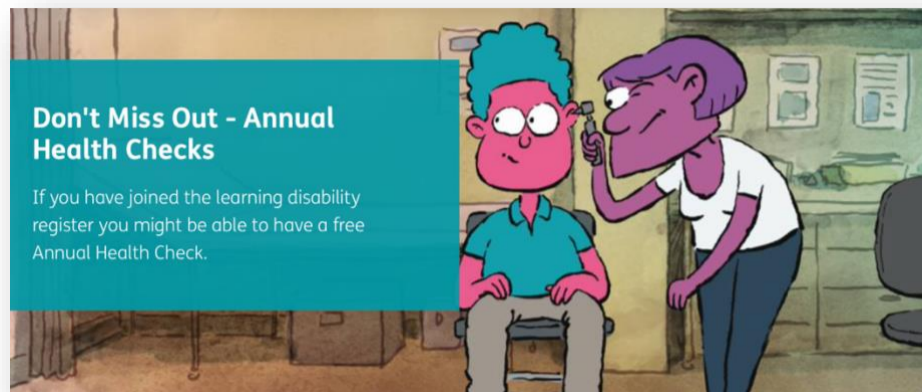


Annual Health Checks for people with learning disabilities in the UK



Geography and scale:	England; national.
Type of disability and age group:	People with learning disabilities aged 14 and over.

Involved actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Health Service (NHS) England • Public Health England • Mencap



Click on the image to view larger version.

Best practice description

People with learning disabilities 14 and over who are registered with a general practitioner (GP) are entitled to a free annual health check. Established in 2008, this programme aims to prevent, detect and treat new and unmet health needs in a timely fashion. Health checks include:

- Physical examinations the patient consents to (e.g. weight, blood pressure, blood samples, etc.)
- Chronic diseases and mental health exam, emphasizing commonly associated conditions (e.g., epilepsy, constipation, dysphagia, etc.)
- Health promotion and review of immunizations and medications.

Accommodations are made whenever necessary, such as additional time, easy to read information, suitable appointment time and support from companions or carers. All of this information is registered in each patient's profile. The GP should help develop a health action plan after the health check and facilitate referrals to any secondary care.^{1,2,3,4} *See previous good example: Learning Disability Registers at Primary Care Level.

Origin / impetus for best practice

- People with learning disabilities face health inequities; they often have poorer physical and mental health than the general population.¹
- "People with learning disabilities may be unaware of the medical implications of symptoms they experience, have difficulty communicating their symptoms or may be less likely to report them to medical staff".⁴
- The Confidence Inquiry (2013) into the deaths of people with learning disabilities recommended the standardisation of Annual Health Checks and a clear pathway between the Annual Health checks and Health Action Plans.⁵

Impact / results of implementing best practice

- From 2019 to 2020, about 58% of people with a learning disability, who are on their GP's learning disability register, had a health check.

Critical success factors for best practice

- GPs receive financial incentives for completing annual health checks.
- Existence of a National Electronic Health Check clinical template
- Existence of a National Health Check toolkit for general practitioners.

Impact statement

"It helps when you have [an annual health check] because it will tell you where your health is improving and where is not" *Leroy*

"Now I do the annual health checks every year, I also want to keep more healthy because I actually started a running group" *Lorraine*

[Personal experiences with annual health checks described in [Mencap's video](#)]

Lessons learned

- Not all GPs do health checks but the number is increasing.
- Not all GPs report giving health action plans.
- Coverage of annual health checks varies considerably across the country.

Sources	<p>¹ Learning and Autism - Annual Health checks - NHS</p> <p>² Annual Health Checks NHS</p> <p>³ People with learning disabilities in England - Public Health England (2020)</p> <p>⁴ Guidance Annual health checks and people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>⁵ Confidential Inquiry, 2013</p>
----------------	---

Further links & information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Health Check film by NHS • Mencap's Don't Miss out! video campaign • Mencap Don't Miss out! website
--	--