

Improving the health of people with learning disabilities

February 28 2014

People with learning (intellectual) disabilities have a lower life expectancy than the general population and are more likely to suffer physical disabilities and chronic conditions.

In the UK concerns about institutional discrimination raised by the charity Mencap in its *Death by Indifference* report, and the Confidential Inquiry into Premature Deaths of People with Learning Disabilities, have highlighted the importance of tackling these issues.

An article published in *Learning Disability Practice* describes a UK framework to help professionals tackle the health and social care inequalities faced by people with learning disabilities.

The Health Equalities Framework was developed by the Learning Disability Consultant Nurse Network to measure the contribution health and social care staff make to reducing exposure to determinants of inequality, such as social, lifestyle and poor communication issues.

The article highlights how the framework can be used to demonstrate how reducing exposure to these determinants and delivering services to mitigate their effects, influences life expectancy for the better.

The authors of the article hope the findings will help to inform public health strategy, service planning and commissioning.

They continue to advise health service planners and providers across the

UK on how to use the framework and have presented it at a series of conferences.

More information: Atkinson D, Boulter P, Hebron C et al (2014) "Exposure to health inequalities as a measure of outcomes." *Learning Disability Practice*. 17, 1, 20-24. [DOI: 10.7748/ldp2014.02.17.1.20.e1501](https://doi.org/10.7748/ldp2014.02.17.1.20.e1501)

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