Coronavirus and People with Learning Disabilities Study

What we know about

Access to Health and Social Care Services

June 2021

What is this study about?

This study is about coronavirus (also called COVID-19) and people with learning disabilities.

We talked to nearly 600 adults with learning disabilities. We talked to people living in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
Nearly 300 family carers or paid supporters of people with severe or profound multiple learning disabilities also gave us information.

This report is about what we have found so far.
Going to see a doctor

We asked people what had happened in the last 4 weeks

5% of people with learning disabilities had hospital appointment cancelled

5% of people with learning disabilities had health tests cancelled

Health checks and flu vaccines

Nearly 70% of people with learning disabilities we talked to had had an annual health check since the start of 2021

Only around 20% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had an health check since the start of 2021

Around 70% of people with learning disabilities had their flu vaccine in Winter 2020/2021
Seeing doctors, therapists and social workers

People with learning disabilities we talked to told us:

- 37% of people with learning disabilities told us they had seen or talked to their GP in the last four weeks
- 17% of people with learning disabilities told us they had seen or talked to their community nurse in the last four weeks
- 11% of people with learning disabilities told us they had seen or talked to their psychiatrist, psychologist or counsellor in the last four weeks
- 9% of people with learning disabilities told us they had seen or talked to a therapist in the last four weeks
- 15% of people with learning disabilities told us they had seen or talked to their social worker in the last four weeks
Seeing doctors, therapists and social workers

People with severe and profound learning disabilities:

- 37% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had contact with their GP in the last four weeks
- 25% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had contact with their community nurse in the last four weeks
- 16% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had contact with their psychiatrist, psychologist or counsellor in the last four weeks
- 25% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had contact with their therapist in the last four weeks
- 15% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had contact with their social worker in the last four weeks
Day services, community activities and college

People with learning disabilities we talked to told us:

21% of people with learning disabilities told us they had been to day services in the last four weeks

52% of people with learning disabilities told us they had taken part in community activities like a club or a quiz in the last four weeks

9% of people with learning disabilities told us they had been to college in the last four weeks

6% of people with learning disabilities told us they had short breaks or respite in the last four weeks

41% of people with learning disabilities told us they had taken part in advocacy groups online in the last four weeks
Day services, community activities and college

People with severe and profound learning disabilities:

25% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had been to day services in the last four weeks

17% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had taken part in community activities like a club or a quiz in the last four weeks

15% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had been to college in the last four weeks

10% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had short breaks or respite in the last four weeks

13% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had taken part in advocacy groups online in the last four weeks
Changes to support

People with learning disabilities we talked to told us:

We asked people about changes to services

We wanted to know about services before lockdown and services after lockdown

20% of people with learning disabilities said their services were going to go back to normal

5% of people with learning disabilities said their services were going to be less than normal

2% of people with learning disabilities said their services were going to be more than normal

People with learning disabilities wanted to meet with their social workers and other professionals

People with learning disabilities wanted access to activities and the community
Changes to support

People with severe and profound learning disabilities:

We wanted to know about services before lockdown and services after lockdown

Services were going back to normal for 14% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities

Services were going to be less than normal for 14% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities

Services were going to be more than normal for 2% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities

People with severe or profound learning disabilities wanted day care

People with severe or profound learning disabilities wanted access to activities and the community
Personal budgets

People with learning disabilities we talked to told us:

24% of people with learning disabilities told us they had a personal budget or direct payment

Some people with learning disabilities (15%) were paying for services that they were not getting

Personal budgets

People with severe and profound learning disabilities:

49% of people with severe or profound learning disabilities had a personal budget or direct payment

Nearly a third people with severe or profound learning disabilities (32%) were paying for services that they were not getting
What happens next?

We want to find out more about people with learning disabilities and COVID-19.

We will talk to people again from July.
Research team contact details

**England**
Sue Caton:
Email: s.caton@mmu.ac.uk
Telephone: 07425 374068

**Northern Ireland**
Peter Mulhall:
Email: p.mulhall@ulster.ac.uk
Telephone: 028 90366318

**Scotland**
Roseann Maguire:
Email: Roseann.Maguire@glasgow.ac.uk
Telephone: 0141 211 3902

**Wales**
Edward Oloidi:
Email: edward.oloidi@southwales.ac.uk
Telephone: 01443 483 042