professionals working with people with learning disabilities.
12. Advise on the development of the total workforce of people who have contact with or support people with learning disabilities.

The changing political and financial climate means that there are currently many policy issues that are of particular interest and relevance to the professional bodies within the Senate. For example:

- Advising regulatory bodies such as the Care Quality Commission about effective monitoring against agreed quality standards
- Advising the Transforming Care Programme and other work programmes that aim to deliver better services and care for people with learning disabilities
- Supporting the professions to develop a unified approach to outcome measures
- Supporting the professional groups to work together to develop effective processes to improve compliance with national quality standards
- Contribute to the development of an effective workforce
- Developing a shared value-base across the professional bodies

**Meetings**

The Senate will normally meet four times a year at venues provided by the professional bodies that are members of the Senate.

**Chair**

The meeting will be chaired by two co-chairs drawn from the professional bodies that are members of the Senate. The Chair will fulfil a term of office normally not exceeding two years and continuity will be ensured by co-chairs taking up office in successive years.

**Quorum**

There would need to be representation from at least 6 members of the Senate

**Minutes**

Minutes of meetings and the agenda would be circulated at least one week before the scheduled meeting. Any member of the Senate can request the Chairs to consider items for the agenda

**For further information**

Please contact the Co-Chairs:

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