

Frequently Asked Questions for Parents and Carers

GP Learning Disability Registers and Annual Health Checks for Children and Young People with a Learning Disability



Translated into easy read
by Ace Anglia
info@aceanglia.com



About this booklet



This is an easy read booklet for Frequently Asked Questions for Parents and Carers.



We have split this booklet into sections to make it easier to read.



The words in **red** are ones we think need explaining.

We then explain what **red** words mean at the back of this booklet.



When we use the word child, we mean anyone under the age of 18 years.

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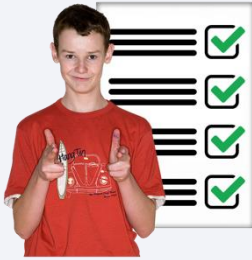
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My child has so many appointments, why is this appointment important?



Children with Learning Disabilities are just like any other children.



They can get all the usual childhood illnesses and infections.



It can be hard to tell if a person with a disability has an illness or infection.



This is because people with a learning disability are not always able to express their ill health or pain.



Having an annual health check means your child is more likely to get the right support, at the right time, to stay healthy.



Your child may be known to a **paediatrician.**



You may go straight to them for support for your child's health needs.



This would mean you make little or no contact with the GP.



When your child becomes 18 years old, support from a **paediatrician** will stop.



From the age of 18 you only see you GP.



It is very important to build a relationship with the GP from an early age.



The Annual Health Check is offered from the age of 14.



This is a good opportunity for the GP to become involved in your child's care.



What is a GP Learning Disability Register?



A GP learning disability register is a record of all the people registered with the GP surgery that have a learning disability.



You can be added to the Learning Disability Register at any age, no matter how young or old you are.



From the age of 14, anyone on the Learning Disability Register will be offered an annual health check by their GP surgery.



The GP learning disability register helps staff at GP surgeries to know who may need extra help or support to access healthcare.



This includes children, young people, and their families.



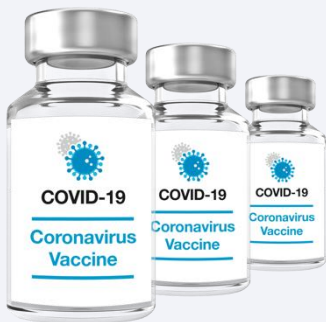
By being on the Learning Disability register your child will be able to get a free -



- **Annual Health Check from the age of 14 and a Health Action Plan**



- **Annual NHS flu vaccination**



- **NHS Covid-19 vaccinations/boosters**



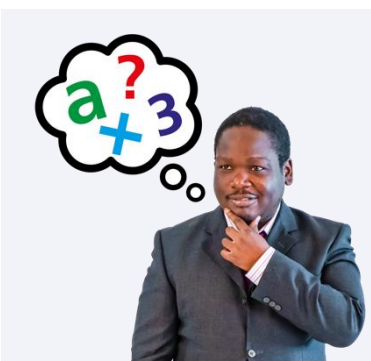
If you are their main carer, you can also be registered as a carer at the GP surgery.



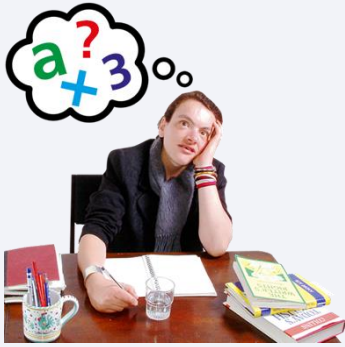
This makes sure that you can support them to attend appointments.



What's the difference between a Learning Disability and Learning Difficulty?



A learning difficulty is different from a learning disability.



It is a type of special educational need, such as dyslexia, or other condition which affects only one area of learning like -



Reading



Writing and spelling



Maths



Dyslexia, for example, is not considered a Learning Disability.



Your child may be Autistic.



But they may not have a learning disability.



Autistic people who do not have a learning disability are not able to have a free Annual Health Check.



Autistic people who do have a learning disability are able to have a free Annual Health Check.



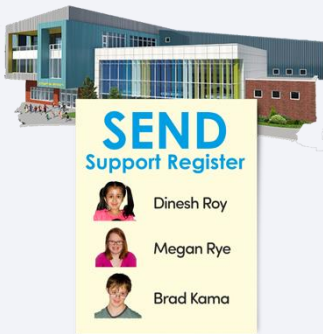
Who should be on a GP Learning Disability Register?



Anyone with a learning disability!



Questions to help you think about whether your child could have a learning disability -



- **Is your child on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Support Register at their school or do they get extra help with their learning?**



- **Does your child attend a special school?**



- Do they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)?



- Is there a diagnosis of a learning disability, or mention of “**global developmental delay**” or “**intellectual disability**” in any reports about your child?



“**Global developmental delay**” or “**intellectual disability**” are medical terms for learning disability.



- Is your child known to the Children or Adult’s Learning Disability Service at Suffolk County Council?



- Do they see a **consultant psychiatrist** for learning disabilities?



- Has anyone ever told you that your child may have a learning disability or global developmental delay?



- Is your child entitled to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or a Personal Independence Payment (PIP)?



If you answered yes to some of the questions, please contact your local GP surgery.



You should ask them whether your child is on or should be added to the GP's Learning Disability Register.



This can be done at any age.



How do I put my child on the Learning Disability Register?



A first step would be to have a conversation with your GP.



Not all children and young people who have a learning disability will have a **diagnosis**.



This may mean they do not have a learning disability on their medical records.



The official definition of learning disability is someone who has all of the following:



- a very reduced ability to understand new or complicated information and to learn new skills



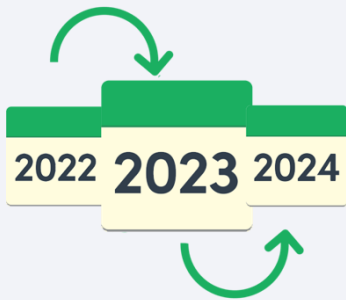
- **Impaired social function: a reduced ability to cope independently**



- **which started before the age of 18, with a lasting effect on a person's life.**



What is a Learning Disability Annual Health Check?



It is a yearly check-up for people 14 years old and over with a learning disability at the doctor's surgery.



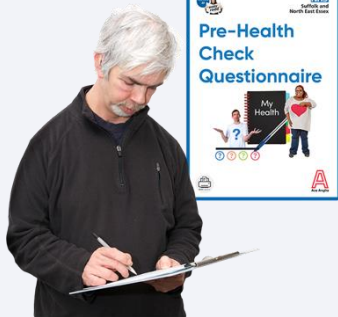
It is a good way of helping your child or young person to stay healthy.



Having a health check can help identify if there are any health problems with your child or young person.



What are the benefits of having an annual health check?



You may be asked to prepare for your child's or young person's annual health check by filling in a questionnaire.



This is called a 'pre health check questionnaire'.



This will give you the opportunity to highlight anything you or your child would like to discuss.



Or if there might be any parts of the health check that they may find difficult or upsetting.



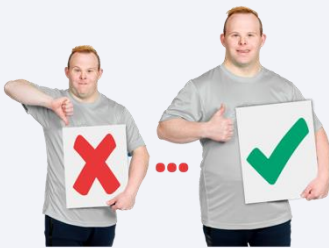
It also helps the GP to know as much information as possible before the annual health check.



Please also let your GP surgery know about any reasonable adjustments you may need in place before your child's visit to the surgery.



What is a Reasonable Adjustment?



Reasonable adjustments are changes people must make.



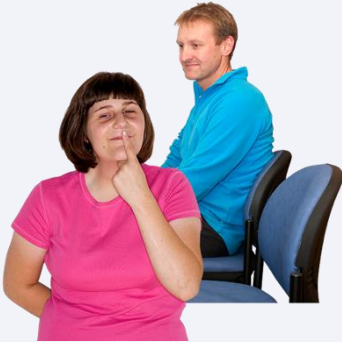
So that someone with a disability can use or access something just as easily as everybody else.



Some examples of what a 'reasonable adjustment' may be are:



- making sure there is wheelchair access



- having a 'quiet' waiting room



- providing easy read letters



- giving priority appointments times



- longer appointments if more time is needed



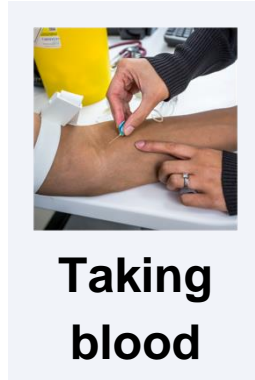
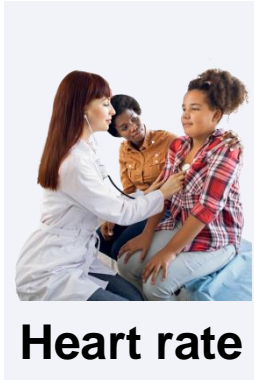
What will happen during an annual health check?



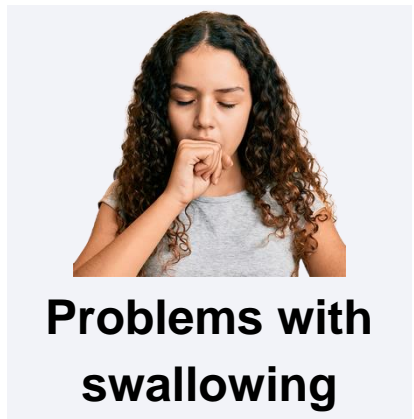
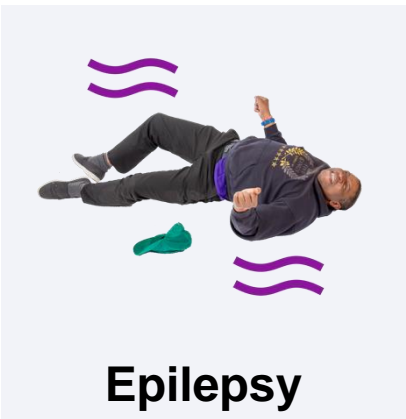
During the annual health check, the GP or nurse will:



- do a general physical check-up which may include -



- ask about things that people with a learning disability often have problems with, such as -



- review medication



- check any existing health problems such as asthma or diabetes



- discuss any other health issues or appointments



- ask about the support you are getting



- discuss transition planning to find out what happens when you are over 18 years old



- discuss how to stay healthy and offer healthy living advice



- discuss and agree the Health Action Plan.



What is a Health Action Plan?



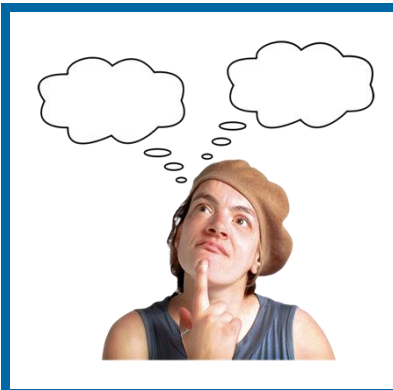
Health Action Plans are care plans that detail what is needed to keep your child healthy.



This should include actions by the GP and other health professionals that must be done.



It can also include actions for you and your child to do.



What is mental capacity and why do I need to know about it?



In childhood, a parent can make decisions and give consent for health treatments for their child.



Once a child becomes an adult every medical decision needs their consent.



If they are unable to understand, then a 'best interest' decision will be made.



'Best interest' decisions weigh up the risks and benefits of any decision.



As a family carer, you know your relative very well and understand -



Ways they communicate



Their likes and dislikes



Needs and wishes



It can feel strange or even hurtful that other people become more involved in decisions about your relative once they become adults.



More people need to be involved as the law says your relative must be treated as an adult.



This follows the principles of the Mental Capacity Act.



The act says some important things about how to decide whether adults are able to make their own decisions.



This is often described as having capacity.



What to do if my child does not get offered an annual health check?



If your child or young person has not had an annual health check:



- **Speak to the GP surgery in the first instance**



- **check that they are included on the Learning Disability Register**



- **ask their GP if they will do an annual health check**



If you are still unable to access an annual health check and your child is over the age of 14 you can contact the Learning Disability Liaison Team who may be able to help.



The Learning Disability Liaison Team can also help and support with reasonable adjustments and **desensitisation**, to find out more please contact:



Email: liaison.nursesld@nsft.nhs.uk

Phone: 01284 733300