

 **CHECKLIST**

- Policy and procedures in place
- Vulnerable patient safeguarding procedures accessible
- Practice nurses and GP leads appropriately trained
- Patients with a learning disability identified – including details of carers/ appropriate adult
- Patient condition coded correctly
- Appropriate patient alert placed on electronic patient record
- Patient invited for a health check
- Health check undertaken
- Cardiff template on your practice system completed
- Appropriate follow-up and review
- LD register up to date - to ensure payment for administering a health check can be processed

**ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS FOR PEOPLE
WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN MEDWAY**

“People with a learning disability are more likely to have poor physical and mental health and will likely die younger than other people.

“People aged 14 or over with a learning disability are entitled to a full health check every year. Let’s make sure none of us miss out.

“It is up to all of us, including friends, parents, carers, doctors and people who work with us to do everything we can to keep people with learning disabilities here in Medway healthy and happy.”

Joe Wastell age 26 Rochester



Advice for General Practice

- In Medway, only 53% of adults with a learning disability who are on their GP's learning disability register had a health check. This compares with 63% national average rate.
(Medway's Adult Learning Disability Strategy 2019-2024, source: Audit plus data, April 2018)
- The Confidential Inquiry into premature deaths of people with a learning disability (CIPOLD, 2013) found that 38% of people with a learning disability died from an avoidable cause;
- Figures from NHS Digital (2016) showed that females with a learning disability had an 18-year lower life expectancy than the general population, while males with a learning disability had a 14-year lower life expectancy;

Many of these deaths are avoidable and not inevitable. Your practice can help close the gap.



What your practice can do

We are aware of the time pressures on GPs and that this may appear to be yet another claim on your time. However, helping people with a learning disability to stay healthy and to learn to manage their long-term conditions themselves is a valuable use of practice resources. These Health checks can prevent more serious illnesses resulting in more expensive interventions and ongoing treatment.

- ✓ Review your register: Patients appropriately coded, ([Link to LD Coding here](#)) and who are over 18, attract a payment for each annual review before end of March. These patients are more at risk and so should be priority for appointments.
- ✓ How you communicate with your patients with a learning disability, their carers and their families, makes all the difference. Remember, patients with a learning disability may need special arrangements ([RCOG](#)) for health reviews. Communication and mobility issues may mean more time, space and sometimes home visits.
- ✓ Recognise that some patients may have [specific health risks](#) due to their condition and may be unable to identify worsening health for themselves.
- ✓ Use the annual review as an opportunity for health and wellbeing education and an opportunity to screen for chronic disease.
- ✓ Ensure you have a supply of information for people with learning disabilities.
- ✓ There are many sources of support and information for patients and carers. Ensure that your practice team is aware and able to access [patient information and advice](#) to take account of patients with a learning disability.
- ✓ Some people with a learning disability depend upon carers, family or friends to support them with their healthcare even if they are living independently. The role of carers in ensuring patients with a learning disability attend, and comply, with any 'pre' or 'post' advice and/or appointments, can be crucial.
- ✓ Identify a Nurse Champion and encourage the use of practice nurses to deliver part of the LD health checks. Keeping GP time free. Identify practice personnel who can encourage attendance by follow up phone-calls and reminders.
- ✓ Patients' rights to consent or decline must be respected in line with the Law. Their capacity to [consent](#) needs to be considered.
- ✓ Be proactive about inviting people with learning disabilities, their parents or carers on to your Patient Participation Group.