



Information for GP Surgeries

ANNUAL HEALTH CHECK

For People with a Learning Disability

People with a Learning Disability are at risk of poorer physical and mental health.

BSW ICB aims to increase the number of people on the Learning Disability register and to achieve 75%+ Annual Health Checks.

Why Annual Health Checks are needed

- Health checks provide a way to detect, treat, and prevent new and unmet health conditions in people with a Learning Disability
- Some people with Learning Disabilities may have specific health risks because of their condition, but may be unable to identify worsening health for themselves
- Carers may not always attribute clinical symptoms to physical or mental illness
- Reviewing medications in people with a Learning Disability, inline with [STOMP and STAMP](#) to reduce unnecessary psychotropic medications, minimise side effects, and improve health outcomes.

The confidential inquiry into the premature deaths of people with Learning Disabilities (**CIPOLD**) recommends a standardisation of Annual Health Checks and a clear pathway between Annual Health Checks and Health Action Plans.

In 2022 the **LeDeR Report** concluded that 42% of deaths were deemed 'avoidable' for people with a Learning Disability. This compares to 22% for the general population.

In addition, people from all ethnic minority groups died at a younger age in comparison to people of white ethnicity, when adjusting for sex, region of England, deprivation, place of death, and type of accommodation.

For more information visit:

www.kcl.ac.uk/ioppn/assets/fans-dept/leder-2022-takeaways.pdf

How can we help increase the uptake of Annual Health Checks?

We are aware of the time pressures on GP surgeries, and that Annual Health Checks may seem to be another claim on your time. However, the long-term benefits are evident. BSW ICB can support GP surgeries to increase the number of completed annual health checks, with resources including:

- Reminder Letter template
- Guidance for administrative and reception staff
- Standard Health Action Plan

To access examples and templates from BSW ICB, visit:

bswtogether.org.uk/yourhealth/learning-disability-annual-health-checks/guidance-for-professionals

All professionals in education, social care, and healthcare can encourage parents and carers of people with a Learning Disability to register them on the Learning Disability register at their GP surgery. You can also remind them of the benefits of this free Annual Health Check. Identifying practice staff to encourage attendance by follow-up calls and reminders, will also help increase uptake.

Why Annual Health Checks matter*

In BSW, 69.8% of young people and adults with a Learning Disability who are on their GPs' Learning Disability registers had an Annual Health Check in 2023-24. The BSW ICB target is 75%. Evidence shows that providing a primary care Annual Health Check for people who have a Learning Disability can identify health concerns including those linked to life-threatening conditions. It can also improve quality of life. Outcomes include:

- The identification of previously undetected health conditions in 51% to 94% of patients
- The number of previously undetected or unmanaged health needs identified per patient ranged from 2.2 to 5.2
- These conditions included serious and life-threatening conditions such as cancer, heart disease and dementia, and minor health conditions, such as impacted ear wax
- Promoting actions to address identified health needs such as vaccinations, blood tests, breast and testicular screening, dental review and vision, and hearing assessment.

***Source, and for more information**

Guidance - Annual Health Checks and people with Learning Disabilities

Visit: gov.uk/government/publications/annual-health-checks-and-people-with-learning-disabilities/annual-health-checks-and-people-with-learning-disabilities

Impact of health checks on treating challenging behaviours*

“Of 56 adults with Learning Disabilities referred to a service for behaviour management, it was judged that 13 of these people’s challenging behaviour might be due to a medical cause. When these 13 people were given a health screen, 10 (77%) of them had health conditions potentially related to their challenging behaviours. Of these, 8 out of 10 people showed an improvement in behaviour once medical problems were addressed.”

Offering reasonable adjustments

GP surgeries are required to ask about the need for any reasonable adjustments when the appointment is booked, including:

- Allowing the necessary time for the appointment
- Accommodating a parent or carer to the health check
- Slowing down what you say and using simple words
- Providing a quiet space to wait
- Producing and sharing a clear Health Action Plan by the end of the appointment.

Occasionally you may have to offer the annual health check as a home visit. More information about special arrangements is available from NHSE NHS England » Reasonable adjustments. For more information visit:

england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/improving-health/reasonable-adjustments

Further action

If you would like to be part of the ongoing annual health check work, please visit the AHCs for health professionals information on the BSW ICB website:

bswtogether.org.uk/yourhealth/health-services/ldan