

# Prevention of mental health problems in people with learning disabilities

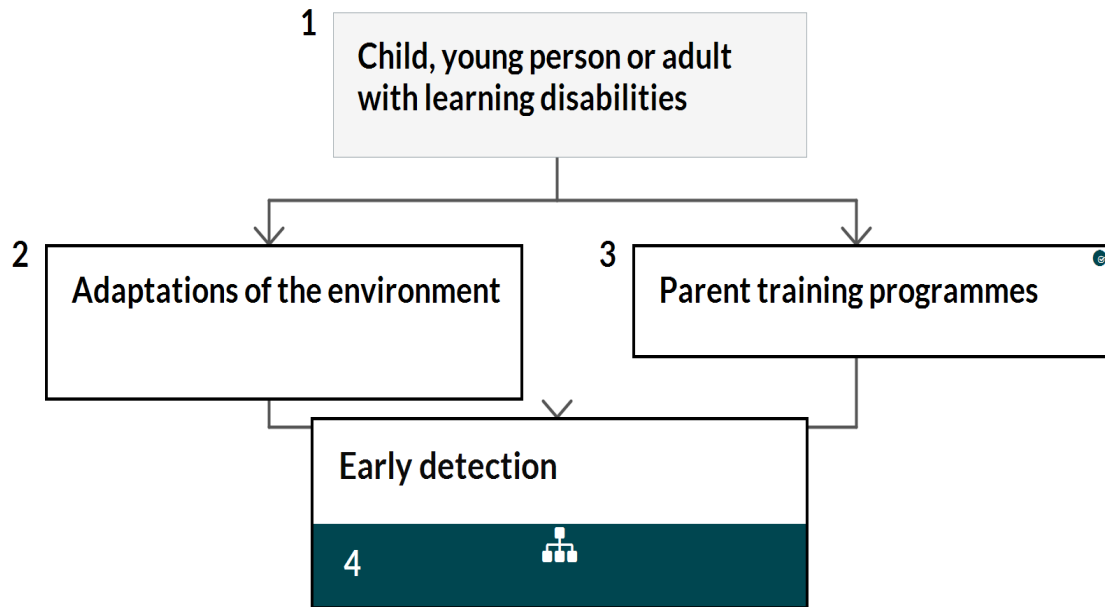
NICE Pathways bring together everything NICE says on a topic in an interactive flowchart. NICE Pathways are interactive and designed to be used online.

They are updated regularly as new NICE guidance is published. To view the latest version of this NICE Pathway see:

<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/mental-health-problems-in-people-with-learning-disabilities>

NICE Pathway last updated: 15 July 2020

This document contains a single flowchart and uses numbering to link the boxes to the associated recommendations.



## 1 Child, young person or adult with learning disabilities

No additional information

## 2 Adaptations of the environment

Health, social care and education services should consider the impact of the social and physical environment on the mental health of children and young people with [learning disabilities](#) [See [page 5](#)] when developing care plans, and:

- provide positive educational environments that are appropriate to their needs
- when care placements (such as birth family to foster care, foster care to adoptive placement, home to residential school/college) are required, minimise the risk of placement breakdown by taking particular care to fit these to the needs of the person.
- give special consideration and support to looked-after children and young people with learning disabilities and their foster parents or care workers, to reduce the child or young person's very high risk of developing mental health problems, and the risk of changes in their home and carers (see [the NICE Pathway on looked-after babies, children and young people](#)).

Health, social care and education services should consider the impact of the social and physical environment on the mental health of adults with learning disabilities when developing care plans, and:

- support people to live where and with whom they want
- encourage family involvement in the person's life, if appropriate
- support people to get involved in activities that are interesting and meaningful to them
- plan for and help people with any significant changes to their living arrangements.

See also [occupational interventions](#).

## 3 Parent training programmes

Consider parent training programmes specifically designed for parents or carers of children with [learning disabilities](#) [See [page 5](#)] to help prevent or treat mental health problems in the child, and to support carer wellbeing.

Parent training programmes should:

- be delivered in groups of parents or carers
- be accessible (for example, take place outside normal working hours or in community settings with childcare facilities)
- focus on developing communication and social functioning skills
- typically consist of 8 to 12 sessions lasting 90 minutes
- follow the relevant treatment manual
- use all of the necessary materials to ensure consistent implementation of the programme
- seek parent feedback.

## Quality standards

The following quality statement is relevant to this part of the interactive flowchart.

### 4. Tailoring psychological interventions

#### 4 Early detection

[See Mental health problems in people with learning disabilities / Mental health problems in people with learning disabilities overview / Early detection: annual health check](#)

Learning disabilities are commonly divided into 'mild', 'moderate', 'severe' and 'profound', but these categories are based on IQ and most UK health and social care services do not measure this. Therefore, this guideline uses the terms 'milder learning disabilities' (approximating to mild and moderate learning disabilities) and 'more severe learning disabilities' (approximating to severe and profound learning disabilities).

All people with learning disabilities:

- need additional support at school
- need support in some areas of adult life, such as budgeting, planning, time management, and understanding complex information
- need more time to learn new skills than people who don't have learning disabilities.

## Glossary

### Carers

(people who provide unpaid support to someone who is ill, having trouble coping or has disabilities; this does not include care workers (paid carers), who are included in the definition of staff)

### Care workers

(people who provide paid support to someone who is ill, having trouble coping or has disabilities in a variety of settings (including residential homes, supported living settings and day services))

### Children

(aged 0 to 12 years)

### Young people

(aged 13 to 17 years)

## Sources

[Mental health problems in people with learning disabilities: prevention, assessment and management](#) (2016) NICE guideline NG54

## Your responsibility

### Guidelines

The recommendations in this guideline represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, professionals and practitioners are expected to take this guideline fully into account, alongside the individual needs, preferences and values of their patients or the people using their service. It is not mandatory to apply the recommendations, and the guideline does not override the responsibility to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual, in consultation with them and their families and carers or guardian.

Local commissioners and providers of healthcare have a responsibility to enable the guideline to be applied when individual professionals and people using services wish to use it. They should do so in the context of local and national priorities for funding and developing services, and in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to reduce health inequalities. Nothing in this guideline should be interpreted in a way that would be inconsistent with complying with those duties.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.

### Technology appraisals

The recommendations in this interactive flowchart represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, health professionals are expected to take these recommendations fully into account, alongside the individual needs, preferences and values of their patients. The application of the recommendations in this interactive flowchart is at the discretion of health professionals and their individual patients and do not override the responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or their carer or guardian.

Commissioners and/or providers have a responsibility to provide the funding required to enable the recommendations to be applied when individual health professionals and their patients wish to use it, in accordance with the NHS Constitution. They should do so in light of their duties to

have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, to advance equality of opportunity and to reduce health inequalities.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.

### **Medical technologies guidance, diagnostics guidance and interventional procedures guidance**

The recommendations in this interactive flowchart represent the view of NICE, arrived at after careful consideration of the evidence available. When exercising their judgement, healthcare professionals are expected to take these recommendations fully into account. However, the interactive flowchart does not override the individual responsibility of healthcare professionals to make decisions appropriate to the circumstances of the individual patient, in consultation with the patient and/or guardian or carer.

Commissioners and/or providers have a responsibility to implement the recommendations, in their local context, in light of their duties to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations. Nothing in this interactive flowchart should be interpreted in a way that would be inconsistent with compliance with those duties.

Commissioners and providers have a responsibility to promote an environmentally sustainable health and care system and should assess and reduce the environmental impact of implementing NICE recommendations wherever possible.