

Quick Guide for Learning Disability Annual Health Checks

What is a learning disability?

A learning disability refers to someone who has reduced ability to learning and difficulty with everyday activities - for example household tasks, going out and meeting friends or managing money - which will affect them for their whole life. People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn and may need support to develop new skills, understand information and deal with or meeting other people or people they don't know.



What is an annual health check?

Visiting your surgery once a year to check how you are feeling, the doctor or nurse will ask some questions and carry out a few checks, for example weight, blood pressure, heart rate to make sure you are healthy.

A doctor and nurse will ask you some questions and take a closer look at how you are doing. They should add your name to their learning disability register and call you back once a year.

You might be able to get extra support such as easy read letters or a health action plan.

This is called an annual health check.



What are the benefits of having a health check?

Having an annual health check is important because it can help keep you healthy and happy.

People with learning disabilities can often have difficulty in knowing when something is wrong, talking about their needs and using health services.

The doctor or nurse can spot signs that you might miss or offer better treatment - for example new or different tablets or medicines.

You can talk to your doctor or nurse about anything worrying you, get advice on your diet or exercise and be more in control of your health and your body.

The annual health check is also a chance for you to get used to going to your medical practice, which will reduce any fears you may have of going at other times.

Before I go...



Think about anything that has been troubling you, for example headaches or stomach pains

Write these down along with any questions you might want to ask.

You may want to talk to a family member or support worker about this. They can also go with you to the appointment, if you choose.



What will happen when I have a health check?

A doctor and nurse will ask you some questions and take a closer look at how you are doing to make sure you are healthy.

During the check, the doctor or nurse will check things like your weight, heart and blood pressure. They may take blood and wee samples (if you are happy to) or talk about your medicines. They might ask about what food you eat and how you are feeling.

What happens next?



Hopefully, the doctor will find nothing wrong and you will have nothing to worry about.

However, occasionally the doctor may find something not right and will be able to treat you for it or may refer you somewhere else for extra tests.

You should attend these and go back to the doctor if needed.

You will also be given a plan with ideas of what you should do next.

This is called a health action plan.



Reasonable Adjustments

The surgery can make changes in order to assist you and make it easier for you to attend the surgery.

This can include using easy read to communicate with you or having appointments at times that suit you.

This is known as making reasonable adjustments.



Health Action Plan

The health action plan will help you remember what you need to do, when it needs to be done by and when or if you need to go back to see someone at the surgery.

The health action plan should be shared with those who need to take action or be aware of important issues.

For example, it could help you and family members or paid support staff to understand the importance of you sticking to a particular diet or treatment.