

# The keys to life

Improving quality of life for people  
with learning disabilities

## Easy Read



## Introduction



The Scottish Government wanted to know if the lives of people with learning disabilities had got better since 'The same as you?' was written in 2000.



We set up a research team to find out. Research is a way of finding out facts and opinions. The research team wrote a report about all the things they found out.



We asked people what they thought about this report. All of this information has helped us make a new strategy (big plan) for people with learning disabilities.



'The keys to life' is the new strategy for people with learning disabilities.



'The keys to life' has lots of recommendations about how to make the lives of people with learning disabilities better. A recommendation is an idea about how to make things better in the future.

## Definitions and numbers

### What is a learning disability?



A learning disability is a lifelong condition that means people may need support to:

- understand new information
- learn new skills
- cope independently



It is important to remember that everyone with a learning disability is an individual. Different people will have different areas of life that they need support with.

### How many people have a learning disability?



About 16,000 school children and young people in Scotland have learning disabilities.

About 26,000 adults in Scotland have learning disabilities and need support.

## Human Rights



Human rights are the rights and freedoms that everyone should have. This means things like the right to life and the right to feel safe.

The human rights of people with learning disabilities are at the heart of 'The keys to life'.

### What are our recommendations on human rights?



Organisations like councils and health boards should make sure their policies support the rights of people with learning disabilities to dignity and equality. This should be done by June 2014.



Local areas should talk to people with learning disabilities and involve them in future decisions.



People with learning disabilities should be given information so they know what their human rights are. They should also be given support to put these rights into practice.

## Commissioning of public services



The commissioning of public services is to do with finding organisations who can give good services for good value for money.

### **What are our recommendations for commissioning public services?**



A new law about Self Directed Support will be put in place in 2014. Self directed support lets people be in charge of their own support so they can live the life they want.



Local authorities and the NHS will work with organisations that can offer support. This means that people with learning disabilities will have a say in the services and support they get.



Organisations like local authorities and the NHS should work together to make support better for people who need long term specialist residential care. This should be done by June 2014.



Local authorities and NHS Boards should make sure the needs of people with learning disabilities are thought about when they buy services together.



A training group will be set up to take forward health and social care workforce development.

## Health



Research tells us that people with learning disabilities have some of the poorest health of any group in Scotland.



We want people with learning disabilities to be healthier.

## What are our recommendations for health?



We will work with other organisations to find out the number of adults with learning disabilities who use health services.



We will work with other organisations to find out the number of adults with learning disabilities who use social work services.



We will work with other organisations to look at patterns of long term medical conditions in people with learning disabilities. This will help improve health and avoid unnecessary deaths.



The Scottish Learning Disabilities Observatory will support better health for people with learning disabilities. They will work on understanding the causes of poor health and unnecessary death in people with learning disabilities.



We will look at best practice guidelines for treating people with learning disabilities in healthcare settings. We will make sure they meet the changing needs of people with learning disabilities.



The Easy Info Zone on the NHS Inform website has easy read health information on it. People with learning disabilities, their families and carers should be told about this website. This should be done by 2014.





A targeted health screening programme for people with learning disabilities should be put in place across Scotland.



All professionals working with people with learning disabilities should promote the National Oral Health Improvement Strategy. This is a plan for keeping people's teeth and gums healthy. This should be done by June 2014.



All NHS Boards should make sure that people with learning disabilities have access to the right medical services. This includes access to learning disability nurses who have extra training in epilepsy. This should be done by June 2015.



Health and social care staff should use the local 'See Hear' policy when working with people with learning disabilities. 'See Hear' is a plan to meet the needs of people with sight or hearing loss.



We will carry out research to make sure that people with learning disabilities get the same treatment as people without learning disabilities.



Organisations will work together to find out how GPs (local doctor) can best meet the needs of people with learning disabilities.



Services should work together to make sure people with learning disabilities get the right level of support when they are in hospital.



Hospital departments such as Accident and Emergency are very busy. It is important to know how many people with learning disabilities visit these departments.

## Independent living



Independent living is about disabled people of all ages having the same choice and control in their lives as other people. It also means having the right help and support to take part in the community.

### What are our recommendations on independent living?



We will look at and develop day opportunities. We will make sure that they are person-centred and have real value for people with learning disabilities. We will do this by June 2018.

To achieve this we will work with:



- Local authorities
- The third sector (organisations like charities and voluntary organisations)
- People with learning disabilities and carers



We will review local housing strategies. Local housing strategies look at the need and demand for housing in local authorities.



We want to find good examples that meet the needs of people with learning disabilities. We also want to find out where we need to get better.



We will make suggestions for change. We will write down a list of resources that will help to make the changes. This will be put into local housing strategies. We will do this by June 2014.



The local housing strategies should show that the views of people with learning disabilities and their carers have been listened to.



It should show how all housing organisations are working to meet the needs of people with disabilities.



We will look at the role of Local Area Co-ordinators. We want to see how they are helping to promote independent living.



We will make a decision by June 2014 about how many more Local Area Co-ordinators we need to promote independent living.



Advocacy can help people with learning disabilities say what they think. We want to improve advocacy. We want more people to use it.

We will make an action plan for this. To help us do this we will work with:

- The Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance
- PAMIS
- The Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability



## Shifting the culture and keeping safe



Shifting the culture is about helping people with learning disabilities to make friends and have relationships. It is also about being supported and protected.

### What are our recommendations on shifting the culture and keeping safe?



The Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability and ENABLE should work with local voluntary services to:

- Help people to set up befriending services
- Work with local authorities and NHS Boards to make sure befriending services are included in their plans
- Record the number of people using befriending services





We will work with other organisations and hold a friendship event by the end of 2013. This will help people with learning disabilities to be supported to have more friends.



We will do research to find out how people with learning disabilities and their family and carers cope with different situations.



This will help us to find out what kind of support people need to cope with different situations.



We will give more money to help people with learning disabilities and their families get access to short breaks.



We will work with ENABLE to make sure that emergency plans are put in place to support people with learning disabilities and carers.



Parents with learning disabilities should have access to local supported parenting services.



We want to make sure that people working with parents with learning disabilities follow the 'Scottish good practice guidelines for supporting parents with learning disabilities'.



## Breaking the stereotypes



This part of the easy read is about developing new ways to help people with learning disabilities get access to education and employment opportunities.

### What are our recommendations on breaking the stereotypes?

We want to help young people with disabilities plan for leaving school. This is called transition. We will do this together with:

- Local Authorities
- Skills Development Scotland
- The Transitions Forum



We want to make sure that young people get access to accessible information. This will support them to understand all the options open to them.



We want more training and education to be available for people with learning disabilities.



This will give people more choices other than going to college. We want to do this by the end of 2014.



We would like the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability to work with Scotland's Colleges and Skills Development Scotland to help make this happen.



We want to develop supported employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

To do this we would like the Learning Disability Implementation group to work with:

- Local authorities
- The NHS
- The third sector



These organisations should employ more people with learning disabilities by 2018. This will show others good examples of supported employment.



We would like to have more volunteer opportunities in the community for people with learning disabilities.



This will help people get work skills.



Local authorities, Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability and Volunteer Scotland should work together to make this happen.

## People with profound and multiple learning disabilities



People with profound and multiple learning disabilities need a lot of support every day. They might need support with things like eating, drinking and washing. They might have more than one disability. They might not speak but use other ways to communicate.

## What are our recommendations for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities?



Groups that work with people with profound and multiple learning disabilities should put into practice the 'Scottish quality framework for the delivery of invasive procedures'. This framework will be launched in autumn 2013.



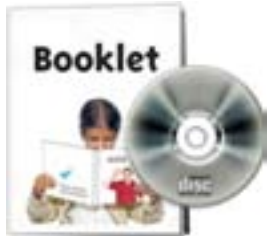
A group will be set up in Scotland to work to increase the number of Changing Places toilets. We want 100 Changing Places in Scotland by June 2015.

## Criminal justice



The Criminal Justice System is a term used to mean the police, courts, prison.

### What are our recommendations on Criminal justice?



All justice organisations should make sure that they make easy read and other accessible information.



A national criminal justice action group will be set up in 2013. This group will be made up of people who work in the criminal justice area.

The group will:

- Find out what the challenges are
- Promote opportunity
- Help to make changes
- Give support to people with learning disabilities



It is important that people who work in the Criminal Justice System have access to the guide 'People with Learning Disabilities and the Criminal Justice System.'



This guide will help them to think about how they can best support people with learning disabilities.



Research will be done across the Criminal Justice System in Scotland.



This research will find out the health needs of people with learning disabilities within the Criminal Justice System. This will help us to know how to improve their health.

## Complex needs



Complex needs is a term used to describe people with learning disabilities who need much more support. This includes:

- people with challenging behaviour
- autism spectrum disorder
- mental health needs
- people with profound and multiple learning disabilities
- offending behaviour
- or a mix of the above

## What are our recommendations for people with complex needs?



NHS Boards and local authorities will work together to develop the right way for people to be discharged from hospital. This will help to stop delays. It will also help to plan for people who do not have a place to stay.



We will work with other organisations to find other ways to support people with complex needs.

This will include self-directed support.

This will include developing housing with support.

We want to do this by June 2015.



We would like people with complex care needs who are in specialist facilities not in Scotland to be supported to live nearer their families.



A group will be set up to help us find out how we can deliver specialist services locally. We want to do this by 2018.

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