

# Learning Disabilities and Autism Partnership

Strategic Approach 2023 – 2028



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## Acknowledgements

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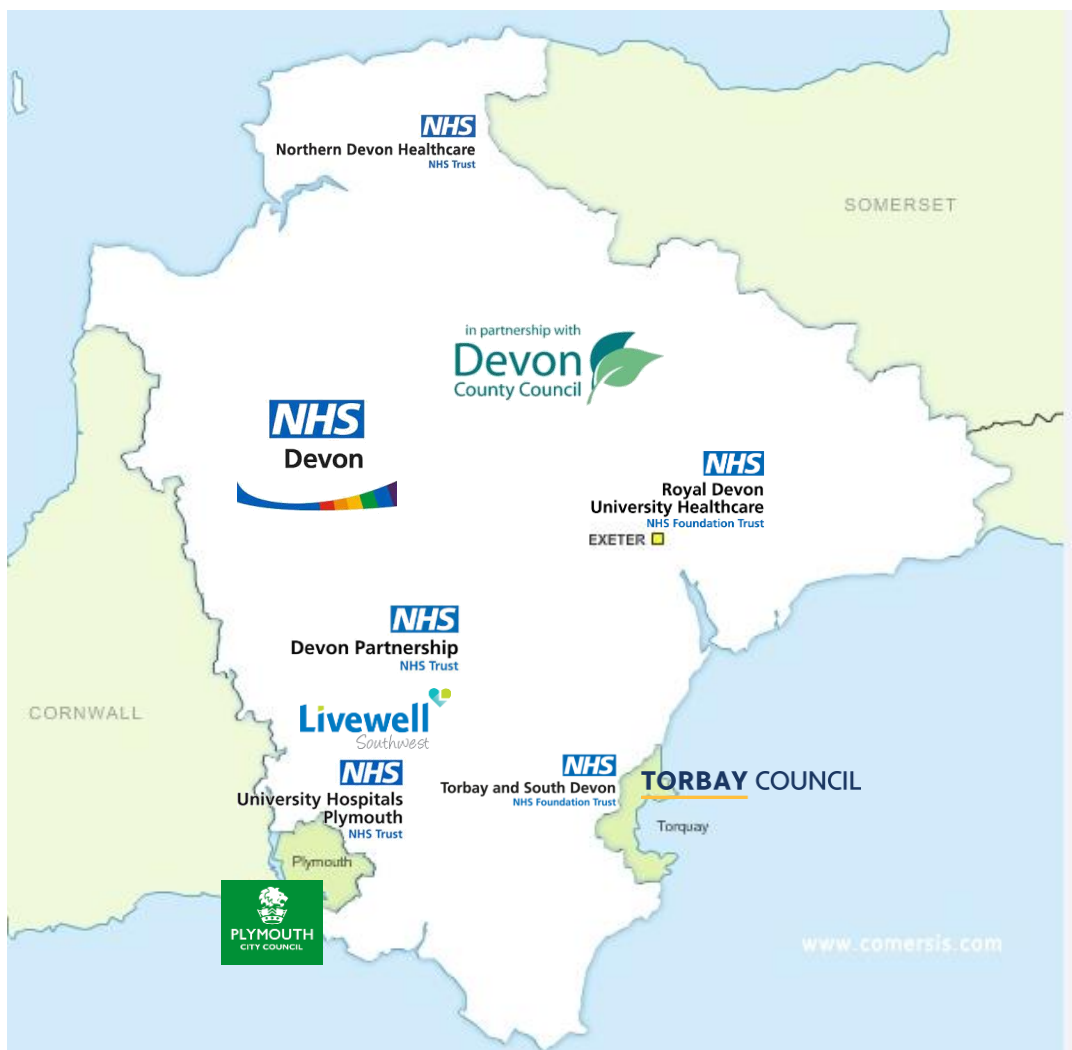
# Learning Disability and Autism Partnership

## Who We Are

The creation of the Devon Learning Disability and Autism Partnership (LDAP) Group has provided an opportunity for organisations from across the Devon system to work more closely together on behalf of local people.

## Who Are Our Partners

We recognise no one single organisation can make a difference for people with learning disabilities and autistic people. Our partner organisations include local authorities, providers, NHS Trusts, NHS England, Primary Care, Local Care Partnerships, and representatives from the Independent, Voluntary and Community Sectors.



# Learning Disability and Autism Partnership

## What We Do

The Devon Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Group oversees and assures the delivery of our agreed programme of work for Devon’s population of people with a learning disability and autistic individuals.

This includes the Integrated Care System (ICS) objectives, which ensure the priorities for learning disabilities and autism are delivered as outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan ([page 3](#)), the NHS Operating Plan ([page 4](#)) and NHS Devon’s Joint Forward Plan ([page 5](#)).

## How We Work

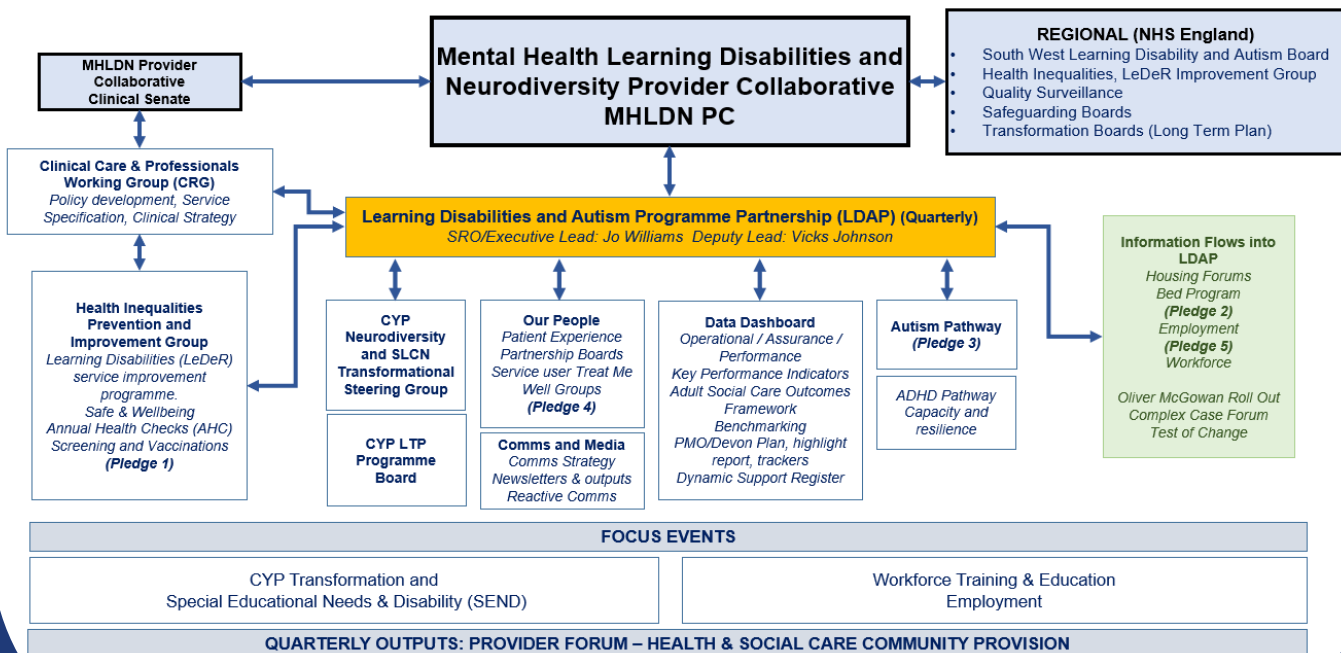
Running through LDAP’s approach are the “Golden Threads” of Co-Production and Reasonable Adjustments. These threads ensure LDAP’s governance involves the people who use our services, and that these services are delivered in the most accessible way.

Below is the LDAP Governance Framework which highlights how we manage accountability and decision making within the Integrated Care System in Devon.

### LDAP Governance Framework v12



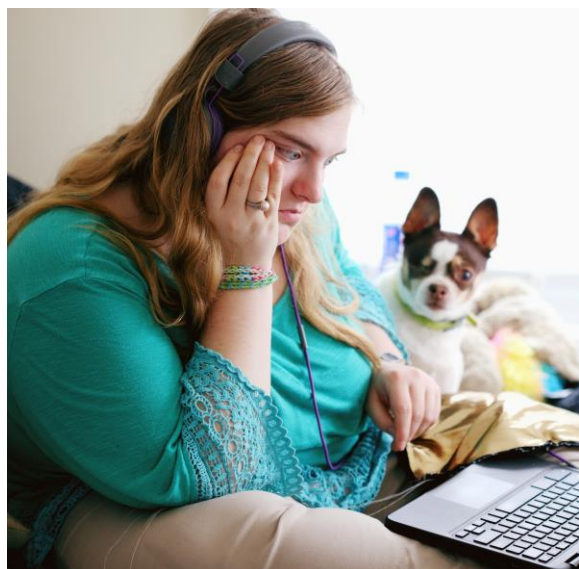
An integrated, collaborative governance framework for people with Learning Disability and/or Autism.



# National Programme of Work

## NHS Long Term Plan

In its current long term plan, the national programme of work recognises the need for people to have more options, better support and properly joined-up care, at the right time, in the optimal care setting.



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Children, young people and adults with a learning disability, autism or both, have the same rights to live fulfilling lives, so the NHS Long Term Plan extended its focus to ensure the needs of people with a learning disability and autistic people are listened to and actioned.

This focus included the development of national Learning Disability Improvement Standards to drive rapid improvement of experience and equity of care.

These standards were co-designed with people with a learning disability, carers, family members and healthcare professionals. They require Trusts to:

- **Respect and protect rights** - as defined in law by the Equality Act (2010) and Human Rights Act (1998).
- **Ensure inclusion and engagement** - empower people with learning disabilities, autistic people or both, and their families and carers to be partners in the care they receive.
- **Workforce skills and capacity** - to meet the needs of people with a learning disability, autistic people, or both by providing safe and sustainable staffing and effective leadership at all levels.
- Those Trusts that provide specialist learning disabilities services commissioned solely for the use of people with a learning disability, autistic people or both **must fulfil the objectives of national policy and strategy**.

These standards form the basis of all services provided by the NHS to people with learning disabilities and autistic people.

# National Programme of Work

## What we will do

The following outlines the key elements of the NHS' national operational priorities. This provides background information for the Learning Disability and Autism Partnership's (LDAP) 5 Year Joint Forward Plan (outlined in the next section):

- **Improve community-based support** so people with learning disabilities and autistic people can lead lives of their choosing in homes, not hospitals. This means we can reduce the reliance on specialist hospitals, and strengthen our focus on children and young people.
- Develop a **clearer and more widespread focus on the needs of autistic people and their families**, starting with autistic children with the most complex needs.
- Make sure all NHS commissioned services are providing **good quality health, care and treatment** to people with a learning disability and autistic people and their families.

\*STOMP & \*STAMP - See Glossary for full description.

## What we will do (continued)

- **Reduce health inequalities** by:
  - Improving the uptake of Annual Health Checks (AHCs)
  - Reducing over-medication through the STOMP\* and STAMP\* programmes, and
  - Taking action to prevent avoidable deaths through learning from deaths reviews (LeDeR)
- Continue to **champion the insight and strengths of people with lived experience and their families** in all of our work and become a model employer of people with a learning disability and of autistic people. For example, NHS staff will be supported to make the changes needed (reasonable adjustments) so that people with a learning disability and autistic people get equal access to, experience of and outcomes from care and treatment.
- Ensure the whole NHS has an **awareness of the needs of people with a learning disability and autistic people**, working together to improve the way it cares, supports, listens to, works with and improves the health and wellbeing of them and their families.

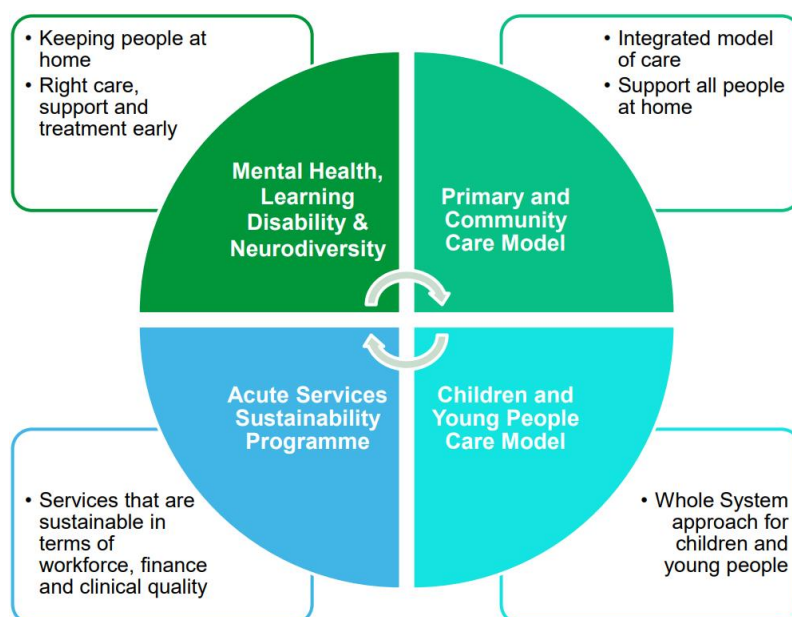
# National Programme of Work

## Joint Forward Plan

NHS Devon's response to the NHS's national Long Term Plan (LTP) is the 5 Year Joint Forward Plan. This sets out the actions that will be taken over the next five years (2023-2028) to deliver the strategic goals, set operational targets and define how funding will be allocated. This will involve all partners to take account of the strategy in their planning in a way that will ensure alignment between housing, education, care and health that has not been seen before.

### Objectives:

- Ensure 75% of people aged over 14 on GP Learning Disability registers receive an Annual Health Check and health action plan by March 2024 as well as continue to improve the accuracy and increase size of GP Learning Disability registers.
- Reduce reliance on, and improve quality of inpatient care, through Care (Education) Treatment Reviews (CETRs) so by March 2024 no more than 30 adults with a learning disability and/or who are autistic per million population, and no more than 15 under 18s with a learning disability and/or who are autistic per million population are cared for in an inpatient unit.
- Test and implement improvement in autism diagnostic assessment pathways to include actions to reduce waiting times.
- Develop integrated workforce plans for the learning disability and autism workforce to support delivery of the objectives set out in the guidance.



# Devon's LDAP Strategic Approach

## Development of the Pledges

Through the LDAP Partnership our agreed strategic approach was to work as an integrated system to create measurable commitments to the population we serve. These are described and defined in Five Pledges. These pledges are informed by the following national, regional and local strategies, white papers and charters:

### Legislation:

- [Down Syndrome Act](#) (2022)
- [Health and Care Act](#) (2022)
- [Equalities Act](#) (2010)
- [Autism Act](#) (2009)
- [Human Rights Act](#) (1998)
- [Mental Health Act](#) (1983)

### Government Policy Papers:

- Department of Health and Social Care Policy Papers "[Building the right support for people with a learning disability and autistic people](#)" (July 2022) and "[National Strategy for autistic children, young people and adults:2021 to 2026](#)" (July 2021)
- Department for Work & Pensions Policy Paper: "[The disability and health employment strategy: the discussion so far](#)" (December 2013)
- Disability Unit, Equality Hub, Department for Work and Pensions Policy Paper "[National Disability Strategy](#)" (July 2021)
- Government White Paper: "[Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century](#)" (March 2001)
- gov.uk: [Disability Rights - Employment](#)

### NHS England:

- "[Dynamic Support Register and Care \(Education\) and Treatment Review - Policy and Guide](#)" (January 2023)
- Action to reduce healthcare inequalities: [Core20PLUS5 - An approach to reducing health care inequalities](#)
- "[Five Year NHS autism research strategy for England](#)" (March 2022)
- "[Learning from lives and deaths - People with a learning disability and autistic people \(LeDeR\) policy 2021](#)" (March 2021)
- "[Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism Inpatient Quality Transformation Programme](#)"
- NHS National Plan - [Building the Right Support](#) (2015)

### ICS Devon:

- University Hospitals Plymouth NHS Trust Policy "[Managing the care needs of people \(all ages\) with a Learning Disability and/or who are Autistic in the acute hospital setting](#)" (July 2022)
- Devon County Council: "[Living Well with Autism Strategy for Devon, Torbay and Plymouth 2015-2020](#)" (July 2020) and "[A Joint Strategic approach to supporting People to live independently in Devon 2020 to 2025](#)" (July 2020)



# Devon's LDAP Strategic Approach: The Five Pledges

## Health Inequalities (Learning Disabilities)

**Our commitment:** To reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes for people with a learning disability and autistic people delivered through actions and learning.

### What we will do:

We will work in partnership with individuals aged 14 years and over with a learning disability and autistic people, their families, and carers to improve physical health outcomes by:

- Ensuring general practice learning disability registers are complete and accurate.
- Enabling access to a good quality Annual Health Check (AHC) with reasonable adjustments made where needed.
- Providing consistent high-quality advice and guidance on healthy lifestyles and enabling persons to access appropriate Lifestyles Services support
- Ensure other health databases have Learning Disabilities and Autistic People access to summary care records so appropriate alerts can be made.



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### What we will do (continued)

We will support individuals through their life span by identifying through the LeDeR learning from action key themes for service improvement.

We will work to improve the quality and safety of acute admissions and discharges of people with learning disabilities.

### Golden Thread of Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments are the changes the law says people or services must make so disabled people can use services as easily as everybody else. Ensuring reasonable adjustments are put in place can help people with learning disabilities and autism get better healthcare and live longer. These are the 'Golden Thread' that runs through every aspect of health and care delivery.

# Devon's LDAP Strategic Approach: The Five Pledges

## Housing

**Our commitment:** We need a new model of service for people with learning disabilities and autistic people, including those with complex needs, that is:

- housing-based and provides the best living environment
- has a clear common pathway for delivery, and
- ensures better life outcomes and best use of financial resources to create sustainable housing and services in the long-term.

### What we will do:

- Establish a comprehensive understanding of housing needs to inform strategic housing development plans with partners and monitor progress.
- Support the development of a range of available housing options for people with complex needs, including appropriate social housing and home ownership, along with the skilled support needed to successfully support tenure.



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### What we will do (continued)

Work in partnership to provide the best possible housing environment for people with learning disabilities and autism, using standardised eligibility and assessment tools; good design principles; comprehensive and shared understanding of current best practice.

- Fully include people with complex needs and their circles of support in the planning and delivery of their housing needs, enabling them to live healthier, happier and more socially inclusive lives by having homes of their own.
- Ensure our overall housing model is sustainable and affordable in the long-term, reducing reliance on wholly debt-funded development by making the best use of available public funds, personal investment and land-assets in the public estate.

# Devon's LDAP Strategic Approach: The Five Pledges

## Autism

**Our commitment:** Our vision is for autistic people to get the support and opportunities they need to lead full and happy lives. As partners, we will work to improve services; increase awareness of autism to help remove barriers for autistic people; provide meaningful support, assessment and diagnosis, early identification and reduce reliance on inpatient care through community services.

### What we will do:

Aligning to the National Autism Strategy 2021-26 (see Glossary) and working in partnership with children's and adults' providers and autistic people, we will:

- Increase professional awareness, general understanding and acceptance of autism through the promotion and delivery of co-produced autism training, including Oliver McGowan training to healthcare staff.
- Improve understanding of autism and identification of opportunities for reasonable adjustments in healthcare settings and services.
- Co-produce/commission initiatives to test and implement improvement in autism diagnostic assessment pathways, including actions to reduce waiting lists.



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### What we will do: (continued)

- Ensure access, at any age, to effective support and interventions while waiting for, and following, autism diagnostic assessment.
- Enable early identification of neurodiversity to provide support during early years of childhood including improving access to education through Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND) framework.
- Improve support to autistic young people through transition towards adulthood.
- Build the right support in the community to reduce health inequalities and avoidable admissions through implementing the Dynamic Support Register (DSR) and Care (Education) Treatment Reviews (CETRs) policies; evaluate Annual Health Check pilot for autistic people in line with national guidelines, and implement actions from LeDeR reviews' findings

# Devon's LDAP Strategic Approach: The Five Pledges

## Co-Production

**Our commitment:** The practice of co-production evolves from conversations between people who deliver public or charitable services in a professional capacity, and people with learning disabilities and autistic people who access these services to receive care or support. We promise to empower people and families to work with us as partners to make sure people get the best care and support possible.

### What we will do:

We want to find more ways to bring co-production to life in the innovations we support, so we will:

- Ensure Co-Production runs through the culture of our partnership.
- Collaborate with critical friends, for challenge and support.
- Enable the programmes of work we support to build co-production into their activities.
- Actively look for ways to support people to overcome barriers to participation.
- Make sure regular communication and feedback loops are developed to all engagement forums in a way that can be received by the appropriate audience.



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## Golden Thread of Co-Production With, not to.

Co-production is about stepping outside of existing assumptions to recognise diverse perspectives - specifically those of people with lived experience - can create more appropriate and innovative ways of working. It enables an equal and reciprocal relationship to make decisions when designing and delivering services. It is built on a common-sense basis: those who are the receivers of a service are the best placed to help design it.

Co-production can also help to challenge the assumption that people with learning disabilities and autistic people cannot participate on an equal level with people in professional roles. It can be a very effective way for people with lived experience to influence change in attitudes and behaviour.

# Devon's LDAP Strategic Approach: The Five Pledges

## Employment

**Our commitment:** Increase the number of working age adults with learning disabilities and autistic people who are in employment.

### What we will do:

- We will ensure for people with a learning disability and autistic people will be given the best help to get a job in Devon.
- Paid employment is everybody's business in Devon. We will gather the right facts and figures to make this happen.
- We will make the benefits of paid employment for people with a learning disability and autistic people known to everyone.
- Devon will lead by example and employ more people with a learning disability and autistic people.



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### Success Stories: No Limits Cafe

No Limits Cafe are a community café (based in Newton Abbot) offering employability skills and supported employment opportunities, changing and improving the lives of those with different abilities. They also make awesome coffee, paninis and brunches!

The café provides Work Experience and Supported Employment, Internship and Apprenticeship programmes, as well as being a community hub that offers social and information sharing

# Glossary

Annual Health Checks (AHCs) - People with a learning disability may have poorer health than other people, so it is important that everyone aged 14+ who are on their doctor's learning disability register has an annual health check [NHS England - AHCs](#)

CETRs - Care, Education and Treatment Reviews. See [NHS England - CETRs](#)

DSR - Dynamic Support Register is a list of people with a learning disability and autistic people who need support. See [NHS England - DSRs](#)

Health and Care Act (2022) - Section 181 refers specifically to awareness training requirements for healthcare and social care professional staff to understand Learning Disability and Autism.

ICS - Integrated Care System [NHS England - Integrated Care](#)

LDAP - Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Group

LeDeR – Learning from Lives and Deaths – People with a Learning Disability and Autistic People. LeDeR is a service improvement programme for people with a learning disability and autistic people. See [NHS England LeDeR](#)

Learning Disability Register - list of people with a learning disability that the GP surgery looks after so the doctor and healthcare staff know what support is required [LD Register Mencap](#)

Local Care Partnerships (LCPs) - collaborations between organisations to help people live happier and healthier lives [ICS Devon - About LCPs](#)

NHS Long Term Plan – [NHS Long Term Plan](#)

National strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026 - [National strategy for Autistic CYP and Adults](#)

National Learning Disability Improvement Standards – [NHS England LD Improvement standards](#)

Primary Care - GP, pharmacy, dentist and optician services [NHS England Primary care](#)

Reasonable Adjustment - a legal requirement to make changes so that services are accessible to disabled people [NHS England » Reasonable adjustments](#)

STAMP - Supporting Treatment and Appropriate Medication in Paediatrics. See [NHS England STAMP](#)

STOMP - Stopping The Over-Medication of children and young People with a learning disability, autism or both. See [NHS England STOMP](#)

Section 117 aftercare - Some people who have been kept in hospital under the Mental Health Act can get free help and support after they leave hospital. The law that gives this right is section 117 of the Mental Health Act, and it is often referred to as 'section 117 aftercare'. See [Mind.org S117 Aftercare](#)

# Acknowledgements

Our acknowledgement and thanks to all our partners involved in the production of this document.

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## Further Reading

- Mencap website: “[Taking Care of your Health](#)”
- [Equally Well UK Charter](#)
- HF Trust Ltd: [Human Rights Act and Learning Disabilities](#)
- [Adult Social Care Vision and Strategies - Have Your Say \(devon.gov.uk\)](#)



Together, We Create!