Improving the Health of People with Learning Disabilities

An Introduction to the Quality Indicators for Learning Disabilities
About this booklet

This booklet is written for people with learning disabilities, their supporters and family carers. Quality indicators have been produced by NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS) and are used to help show if a health service is doing its job properly.

Why have quality indicators?

The National Health Service (NHS) in Scotland must make sure that people get a high quality of health service so that they can enjoy the best possible health.
What are quality indicators for?
They help to check how well a health service is meeting the needs of children and adults with learning disabilities and their families. They should be used to improve services.

How do the quality indicators work?
Each quality indicator states what your local health service should be doing for people.

Then it explains how the NHS should be doing this.

Finally there are some questions to test if your local health service is doing this well.
How are the quality indicators used?

They are used first by your local health service to find out how well the service is working. This is called a self-assessment.

Then a team from NHS QIS will visit the service and use the quality indicators to check the self-assessment.

Next NHS QIS will write a public report on how well the service is doing and what it needs to do to improve.
How can you be involved?

When you use your local health service you may be asked what you think about the service you have received.

Your local health service may ask for your views and include these in their self-assessment.

When NHS QIS comes to visit the service you may get asked if you want to meet the review team.
If you have not been involved, you may still want to tell a review team member what you think. You will be able to get guides to the quality indicators for people with learning disabilities and for family carers from your local health service and from NHS QIS.

**What do the quality indicators measure?**

There are six quality indicators for services for children and adults with learning disabilities and their families. The next section tells you a bit more about each quality indicator.
1. Involving children and adults, and their family carers

This looks at how well health services involve people in deciding how to get the best possible service. Some examples are:

- Information is available in different ways that people can understand.
- Services make independent advocacy available.

2. Promoting inclusion and wellbeing

This checks what health services are doing to make sure that people get the right services and support to be healthy. Some examples are:

- Services treat people fairly.
- Good patient transport is provided.
- Action is taken to improve people’s health.
- Health services help people to find out and use direct payments.
3. Meeting everyday healthcare needs

This is about how well GPs, community health services and staff in general hospitals provide services for people. Some examples are:

- There should be a good assessment of what individual health needs are.
- Support is available when people go for appointments and if they have to go into hospital.
- There are up-to-date personal plans.
- There are services for people who use wheelchairs and special equipment.

4. Meeting healthcare needs that require more special treatment

This is about services to people whose health needs are more complicated or will last all their life. Some examples are:

- Good contact between these services, GPs and other health staff in hospitals and in the community.
- Services are local and easy to access.
5. Making sure people who have to stay in hospital have a good quality of life

This is about making sure that people are treated with respect and are comfortable and safe. Some examples are:

- Surroundings are homelike.
- Privacy and property have been respected.
- Support for people to make choices and decisions is available each day.

6. Planning services and working together

This is about making sure that local health services meet the needs of everyone. Some examples are:

- Information is recorded that will help plan services.
- All services are working together to ensure that there are the right services to meet everyone’s needs.
NHS Quality Improvement Scotland (NHS QIS) helps the NHS improve health services for people with learning disabilities and other people. It was set up in January 2003. If you want to know more about NHS QIS please contact:

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