

LEARNING DISABILITY ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS



A GUIDE TO ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS
FOR ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

LEARNING DISABILITY

ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS

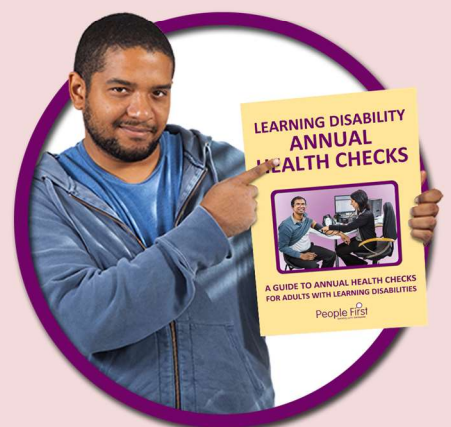
People with a learning disability often have worse physical and mental health than other people. This does not need to be the case.



Learning Disability Annual Health Checks are for adults and young people aged 14 or over with a learning disability.



In this booklet we will call Learning Disability Annual Health Checks “**Annual Health Checks**”.



WHAT WILL AN ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK DO FOR YOU?

An **Annual Health Check** helps you stay well by:

- Giving you a head to toe physical examination.
- Identifying health issues and treating them before they become more serious.
- Talking to the GP or nurse about any changes to your ongoing health issues, e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes etc.
- Giving you the chance to talk to your GP or nurse about:
 - ✓ your general health
 - ✓ medicines you take
 - ✓ lifestyle and wellbeing

You do not have to be ill to have an annual health check – in fact, most people have their **Annual Health Check** when they are feeling well.



REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

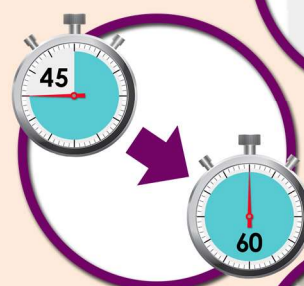
If you are worried about seeing your GP, or there is anything you need to make your visit better, let your GP practice know.

They will help make sure it goes well for you by making any **reasonable adjustments** you need.

A **reasonable adjustment** is when changes are made so people with disabilities have equal access to good quality healthcare services.

Tell your GP practice if you need any reasonable adjustments, such as:

- Using pictures, large print or plain language to tell you what is happening at your annual health check.
- Longer appointments
- Making an appointment for the beginning or end of the day, if you find it hard to be in a busy waiting room.
- Having a family member or support worker with you.



The reasonable adjustments you need should be written down in a health profile or **Health Action Plan** that your GP or nurse can use.

Why not think about what could make your **Annual Health Check** visit better and write them down!



A large, empty white rectangular box with a black border, intended for writing down adjustments or plans.

WHAT IS THE LEARNING DISABILITY REGISTER?

Anyone aged 14 or over who is on their GP's **Learning Disability Register** can have a **free** annual health check once a year.



The **Learning Disability Register** is a record of people with a learning disability listed with each GP practice.



Check with your GP practice if you are on their register.



You can ask to go on this register if you think you have a learning disability.



You can use the form at the back of this booklet to ask your GP to add you to their learning disability register and to ask for an **Annual Health Check**.



WHAT IF MY GP DOES NOT OFFER ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS?

Most GP practices offer **Annual Health Checks** to people with a learning disability.



GP surgeries do not have to offer this service.



If your GP practice has not offered you an annual health check, you can ask them if they could provide one.



If your GP says no, you can contact your local **Learning Disabilities Community Team** for advice. They should be able to help you access an **Annual Health Check**.



Contact details for your local **Learning Disabilities Community Team** are in the back of this booklet.



BEFORE YOUR ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK

You should be sent a letter by your GP asking you to make an appointment for your **Annual Health Check**.



When you get a letter, you need to phone your GP practice and ask them for an appointment.



You need to tell the receptionist if you need any **reasonable adjustments** at your appointment.



You may be asked to have a blood test before your **Annual Health Check** appointment.



If you are scared of needles you can contact your local **Learning Disabilities Community Team** for help and advice.



WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK?

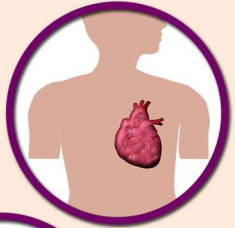
Your **Annual Health Check** will be done in 2 parts.

The **first part of your annual health check** will be a head to toe physical check. This will be done by the practice nurse or by your GP, it should not be done by a Health Care Assistant.

During the physical part of the **Annual Health Check** they will check your:

- Height
- Weight
- Heart rate
- Blood pressure
- Eyes
- Ears
- Blood
- Oxygen levels

You may also be asked to give a urine (wee) sample.



Some people may have health issues that link to their learning disability, e.g. people with Down's Syndrome may be more likely to have thyroid problems.



The GP or nurse will check for these health issues in the first part of your **Annual Health Check**.



The second part of your **Annual Health Check** will be done by your GP.



They will ask you about:

- **Your lifestyle**, e.g. what you eat and drink, if you exercise and your mental health.
- **Things that are more common for people who have a learning disability**, such as constipation or problems with swallowing.



- **Your medicines.** They will check that your medication is still right for you. They may change your medication or how much you take if your health condition has changed.



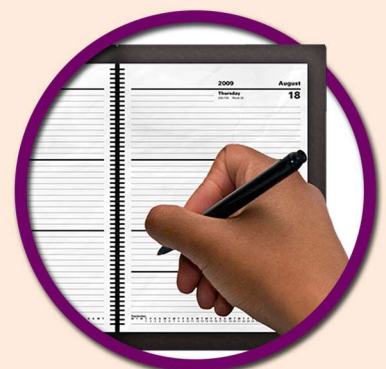
- **Vaccinations and immunisation.** A vaccination is an injection from a needle (also known as a 'jab') that helps protect you against diseases. They will check that these are up to date, e.g. tetanus, flu jab, pneumonia jab.



- **Ongoing health conditions** e.g. epilepsy, asthma or diabetes. The GP will check if your health condition is under control or they will advise you if any changes need to be made.



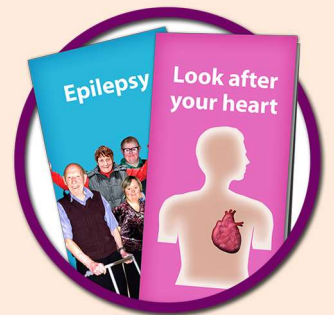
- **Other health appointments** you have or may need, such as physiotherapy, speech therapy or mental health specialist.



- **Your family and/or carers.** The GP will check that they are also well and getting the support they need.
- **Moving to adult services** if you are under the age of 18.



The GP may also give you health information, such as advice on healthy eating, exercise, contraception or stopping smoking, if you need it.



They may tell you if you need any more support. This may be a referral to a dietitian, gym sessions, a mental health specialist or other health specialist.



The GP will ask if you have any questions for them.



To help you do this we have included a list of questions on the next page that you may want to ask.



Here are some ideas about questions you might like to ask your GP.



Tick the boxes next to the questions you'd like to ask:

- ☐ How is my blood pressure?
- ☐ What are the best foods to eat to keep me healthy?
- ☐ What is my medication for?
- ☐ How can I give up smoking?
- ☐ How much alcohol is it safe to drink a week?
- ☐ Am I okay to do exercise?
- ☐ Can I have a copy of my annual health check?

Write in any other questions you have for your GP here:



At the end of your appointment, if you are well and nothing about your health has changed, your GP should tell you that everything is ok and nothing else needs to be done, until your next **Annual Health Check** in a years' time.



You can ask your GP for a paper copy of your **Annual Health Check**.



You will be asked if it is ok for your GP to share your information with other services that provide your health care.



You will also be asked if it is ok for your GP to update your **Summary Care Record**.



Sharing your information helps you get the right support if you ever have to go to a hospital.



AFTER YOUR ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK

Once you have left your appointment your GP will make referrals to any specialists you may need to see.



If your medication has been changed you can go to the chemist to collect it.



You should read or ask for support to read and understand any information or leaflets you have been given.



To help you remember what you need to do after you have had your **Annual Health Check** we have included some questions for you to complete on the next page.



WHAT YOU NEED TO REMEMBER AFTER YOUR ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK?

Use this page to write down anything you need to remember after your **Annual Health Check**.



Date of Annual Health Check:



Any changes to my health:



Any changes to my medication:



Things my GP will do next:



Things I must do next:



When my immunisations are due:



Date my next Annual Health Check is due:



Anything else I need to remember:



ASK YOUR GP FOR AN ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK

If you believe you have a learning disability and would like to have an Annual Health Check you can take this tear off slip and hand it in at your GP practice.



If you need help to fill in your information you can ask a friend, family member, support staff or anyone you trust.



Learning Disability Annual Health Check Request

My name is

Date of birth

Address

.....

Please contact me by ☐ Post ☐ Telephone ☐ Carer

Contact number

Carers name

Carers phone number

If you need help to cut out the slip below you can ask a friend, family member, support staff or anyone you trust.



Once you've filled the slip in and cut it out, don't forget to hand it in at your GP practice to request your **Annual Health Check.**



I believe I am a person with a learning disability, and I want a Learning Disability Annual Health Check.



I would also like to make sure that I am given the Flu vaccine as I consider myself to be vulnerable.



LEARNING DISABILITIES COMMUNITY TEAMS

The **Learning Disabilities Community Teams** have health facilitators whose job is to improve access to health care for people with learning disabilities.

They understand the barriers to health care for people with learning disabilities and make sure that they are supported with their health needs including accessing **Learning Disability Annual Health Checks**.

You can contact your local **Learning Disabilities Community Teams** at:

Sefton Learning Disabilities Community Team:

2nd Floor, The Hesketh Centre, 51-55 Albert Road,
Southport, PR8 0LT

Telephone: **01704 383 030** or **01704 383 114**

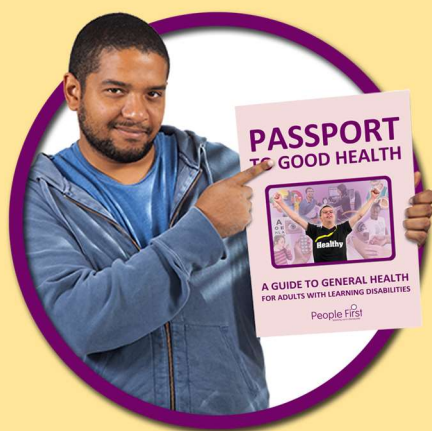
Liverpool Learning Disabilities Community Team:

Mersey Care NHS Trust Community Hub, Falklands
Approach, Norris Green, Liverpool, L11 5BS

Telephone: **0151 737 4800**



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO KEEP YOURSELF HEALTHY SEE OUR PASSPORT TO GOOD HEALTH BOOKLET



TO DOWNLOAD OUR OTHER BOOKLETS PLEASE VISIT
WWW.PEOPLEFIRSTMERSEYSIDE.CO.UK

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