



Some guidance for social care workers on how to use the Principles for mending gaps with people with learning disabilities and annual health checks.

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| <p>1. These principles apply to all people with learning disabilities including those with autism and Down's syndrome.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Learning disabilities' is a broad term, sometimes people get left out of the process. It is important to ensure that everyone who is entitled to an AHC is included • Make sure that these apply to everyone who you are supporting to have an Annual Health Check (AHC). • Support individuals to make sure that they are entitled to an AHC and are getting invitations to have one |
| <p>2. People with learning disabilities do not wish to be referred to as having different needs to 'other' people. Use positive language that is inclusive and promotes equality.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although some people with learning disabilities can be prone to certain health conditions, it should not be assumed that everyone does. • Make sure that the person you are supporting has time to prepare for their AHC. • Have conversations about what health issues they would like to discuss with their doctor or nurse. This may mean making a list. • Support them to raise these in the meeting. |
| <p>3. Going for an annual health check is like going for half a pizza; people</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AHC should be a holistic, whole person approach. |

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| <p>want a full pizza – questions should not focus on physical health only. Annual health checks should be about the whole person and include mental health and well-being.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person you are supporting at an AHC may want to talk about things to do with both physical and mental health and wellbeing issues • Support them to raise these issues at their AHC and that they are included on their annual health plan |
| <p>4. Don't take the pee – don't ask people to provide urine samples and other results if they are not collected, don't waste people's time.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If asked to provide any samples check these are necessary as sometimes this can incur costs to the individual. • Support someone to find out whether they need to take a urine sample and what that will be used for. • Support them to find out what other routine samples or tests to expect during their AHC |
| <p>5. Some people with learning disabilities can talk about the health issues that are important to them. Some people may find it more difficult to talk about their health and need support.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some people know when they have concerns about their health and can talk about these. They may wish to attend their AHC alone. Some people don't know if they have any concerns and need more support • Give someone plenty of time to talk about their health and anything that is worrying them, before the AHC. This may mean having more than one conversation. • Ensure you check whether they want you or anyone else there with them and whether they would like anyone to speak on their behalf at the meeting • Support the person to prepare for what they want to talk about; for example, making a list |
| <p>6. Annual health checks should be conducted face to face with pictures to support. They should be online if it</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AHC should never take place over the telephone. • Support someone to ensure that their AHC is carried out face to face. |

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| <p>is not possible to attend the surgery. They should never be over the telephone which makes communication difficult and frustrating.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person should be given the option where possible of either online or in person. • Support someone to challenge an offer of a telephone call |
| <p>7. Where possible, people should be involved in agreeing an annual health plan which should be written down, based on health priorities they need to manage.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The annual health plan should be co-written to agree the health priorities for people to work on. • Support someone to ensure that the AHC leads to an annual health plan that reflects the conversation held and the issues that they wanted to raise. • They may want support to look at their annual health plan after the meeting to plan how they want to follow it and who they want to get support from to do this. |
| <p>8. Where possible, arrange with the person where and when is best for them to have the appointment and use number systems in a waiting room – it is good to know where you are in the queue. Also (where possible) ask if they have a preference to see a male or female practitioner.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that you support the person to have their AHC where they want it. This may mean speaking on their behalf if they want you to. • If the AHC is going to be in a GP surgery, support the person to ask the surgery to provide some information about how long they will have to wait and whether they have a number system which would help them. • Ensure that the person has any necessary support to ask for their preference for a male or female GP/nurse. It would good to plan this before the day of the appointment. |

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| <p>9. Support providers and GP's need to make sure everyone has access to information they need in easy read format, about the annual health check process and other physical/mental health conditions.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AHC may identify conditions the person has not heard about. Follow this up with providing easy read information, the following websites may be helpful https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources • Ensure that the person has access to easy-read materials, prior to the AHC. • This may mean supporting them to plan ahead for this to be in place and to ensure this is followed through at the AHC itself |
| <p>10. There may not be time to discuss all health needs but the GP, or nurse could assist with signposting or referrals, e.g. for mental health and well-being, sexual health guidance assist with signposting or referrals, e.g. for mental health and well being, sexual health guidance.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People should have up to an hour to discuss their support requirements although some concerns may need to be directed elsewhere. • Support the person to ensure that everything they want to discuss is addressed during the AHC. • This may mean asking for information about other services. • Ensure that this is included in the annual health plan |