



healthwatch

INFORMATION GUIDE

**Annual Learning
Disability Health
Checks**

In this guide you will find:

- Information on the Annual Learning Disability Health Checks
- What is involved in the health check and what to do if you or someone you care for is not offered one
- Learning Disability help available in your local area



Learning Disability Health Checks

Learning Disability Health Checks

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

The learning disabilities health check scheme is designed to encourage practices to identify patients with learning disabilities, to maintain a learning disabilities 'health check' register and offer them an annual health check, which will include producing a health action plan.

This annual health check is for adults and young people aged 14 or over with a learning disability. Anyone aged 14 or over who's on their GPs learning disability register can have a free annual health check once a year. You can ask to go on this register if you believe you have a learning disability. You can also check with your GP whether you or the person you care for is on the register.

All adults on the register should be invited by their GP practice to come for an annual health check. You do not have to be ill to have a health check, most people have their annual health check when they're feeling well. If you're worried about seeing a doctor, or there's anything they can do to make your visit better, let the doctor or nurse know. They'll help make sure it goes well for you.

Where most GP surgeries offer the annual health checks, they don't have to offer it. If your GP surgery hasn't offered you an annual health check, you can ask them if they could provide one. If they say no, ask your local community learning disability team for advice. They should be able to help you access an annual health check.

Health Reviews

During the health check the GP or practice nurse will:

- do a physical check-up, including weight, heart rate, blood pressure and taking blood and urine samples
- talk to you about staying well and if you need any help with this
- ask about things that are more common if you have a learning disability, such as epilepsy, constipation or problems with swallowing (dysphagia)
- talk to you about your medicines
- check to see if your vaccinations are up to date
- if you have a health problem such as asthma or diabetes, the GP or nurse will check how it's going
- check to see if you have any other health appointments, such as physiotherapy or speech therapy

- ask if family and/or carers are getting the support they need
- help make sure that things go well when children move to adult services at the age of 18

If your learning disability has a **specific cause**, the GP or practice nurse will often do **extra tests** if there are any other health risks. For example, for people with Down's Syndrome, they may do a test to see if the thyroid gland is working properly.

You'll be asked for your consent (permission) to share information with other services that provide your care. This will help you get the right support if you go to a hospital, for example.

People with a learning disability have a legal right for reasonable adjustments to be made so they can get the same benefits from healthcare services as everyone else. A reasonable adjustment is when somebody changes how they do things to make it better for you.

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

- using pictures, large print or simpler words to say what's happening
- booking longer appointments
- putting an appointment at the beginning or end of the day, if you find it hard to be in a busy waiting room

The reasonable adjustments you need should be written down in a health profile or health action plan that the GP or nurse can use.

Is this compulsory?

The annual health check is not compulsory, but it is very beneficial for finding out about conditions early and providing early help.

IMPORTANT – Learning Disability annual Health Check is not the same as the NHS annual Health Check which is for all adults aged 40 to 74. This assesses the risks of heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, diabetes and dementia, every 5 years.



Support Available:

Learning Disability Support:

Hull Various Learning Disability Community Services: 01482 336740

Hull Children's Learning Disability Team: 01482 396703

Mencap Direct Free Helpline: 0808 808 1111

Mencap Hull: 01482 211 473

Scope Charity: 08088 003 333

Hull RED (community and social opportunities for people with learning disability):
info@hullred.co.uk or Facebook page @Hullred.co.uk

Peters World Hull Autism Support Group: Facebook: Peter's World Hull Autism Support Group

Downright Special Network (Down Syndrome Support Group): 01482 420160

If you would like to find out more about Learning Disability Health Checks visit www.nhs.uk/conditions/learning-disabilities/annual-health-checks

OR

Contact your local Healthwatch, contact details can be found below:

healthwatch

East Riding of Yorkshire

Phone: 01482 665 684

Email: enquiries@healthwatcheastridingofyorkshire.co.uk

Website: www.healthwatcheastridingofyorkshire.co.uk

healthwatch

Kingston upon Hull

Phone: 01482 595505

Email: enquiries@healthwatchkingstonuponhull.co.uk

Website: www.healthwatchkingstonuponhull.co.uk

healthwatch

North East Lincolnshire

Phone: 01472 361 459

Email: enquiries@healthwatchnortheastlincolnshire.co.uk

Website: www.healthwatchnortheastlincolnshire.co.uk

healthwatch

North Lincolnshire

Phone: 01724 844986

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