


Strategy for excellence in the care of patients with a Learning Disability 2022 - 2025



Dedicated to
excellence



“ People with a Learning Disability face many health inequalities resulting in worse health outcomes than the general populations ”

Executive Summary

The purpose of this document is to set out our three-year strategy for improving care and experience for people with a Learning Disability when they are in our hospital. This includes as an in-patient, attending our outpatient services or as family members or visitors.

Coming into hospital for many people with a Learning Disability can be a frightening and distressing time. It can also be a very anxious time for families and carers.

Patients with a Learning Disability and autistic people should be able to expect high quality, personalised and safe care when they use the National Health Service (NHS). The NHS Long Term Plan has pledged to improve services for people with a Learning Disability, autism or both and reduce inequalities in care and outcomes for this group of people.

This strategy describes our ambition and standards for compassionate, person centred care for people with a Learning Disability. We recognise the vital role that families and carers play.

For the past three years Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust had taken part in the National Learning Disability Improvement Standards benchmarking the standards aim to promote greater consistency and to ensure all Trusts deliver the outcomes that people with a Learning Disability, Autism or both expect and deserve. There are three applicable to acute hospitals, which were co-produced by people with a Learning Disability, Autism, or both, carers' family members and healthcare workers.

The Learning Disability Steering Group at the Trust have developed their three-year strategy in accordance with the three universal standards from the Learning Disability Improvement Standards.

1. Respecting and protecting rights.
2. Inclusion and engagement
3. Workforce

Introduction

I am delighted to introduce the Trust's Learning Disability Strategy 2022-2025 which demonstrates how we will develop and deliver services over the next three years to ensure we provide access for all. As an acute Trust, Northampton General Hospital NHS Trust has a role to play in improving health and reducing health inequalities which means understanding that delivering equal treatment does not always mean delivering the same treatment to everyone. The Trust is committed to delivering high quality care to patients that meet their individual needs and which will require reasonable adjustments and additional support. This will ensure that treatment and care is safe and personalised.

The priorities in our strategy were agreed by members of our Learning Disability Steering Group who will be instrumental in monitoring the strategy's progress.



Debbie Shanahan

Director of Nursing, Midwifery & Patient Services

September 2021

Definition of a Learning Disability

The Department of Health defines learning disability as:

- a significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills **with**;
- a reduced ability to cope independently **and**;
- Which started before adulthood, with a lasting effect on development

There are over 1.2 million people in England with a Learning Disability and 200,000 Autistic people.

People with a Learning Disability experience significant health inequalities compared to the general population. Despite initiatives such as the introduction of the Learning Disability Mortality review (LeDeR) programme in 2017 and the enhanced services of annual health checks over several years, the average age of death is still 23 years younger for men and 27 years younger for women compared to the rest of the general population.

Reasonable Adjustments:

A lack of reasonable adjustments can be a barrier to accessing healthcare settings and to equal healthcare (Ali et al., 2013; Heslop et al., 2013).

The Confidential Inquiry into premature deaths (2013) of people with learning disabilities (CIPOLD) reviews showed the lack of reasonable adjustments provided to people with a learning disability (especially in accessing clinic appointments and investigations) as a contributory factor in a number of avoidable deaths (Heslop et al., 2013).

Healthcare professionals have a legal duty to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled people (Public Health England, 2016). This can include providing easy-read information, avoiding medical jargon or longer appointment times

Local Context

In Northamptonshire, around 21% of the adult population have a disability. It is estimated that around 2.3% of the adult population have a Learning Disability and around 18.4% have a physical disability. There are currently 3904 people with a Learning Disability on GP Registers in Northamptonshire (Quality outcomes Framework register – QoF register May 2021)

Learning Disability Service at NGH

The Learning Disability team at NGH consists of a full time Learning Disability Liaison Nurse and a part time Learning Disability Project worker who acts as an expert by experience.

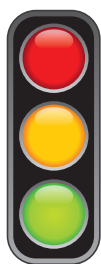
The key aims and roles of the service are:

- To work in collaboration with the acute hospital to enable easy and open access to healthcare services for people with a Learning Disability.
- To assist services at NGH to effectively meet the healthcare needs of people with a Learning Disability and to respond appropriately to the additional needs which some individuals may present.
- To support people with a Learning Disability and their carers to achieve positive experiences and effective outcomes in NGH settings.
- To act as a point of contact for service users, carers, acute hospital teams and other agencies and services with regards to the complex health needs of people with a Learning Disability and access to healthcare.
- To provide a programme of education to ensure healthcare staff are able to respond appropriately to the needs of people with a Learning Disability.

The team achieves this through:

- Liaison
- Education and Practice Development
- Strategic developments





Standard 1

Respecting and Protecting Rights.

Ensuring Equality Act duties and Human Rights of people with a Learning Disability are respected and protected.

Strategic Aims:

- Able to demonstrate that Reasonable Adjustments to care pathways have been made for people with a Learning Disability, Autism or both.
- Trusts will monitor the rates of Do Not attempt cardio pulmonary resuscitation (DNACPR) for patients with a Learning Disability.
- Trusts must have processes to investigate deaths of a person with a Learning Disability whilst using their services and to learn lessons from the findings of these investigations.

Objectives:

- All clinical pathways will be reviewed to ensure appropriate reasonable adjustments are in place to ensure people with a Learning Disability can access highly personalised care and achieve equality of outcomes.
- Audits of patients and carers utilising pathways will be undertaken to obtain patient experience feedback, which will influence service developments.
- Audits of compliance with Mental Capacity Act (MCA) including DNACPR
- Work in partnership with KGH to develop a standardised Hospital Passport to be utilised by both Acute Trusts to supporting the LD population. This will help ensure consistent approach
- Ensure that there is senior leadership representation on the Countywide LeDeR Steering group.
- Engagement from the Trust so that there is a clear process of compliance and engagement with LeDeR including supporting reviewers to access records and information sharing.
- There will be clear processes in place to share learning and good practice from deaths.

LeDeR National Learning Disability Mortality Review Programme



Standard 2

Inclusion and Engagement

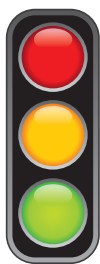
Every Trust must ensure all people with Learning Disabilities, and their families and carers are empowered to be partners in the care they receive.

Strategic Aims:

- Demonstrate our services are co designed with people with Learning Disability, Autism or both
- Ensure patients and carers feel empowered to exercise their rights
- Ensure services are values led in staff training and complaints handling

Objectives:

- The Trust Learning Disability Steering group will meet quarterly. All papers for this group will be in an easy read format to ensure accessibility for all attendees.
- There will be representatives of people with a Learning Disability and / or carers to ensure meaningful engagement and the voice of people with a Learning Disability is heard.
- The Trust Learning Disability Project worker acts as expert by experience, who will support training healthcare staff about challenges people with a Learning disability face when accessing healthcare.
- Work in collaboration with the Trusts complaints team to develop easy read resources and ensure the complaints process is accessible with reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
- The Trust will value carers who support people with a Learning Disability during their hospital stay as partners in care – We will gather feedback from carers and share their experiences to support and influence positive changes.



Standard 3

Workforce

All Trusts must have the skills and capacity to meet the needs of people with a Learning Disability, by providing safe & sustainable staffing with effective leadership at all levels.

Strategic Aims:

- Staff must make receive the relevant training on how to meet the unique needs of people with Learning Disability, Autism or both.
- To have specialist Learning Disability advise available to staff.
- Develop workforce plans.

Objectives:

- The Learning Disability Liaison Nurse and Learning Disability Project Worker will continue to provide training to variety of hospital staff.
- Implement the Oliver McGowan Mandatory training in Learning Disability and Autism once nationally approved to relevant staff as per roles and responsibilities.
- Obtain feedback from the training to ensure training influences and changes practice.
- The Learning Disability Liaison Nurse and the Learning Disability Project Worker will provide a visible presence across the Trust to provide Leadership, role model and expertise.
- The Trust will have Learning Disability and Dementia Champions in each ward and department. Their role will be to embed best practice to support patients with a Learning Disability in their areas.

Delivering the Strategy Year by Year

Each strategic aim have been aligned with the NHSE Learning Disability Improvement standards

The work streams will be led by the Learning Disability Liaison Nurse with support from the Head of safeguarding and the wider safeguarding team.

The Strategy is a living document and will be monitored by the Learning Disability Steering group. This will provide evidence of progress and strategy development. The work plan will be evaluated at year end and the priority actions agreed for the subsequent year.

References

- NHS Improvements (2018), The Learning Disability Improvement Standards for NHS
- Mental Capacity Act 2020
- The Equality Act 2010
- Mencap Treat Me Well (2017): A campaign to transform how acute hospitals treat people with a Learning Disability
- Care Act 2014
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards 2009
- NHS England (2019) NHS Long Term Plan
- Learning Disability Mortality Review (LeDeR) Annual Report 2021



Paul Blake -
Learning Disability
Project Worker

Debbie Wigley -
Learning Disability
Liaison Nurse



**University Hospitals
of Northamptonshire**
NHS Group

Developed by Debbie Wigley – Learning
Disability Liaison Nurse and Learning
Disability steering group.

Designed and produced by
Communications Department

April 2022