








Top Tips for  
**Carers of People**  
with a  
**Learning Disability**  
in Derbyshire

**Healthwatch Derbyshire is an independent voice for the people of Derbyshire. We are here to listen to the experiences of Derbyshire residents and give them a stronger say in influencing how local health and social care services are provided.**

Healthwatch Derbyshire has worked in partnership with Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Nottingham University, Learning Disability Carers Community, Hardwick Clinical Commissioning Group and learning disability representatives to produce this leaflet.

This leaflet is intended to provide information for learning disability carers regarding access to health and social care services for the cared for person and some additional information about carers' rights and support.

## **General Practitioners (GPs)/Doctors**

-  Find out about the appointment booking system at the cared for person's GP surgery. You may need to contact the surgery at 8am to book an appointment or register for online booking. Ask the practice for more information.
-  Consider alternatives to visiting a GP. The cared for person may be able to get an appointment with a nurse practitioner or speak to a local pharmacist.
-  When you ring the GP surgery, be prepared to explain the situation and background of the person you care for to the receptionist. Explain what help you think is required and what you would like to happen, so the receptionist can direct you to the right person, this could be to see a nurse or a GP.
-  Make sure the person with a learning disability is on the learning disability register at the surgery.
-  Ask the surgery to put an alert onto their electronic system which identifies what kind of help/reasonable adjustments the person with a learning disability requires, including their communication needs.

- 👉 Register yourself as a carer at the surgery. Some surgeries have carers' champions that may be able to offer some advice.
- 👉 If you feel the cared for person will need to discuss more than one health problem, or will need more time to explain, ask for a double appointment.
- 👉 Make sure the cared for person has undergone an annual learning disability health check at the surgery and ask the surgery to ensure that this is flagged on their system.
- 👉 Familiarise yourself, and the cared for person, with what should happen at an annual health check which will include:
  - General examination: weight, height, heart rate, blood pressure, urine test, examination of feet, hearing, eyes and a check for epilepsy.
  - Questions about mental health, lifestyle, chronic illnesses.
  - Medication review.
- 👉 If the cared for person has a Health Action Plan/blue My Health File, remind them to take it with them to the appointment.
- 👉 Ask the surgery if you are entitled to your own health check.
- 👉 Ask the GP to tell the Out of Hours service that the person has a learning disability and that you care for them. This could be via a Summary Care Record which explains how to respond to the person's learning disability and any health conditions.
- 👉 Call 111 Out of Hours if medical help is needed, but it isn't an emergency.
- 👉 Keep a record of the Community Learning Disability Teams:-  
Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Trust (DHCFT) for South Derbyshire: **01332 268455** and Derbyshire Community Health Services (DCHS) for North Derbyshire: **01246 565000**.

## Referrals

- 1 If the GP is referring to a service via the NHS e-referral system (Choose and Book), ask the surgery to make the appointment and write it down for you.
- 2 Ask the surgery to write the information down in the cared for person's Health Action Plan/personal health file, including appointments.
- 3 Find out the name of the learning disability acute liaison nurse at your local hospital and ask your GP to send the appropriate information on. The learning disability acute liaison nurse may be able to meet you before the cared for person's appointment and speak to other nurses and departments, if necessary.
- 4 Ask for a Hospital Passport/Traffic Light Assessment. This should hold all the relevant information about the cared for person, such as communication preferences, pain thresholds and the nature of their learning disability. Pass this on to hospital staff.
- 5 When the person is referred to another NHS service, ask for their referral to include information about their learning disability and what would make the appointment more successful, e.g. extra time, communication needs.
- 6 Make sure that the cared for person is having regular eye tests. Visit [www.seeability.org/looking-after-your-eyes](http://www.seeability.org/looking-after-your-eyes) for more information.



## Support

- 👂 You are entitled to a carer's assessment under the Care Act 2014, and you may be entitled to a carer personal budget if you provide care for 35 hours, or more, per week. Contact call Derbyshire: **01629 553190**.
- 👂 Register yourself as a carer at Derbyshire Carers Association: **01773 833833**.
- 👂 Contact Adult Care if the person with a learning disability has not undergone an adult care assessment: Call Derbyshire - **01629 553190** or for Derby City - **01332 640777**.
- 👂 Find out the name of the cared for person's social worker: **01629 533190**.
- 👂 Find out about the local carers support groups in your area: **[www.carersinderbyshire.org.uk](http://www.carersinderbyshire.org.uk)**
- 👂 Find out which services have wheelchair weighing scales: Babington Hospital, Belper (sit on scales) **01773 525061**, Outlook Day Centre, Long Eaton **01629 531872**, Whitemoor Day Centre, Belper **01629 531 913** (hoist scales), Clay Cross Hospital **01246 252900**, St Oswalds Hospital, Ashbourne **01335 230000**. Ring and check availability.

## Compliments, concerns and suggestions

- 👂 Always try and resolve matters with the service concerned. Ask to speak to the practice manager at the GP surgery or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) within the hospitals.
- 👂 Contact Healthwatch Derbyshire, the independent consumer champion for health and social care services, if you are unsure of who to speak to and we will give you the relevant signposting information. Call **01773 880786** or go to **[www.healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk)**
- 👂 Contact Derbyshire Mind for independent health complaints advocacy **01332 623732** or email **[advocacy@derbyshiremind.org.uk](mailto:advocacy@derbyshiremind.org.uk)**

**(All contact details have been provided by Healthwatch Derbyshire and were correct at the time of writing, but are subject to change).**

# A Guide to Learning Disability Health Checks

## Examined:



Weight



Blood Pressure



Chest and pulse

## Chat: The Doctor or Nurse will talk to you about:



Epilepsy



Diabetes



Lifestyle



Teeth



Sleep



Pain



Checking your private parts



Poo and constipation



Checking your breasts



- A doctor or nurse will do your health check with you at your GP surgery.**
- It can take between 30 minutes to an hour.**
- You will be asked questions and have a check-up.**
- You can take a support worker, a family carer or someone that knows you well with you.**



**Ears**



**Feet**



**Breathing**



**Skin**



**Eyes**



**Periods**



**Mental Health**



**Medication**



**Smear tests**



**Pregnancy**



**Health action plan**



**Blood test if needed**



**Where you live**



Tel: **01773 880786**

Text: **07943 505255**

Email: **[enquiries@healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk)**

Web: **[www.healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk)**

If you require this leaflet in an alternative format, please contact us on **01773 880786** or **[enquiries@healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchderbyshire.co.uk)**



**@HWDerbyshire**



**HealthwatchDerbyshire**