

Mental Health News

Meeting the Mental Health needs of People with Learning Disabilities

The Mental Health News e-bulletin is a daily bulletin issued by the Mental Health Improvement Programme (MHIP) containing an item relating to a Mental Health issue, development or outcome in the North West.

The aim is to bring awareness to our stakeholders about service improvement and innovative projects underway in Mental Health across the North West, and to encourage you (the reader) to act as vehicle for ensuring that you or your organisation is engaged with the work where applicable.

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The North West Training and Development Team (NWTDT www.nwtdt.com) facilitate a Health and Learning Disability Network. One of the ongoing regional (and national) issues is the importance of access to mainstream mental health services for people with a learning disability. We believe that when we get our services right for people with learning disabilities, we get them right for everyone. People with a learning disability have higher associated health care needs including a significantly raised risk of developing mental health issues than the general population, yet are much less likely to access health care services. Furthermore across the region access to good mainstream mental health provision is limited and often results in inappropriate and expensive out of area placements or even worse contact with the criminal justice system.

How can we work together to improve this situation?

Would one solution be better partnership working between specialist learning disability services and mental health services?

One of the ways to encourage closer working between services is to jointly complete the Green Light Toolkit. This helps services to paint a picture of what good mental health services for people with learning disabilities could look like and gives ways of assessing how well local services measure up. The toolkit will be updated to take account of New Horizons (A new vision for mental health and well-being) the current version is available from:

<http://valuingpeople.gov.uk/dynamic/valuingpeople146.jsp>

The toolkit will help you to strengthen local partnerships. These include primary care services, mental health services, learning disability services public, voluntary sector services and others. All of this is done in ways that involve people with lived experience of learning disability and mental ill-health, their family and carers.

For further information contact: janet@jan-net.co.uk or Catherine.webster@nwtdt.com

Useful learning disability websites:

www.valuingpeople.gov.uk

www.easyhealth.org.uk

www.learningdisabilities.org.uk

<http://www.intellectualdisability.info/home.htm>

www.jan-net.co.uk

www.debramooreassociates.com

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