RCNFoundation
Supporting nursing and midwifery, improving care

Easy Read

Learning disability nursing

What needs to change



Easy Read

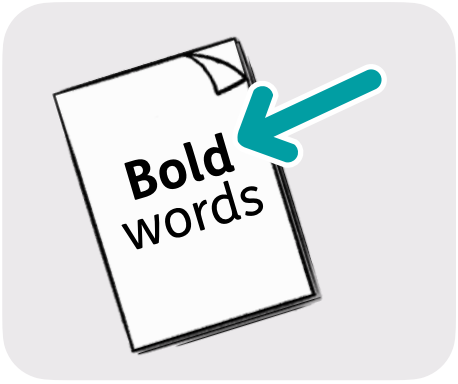


This is an Easy Read version of some information.

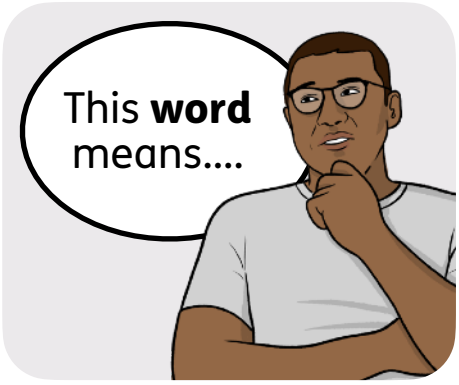
It uses easier words and pictures.



Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are **bold** to show they are important.



We explain bold words if they are hard to understand.

What is in this booklet

About this booklet 4

Why learning disability nursing is important 5

What we found out about learning disability nursing 7

About our recommendations 9

Recommendation 1 10

Recommendation 2 12

Recommendation 3 14

Recommendation 4 16

Recommendation 5 18

Recommendation 6 20

Recommendation 7 22

Recommendation 8 24

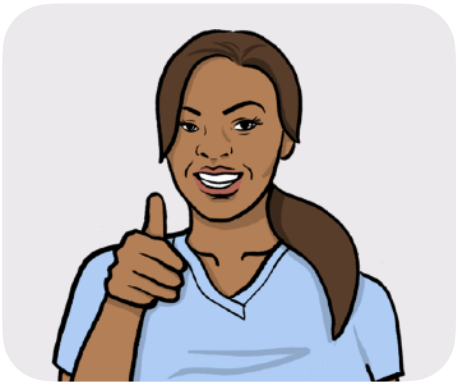
Find out more 26

About this booklet

This booklet is from the RCN Foundation.



We support nurses and health services to work in better ways.



This booklet is about how we think **learning disability nurses** can be supported better.



Learning disability nurses are specially trained to support people with learning disabilities.

Why learning disability nursing is important

Learning disability nurses are trained to:



- Give special support to people with learning disabilities.



- Support the person's family.



- Support other healthcare staff with caring for someone who has learning disabilities.

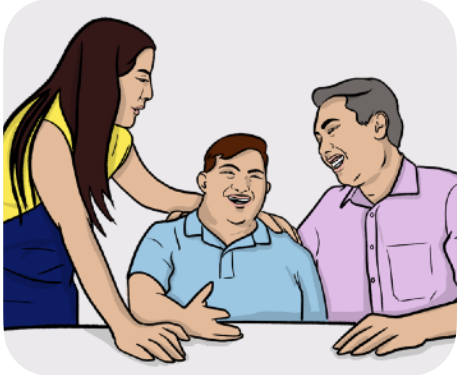
Learning disability nurses can:



- Understand the needs of people with learning disabilities and tell others what they need.



- Improve the support that people with learning disabilities get from healthcare staff.



- Help people with learning disabilities to use the services they need.



- Improve people's lives and help them to do more for themselves.

What we found out about learning disability nursing

After looking at lots of information, we found out that:



- Learning disability nurses provide a special service that other health professionals cannot provide easily.



- People with learning disabilities may not get the health support they need without the help of learning disability nurses.



- People with learning disabilities have worse health than other groups of people, which is not fair.
  Learning disability nurses help to lower this unfairness.

After looking at lots of information, we also found out that:



- Learning disability nurses understand how learning disabilities can affect people's **physical** and mental health.

  Physical health is to do with your body.



- Learning disability nurses do more than just care for people. They can help people speak up for themselves and improve services.



- Learning disability nurses can save the NHS and social care money by spotting health issues that people have early on.
  The issues then do not become more serious.

About our recommendations



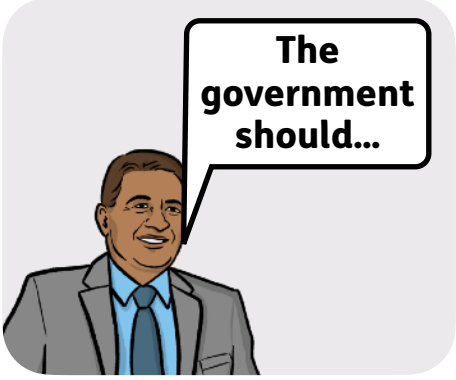
We have 8 suggestions for how the government, the NHS and social care can better support learning disability nursing.

These are called our **recommendations**.

We will tell you:



- What each recommendation is.



- How we would like the government to work on them.

Recommendation 1

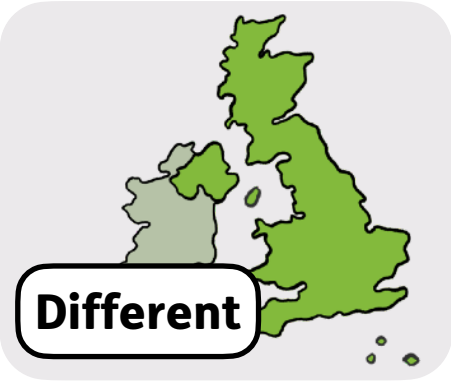


The government should make sure all areas of the UK have a plan to support learning disability nursing.

They should do this because:



- At the moment, a lot of learning disability nurses do not get the support they need at work.



- Different areas of the UK support learning disability nursing in different ways.

The government should start working on:



- Setting goals for how many learning disability nurses each area of the UK should have.



- Improving plans which say the type of staff the NHS and social care need.



- Training more learning disability nurses.



- Making it clearer how learning disability nurses can move up in their jobs.

Recommendation 2



The government should make sure there are more learning disability nurses in the NHS and social care.

They should do this because:



- Learning disability nurses have an important job to do in supporting lots of different services.



- Learning disability nurses help spot health issues before they become more serious.

The government should start working on:



- Making sure there is at least 1 learning disability nurse in all hospitals.



- Getting more learning disability nurses in clinics and health centres in local areas.



- Getting more learning disability nurses in services that support people with learning disabilities, like **epilepsy** or cancer services.

  Epilepsy is a health condition which can make you have fits.



- Making sure that local health and care services always think about people with learning disabilities.

Recommendation 3



The government should set up a way of checking how learning disability nursing can help people with a learning disability.

They should do this because:



- There is no set way of checking how learning disability nurses help people with a learning disability.



- Having this information would help the NHS and social care to know if it is worth spending money on learning disability nursing.



The government should set up a way of checking how learning disability nursing works and helps patients.

These might be things like:



- How happy people with a learning disability are or,



- The number of emergency hospital visits people have to make.

Recommendation 4



The government should help the public and health staff to understand what learning disability nurses do.



They should do this because not many people understand what learning disability nurses do.

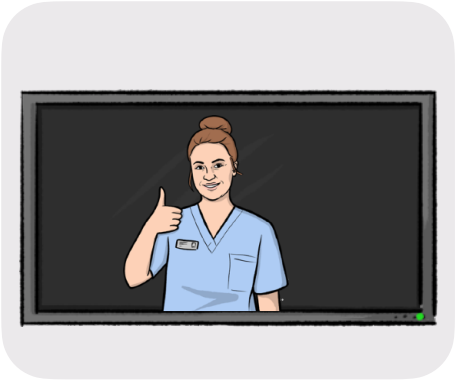


The government should set up a **campaign** to tell people about what learning disability nurses do and how they can help people.



A **campaign** is a way of telling people about something, like in newspapers or on TV.

The government should also start working on:



- Including learning disability nursing when running campaigns about working for the NHS and social care.



- Making sure learning disability nursing is seen as a good job choice for people who are thinking about becoming nurses.



- Telling staff about the importance of being a learning disability nurse.

Recommendation 5



The government should make sure there are more learning disability nurses in higher up jobs in the NHS and social care.



They should do this because when there are learning disability nurses in higher up jobs, they help to improve services.



The government should make more learning disability **consultant nurse** jobs.

Consultant nurses are higher up nurses that help to plan and manage health services.

The government should also start working on:



- Making sure learning disability nurses who know a lot are included in making new rules and plans for the NHS and social care.



- Including learning disability nurses in important leadership jobs in the NHS and social care.



- Supporting learning disability nurses to train to become leaders in the NHS and social care.

Recommendation 6



The government should check to see if all health services are making **reasonable adjustments** for patients.

Reasonable adjustments are changes to services to support disabled people's needs, like having information in Easy Read.

They should do this because making reasonable adjustments helps:



- Everyone to use health services.



- Lower the unfairness in how different groups of people are treated by the NHS and social care.

The government should start working on:



- Including reasonable adjustments when checking how well the NHS and social care provide their services.



- Asking NHS and social care services to share information about how they make reasonable adjustments.



- Giving more training about reasonable adjustments to all NHS and social care staff.



- Making it easier for people to check if NHS and social care services are being fair in how they make reasonable adjustments.

Recommendation 7



The government should spend more money on services that find out if people are ill early on.



This is because learning disability nurses can support services that help stop illnesses from becoming worse.



When illnesses are dealt with early, it has a good effect on the person and also saves the NHS and social care money.

The government should start working on:



- Setting up more services to stop people's illnesses from getting very bad.



- Spending more money on services that check people's health.



- Making sure learning disability nurses are part of projects to support the health of people with learning disabilities.

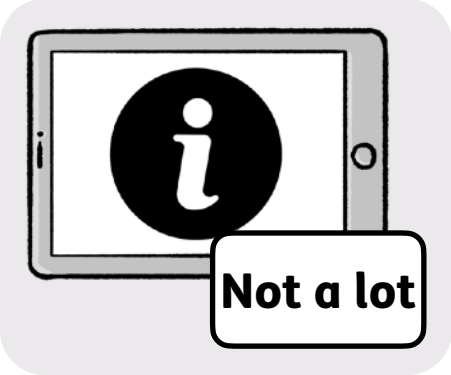
Recommendation 8



The government should find out more about how learning disability nursing can save the NHS and social care money.



There is already some information that shows it does save the NHS and social care money.



But there is not a lot of information.



Finding out more could help the government make decisions about spending money on learning disability nursing in the future.

The government should start working on:



- Spending money on larger projects to see how learning disability nursing can save the NHS and social care money.



- Looking at how much money has been saved when they check how well a service is working.



- Setting up ways of checking how learning disability nursing can save the NHS and social care money.



- Using information to support big decisions about what new services to set up.

Find out more

You can look at our website here:
rcnfoundation.rcn.org.uk



What do you think about this Easy Read booklet?

Please fill in this survey to tell us what you think:
www.easy-read-online.co.uk/easy-read-feedback-survey

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