Health Facilitation Service for People with Learning Disabilities

Health Facilitation Nurses

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Southend
A Community Service:

We are a nurse lead community learning disability service.

Working with people of 18 years and over, with a learning disability and physical health need.
Community Team for People with Learning Disabilities:

We are part of a wider team giving us access to:

• Crisis Support Team
• Occupational Therapists
• Speech and Language Therapists
• Dysphagia Team
• Psychiatrists
• Psychologists
• Social Workers
• Behaviour Therapy Service
Health Facilitation Service

This includes working with

• GP’s
• Southend hospital
• Community services

to make the health needs of people with learning disabilities in Southend better.
What can we do to help GP surgeries

Support GP surgeries to make their register of people with learning disabilities better.

Offer advice to G.P’s and practice staff about carrying out annual health checks

Support GP surgeries to reduce people not attending their annual health checks.

Support G.P’s and practice staff in meeting any unmet health needs after an annual health check.
Why should a person with a learning disability have an annual health check

On average men with learning disabilities die 13 years sooner than men in the general population.

On average women with learning disabilities die 20 years sooner than women in the general population.

(Confidential enquiry into premature deaths of people with a learning disability 2013)
People with learning disabilities tend to have a greater need for health care than the general population, but are less able to access services and they may receive poorer care if they do (IHAL 2010)
Why are there health inequalities

• Diagnostic overshadowing – eg. Behaviour problems may be due to pain but perceived as challenging behaviour.

• Communication difficulties- a person may not be able to explain when they are in pain or feel poorly

• Increased risk of community problems such as poverty, poor housing conditions, unemployment, social isolation and discrimination

• Increased health risk due to their learning disabilities for example heart problems in people with Downs Syndrome or Mental Health problems in people with Autism.

• People with Learning disabilities may also be less likely to receive or act upon health promotion information and health screening.

(IHAL 2010)
Health checks provide a way to detect, treat and prevent new health conditions in people with learning disability.

Health Checks on 190 people in General Practice settings identified new health needs for 93 participants (51%).

(Robertson et al 2010)
What is an Annual Health Check

A health check is when the doctor checks if you are healthy

You don’t need to be ill to get a health check. But you can ask your doctor about anything that is hurting or worrying you.

It is a good idea to have a health check 1 time every year.

Health checks normally take between half an hour and 1 hour.
Health checks happen at the doctors. Your doctor should do some of your health check. A nurse might do some as well.

It may help if someone who knows you well comes to your health check.

At a health check the doctor or nurse will check things like

- how much you weigh
- your eyes
- any medicine you take
- if you are feeling happy or sad
- what food you eat.
The doctor or nurse might ask you to take some of your clothes off so they can check things like

- your chest

- your tummy.

Your doctor might want to check your wee. You can bring this with you in a bottle. Or your doctor can give you a bottle to wee in when you come to the doctors.
After your health check the doctor or nurse will say if you need to go and see any other people that can help you.

If you want to know more about having a health check you can speak to

• your family
• someone in your support team
• your doctor
• Your health facilitation nurse
• Mencap – where the pictures and words came from for part of this presentation.
Reasonable adjustments that have already been made by some GP’s in Southend

• Giving the person the first or last appointment of the day, a quieter time within the surgery.
• Offering a longer appointment.
• Working closely with the health facilitation service to understand the individual’s support needs.
• Offering a home visit when all other options have failed.
• Using easy read resources.
• Providing learning disability annual health checks.
• Taking a blood test at the annual health check.
If anyone you know hasn’t had an annual health check and is having difficulties talking to their GP surgery about it please contact Jo or myself.
Contact details

For the Southend Team  Call 01268 739133

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I'm now going to hand you over to Jenny Gilliatt from SHIELDS Parliament who will talk about her experience of having an annual health check.