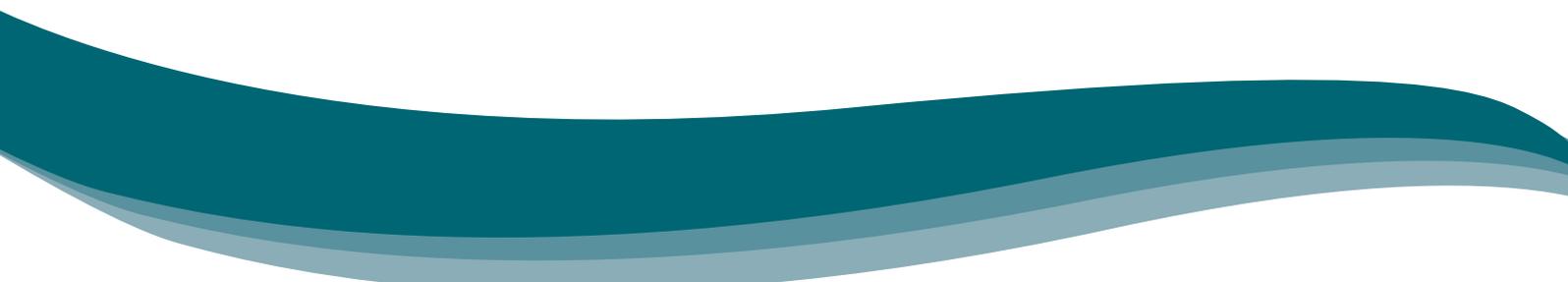


# Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for  
People with Learning Disabilities for all practitioners  
working with people with learning disabilities:  
a human rights-based approach

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# 1. Background and purpose of the framework

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Across Scotland there are approximately 26,000 adults and 16,000 school-aged children and young people who have learning disabilities (Scottish Government, 2013). People with learning disabilities, their families and carers have the right to be valued as individuals and lead healthy, fulfilling, inclusive lives. They have the right to be partners in safe, effective and person-centred care and, where required, receive additional specialist support.

People with learning disabilities have the right to access the full range of services across Scotland available to all, free from discrimination and protected from harm. This educational framework is a resource for anyone who seeks to reduce the inequalities people with learning disabilities experience and ensure that the support and service they offer meets the needs of people with learning disabilities. This framework is a human rights framework, informed by and developed in partnership with people who have learning disabilities.

Scotland's strategy for people with

learning disabilities – *The Keys to Life* was published in 2013, *An Implementation Framework* (Scottish Government, 2015a) followed in 2015. The implementation Framework aims to involve a range of partners and stakeholders to deliver change. The implementation framework highlights a commitment to use human rights based methods to delivery, including the PANEL and FAIR approach (see section 3, pages 10 and 11). The implementation framework sets out the Scottish Governments vision for people with learning disabilities in Scotland:

“...that all citizens of Scotland who have learning disabilities live longer, healthier lives; are supported to **Participate** fully in all aspects of society; **Prosper** as individuals and are valued contributors to a **Fair** and equal Scotland.”

(Scottish Government, 2015a, p.8)

The *Keys to Life* implementation framework outlines four strategic outcomes. The *Keys to Life* is grounded in human rights. The implementation framework was developed around the articles and principles of the United

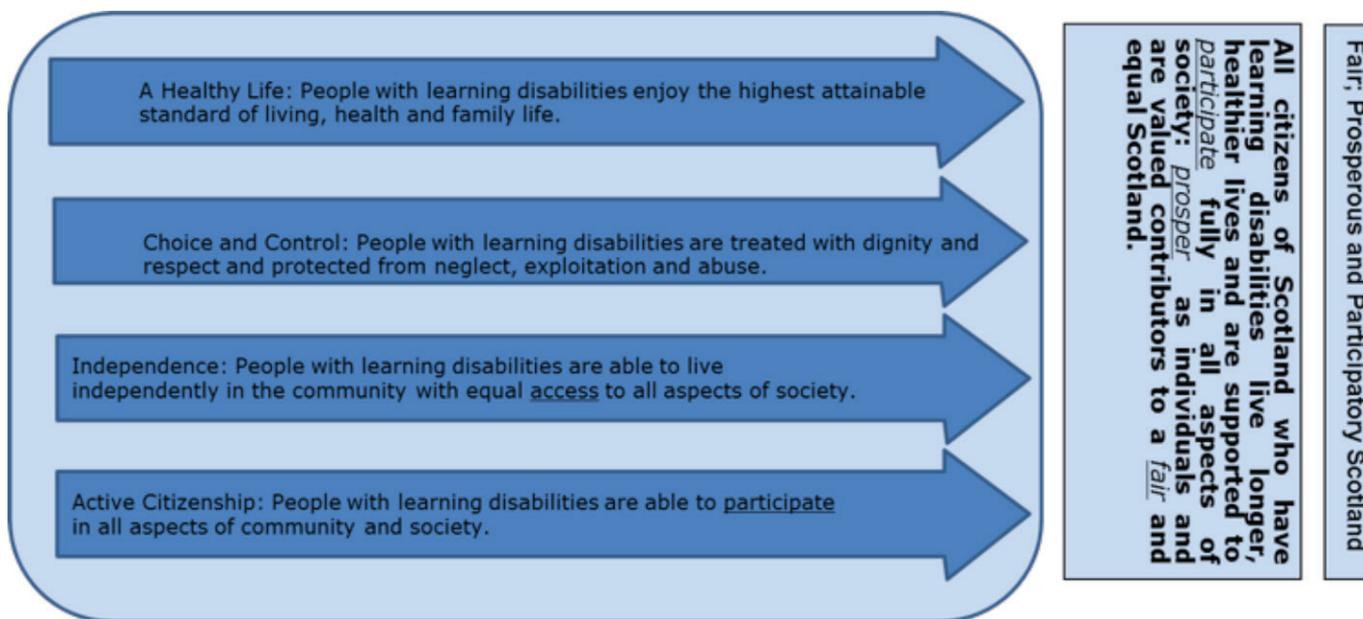
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Nations **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN 2006)**. The implementation framework is intended to protect the rights and dignity of people with learning disabilities, ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights by people with learning disabilities. Like the Convention, the implementation framework views people with learning disabilities as full and equal members of society, with human rights.

This educational framework for health equalities for people with learning disabilities aims to equip practitioners<sup>1</sup> with the knowledge and skills to help reduce health inequalities that affect people with learning disabilities.



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<sup>1</sup> “Practitioner” is used throughout this framework to refer to anyone who has a formal role with a person with a learning disability.

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## 2. Developing the educational framework for health equalities

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The process of developing the educational framework for health equalities had three parts.

1. A literature search on health equalities and health inequalities was undertaken. Very little literature was found on health equalities. Findings from the literature search highlighted literature under a number of themes and these are explored in Section 3.5 page 13 of this framework. The educational framework draws heavily on Promoting Excellence (NES & SSSC, 2011). Promoting Excellence describes the knowledge and skills that are required by staff working with people with dementia. at four different levels. Similar levels are used with this framework.

2. An initial framework was written, then redrafted following comments received from a number of critical readers (see Appendix 1).

3. Three consultation events were held, attended by individuals from health and social care sectors as well as people with learning disabilities. Following these events a second draft was written for comment.

People with learning disabilities who attended the consultation event have now formed the NHS Education for Scotland Learning Disability Forum (see Appendix 2). They have continued to refine the framework and the quotes that feature throughout the text come from them.

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## 3. The evidence and underpinning human rights

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### 3.1 A rights-based approach

Following from the development of the *Keys to Life* implementation framework, this educational framework is grounded within a human rights based approach. The four strategic outcomes highlighted within the *Keys to Life* implementation framework link directly to both the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes (Scottish Government, 2015b) and the integration planning and delivery principles, both of which are grounded in a human rights-based approach. Human rights are based on the principle that people should be equal and free to participate as full and active members of society. They belong to us all, including people with learning disabilities and are the basic rights and freedoms we enjoy as human beings, allowing us to live with dignity and participate in our communities equally.

A human rights-based approach is a way of empowering people to know and claim their rights. It increases the ability and accountability of individuals, organisations and relevant practitioners who are responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling rights. This means giving people greater opportunities to participate in shaping the decisions that impact on their rights.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) sets out the following principles:

- respect for inherent dignity
- non-discrimination
- full, effective participation and inclusion in society
- respect for difference
- equality of opportunity
- accessibility
- equality between men and women
- respect for the evolving capacities of children with disabilities.

These overarching principles are used throughout the framework.

The Scottish National Action Plan (SNAP) on Human Rights (Scottish Human Rights Commission 2013) recognises that human rights impact on all of us through a basic assumption of humane, dignified, fair and equal treatment in our homes, schools, workplaces and communities. As part of its

commitment to SNAP, the Scottish Government (with others) is leading a programme of work to ensure that human rights is at the heart of health and social care integration.

SNAP advocates the use of the PANEL and FAIR approaches. The PANEL principles are important in applying a human rights-based approach in practice.

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### 3.2 The PANEL principles

These principles uphold the rights of everyone to person-centred care and support.

	PANEL principles
<b>Participation</b>	Everyone has the right to participate in decisions that affect them. Participation must be active, free and meaningful and give attention to issues of accessibility, including access to information in a form and a language that can be understood.
<b>Accountability</b>	Accountability requires effective monitoring of human rights standards. For accountability to be effective, there must be appropriate laws, policies, administrative procedures and mechanisms of redress to secure human rights.
<b>Non-discrimination and equality</b>	A human rights-based approach means that all forms of discrimination must be prohibited, prevented and eliminated. It also requires the prioritisation of those in the most vulnerable situations who face the biggest barriers to realising their rights.
<b>Empowerment</b>	People should understand their rights and be fully supported to participate in the development of policy and practices that affect their lives. People should be able to claim their rights where necessary.
<b>Legality</b>	The full range of legally protected human rights must be respected, protected and fulfilled. A human rights-based approach requires the recognition of rights as legally enforceable entitlements and is linked to national and international human rights law.

## 3.3 The FAIR approach

The Scottish Human Rights Commission has also developed the FAIR approach to help apply human rights in practice. The FAIR approach can be used as a means of reaching a balanced and just solution in difficult situations. The FAIR chart, below, outlines the steps that can be taken in more detail.

	FAIR approach
<b>Facts</b>	<p>What is the experience of the individual?</p> <p>Is the individual being heard and, if not, do they require support to do so?</p> <p>What are the important facts to understand?</p>
<b>Analysis of rights at stake</b>	<p>What are the human rights or issues at stake?</p> <p>Is the right to life or the right not to be subjected to inhuman or degrading treatment at stake? If so, these rights are absolute and cannot be restricted.</p> <p>Can the right be restricted? What is the justification for restricting the right?</p> <p>Is the restriction on the right 'proportionate'? That is, is it the minimum necessary restriction to meet the aim or a 'sledgehammer being used to crack a nut'?</p>
<b>Identification of shared responsibilities</b>	<p>What changes are necessary? Who has responsibilities for helping to make the necessary changes?</p>
<b>Review actions</b>	<p>Have the action taken been recorded and reviewed and has the individual affected been involved?</p>

It is intended that this approach will be used in practice by practitioners to aid their decision-making.

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### 3.4 The National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes

The National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes (Scottish Government, 2015b) apply across all integrated health and social care services, ensuring that NHS boards, local authorities and integration authorities are clear about their shared priorities by bringing together responsibility and accountability for delivery.

The outcomes provide a strategic framework for planning and delivering health and social care services. They focus on improving experiences and quality for people using services, their families and carers, and improving how services are provided. They also set out the difference integrated health and social care services should make for people.

There are nine National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes that apply to integrated health and social care. NHS boards, local authorities and the integration authorities will work together to ensure that the outcomes are meaningful to people in their area, including people with learning disabilities.

- 1 People are able to look after and improve their own health and wellbeing and live in good health for longer.
- 2 People, including those with disabilities or long-term conditions or who are frail, are able to live, as far as reasonably practicable, independently and at home or in a homely setting in their community.
- 3 People who use health and social care services have positive experiences of those services and have their dignity respected.
- 4 Health and social care services are centred on helping to maintain or improve the quality of life of people who use those services.
- 5 Health and social care services contribute to reducing health inequalities.
- 6 People who provide unpaid care are supported to look after their own health and wellbeing, including to reduce any negative impact of their caring role on their own health and wellbeing.
- 7 People who use health and social care services are safe from harm.

- 8 People who work in health and social care services feel engaged with the work they do and are supported to continuously improve the information, support, care and treatment they provide.
- 9 Resources are used effectively and efficiently in the provision of health and social care services.

### 3.5 The Health Equality Framework

In 2011, the Learning Disability Public Health Observatory in England (Emerson et al 2011) examined the evidence on health and health inequalities for people with learning disabilities. The Observatory found that people with learning disabilities experienced health inequalities as a result of factors that were common across five themes:

- social determinants
- genetic and biological determinants
- communication difficulties and reduced health literacy determinants
- personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks
- deficiency in access to, and quality of, health provision.

In 2012 Strengthening the Commitment (Scottish Government 2012), the report of the UK modernising learning disability nursing review called upon nurse leaders to develop

and apply outcomes focused measurement frameworks to evidence their contribution to improving person centred health outcomes. The Health Equalities Framework (HEF) (Atkinson et al., 2015) was developed as a response to this recommendation. The HEF is an outcomes tool based on the determinants of health inequalities designed to help commissioners, providers, people with learning disabilities and their families understand the impact and effectiveness of services and was developed around the five common themes above. The HEF was made freely available across the UK.

The overarching principles of human rights for people with learning disabilities are used throughout this educational framework, the five themes outlined in the HEF provide assurance that services working with people with learning disabilities meet their duties under equality legislation (HMSO 2010). The knowledge and skills required by individuals who work with people with learning disabilities are outlined within the five HEF themes, which support the delivery outcomes of both the *Keys To Life* and the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes.

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### 4. How the framework should be used

The framework can be used in a number of ways by:

- individual practitioners (in conjunction with the appropriate generic and/or professional frameworks and guidance) to help them understand the values base and knowledge and skills expected of them in enabling people with learning disabilities to achieve health equality
- individual practitioners with their managers/supervisors to identify how they are performing
- organisations to ensure practitioners have the knowledge and skills to tackle health inequalities and plan staff development activities to reflect the aspirations set out in the framework
- organisations to shape the design and delivery of future-focused vocational and professional undergraduate and postgraduate education and training
- people with learning disabilities, their families and carers as an information resource to ensure they are aware of and can exercise their rights in achieving health equality.

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### 5. The structure of the framework

#### 5.1 Levels of knowledge and skills

Each level defines the knowledge, skills and behaviours specific to the practitioner's role in relation to reducing health inequalities experienced by people with learning disabilities. Rather than being hierarchical, the levels are concerned with levels of responsibility in relation to working with people with learning disabilities. Each level therefore defines the knowledge and skills in reducing health inequalities for people with learning disabilities specific to a practitioner's role, rather than to his or her seniority within the organisation or profession.

The **Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the baseline knowledge and skills required by all practitioners working with people with learning disabilities, including in the person's own home.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions, and/or direct/manage care and services.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who by virtue of their role and practice setting play a specialist role in reducing inequalities for people with learning disabilities.

The skills outlined at each level are constructed in an incremental way: for example, practitioners working at Enhanced Practice Level would also possess the knowledge and skills described at all preceding levels. Each individual practitioner and his or her employer must take responsibility for ensuring that they correctly interpret and apply the content and aspirations of the framework in relation to their roles in working with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.

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## 6. Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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“ I couldn't understand the instructions from the hospital. ”

“ I always see the same GP – this means he knows me really well. ”



The **Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** provides the baseline knowledge and skills required by all practitioners.

## Social determinants

### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel empowered and enabled to exercise rights and choice and to be treated with dignity and equity.*

*People with learning disabilities live in settled and safe family accommodation or their own tenancy/ownership, reflecting their personal choice.*

### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Appreciate that people with learning disabilities have a right to a life that is meaningful and valued.
- Understand that a good and valued quality of life should reflect the priorities of the person with learning disabilities, their family and carers.
- Understand what is meant by the term person-centred support in relation to people with learning disabilities.

- Recognise the characteristics of high-risk accommodation or adverse environments that prevent health equality.
- Awareness of the agencies in both health and social care that can be used for referral to more appropriate accommodation.

### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Interact with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers in a way that recognises their wishes and priorities.
- Seek support and advice from professionals and family carers where there may be communication issues.
- Take the information in relation to accommodation and refer to the relevant professional or agency.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** provides the baseline knowledge and skills required by all practitioners.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are engaged in meaningful activities, paid employment or education.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Awareness of the importance of meaningful engagement for the person with a learning disability.
- Awareness of the role of other professionals and family carers who can support the identification of meaningful activity.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Seek support from/make a referral to relevant others to engage the person with a learning disability in meaningful activities of their choice.

*People with learning disabilities have sufficient financial support.*

- Awareness of the importance of financial security for the person with a learning disability.
- Awareness of the professionals and family carers who could aid the person with a learning disability to access more information about their finances.

- Take information in relation to finances and refer to the relevant professional or agency.

*People with learning disabilities have a range of social networks.*

- Awareness of the importance for the person with a learning disability in engaging in activities in the local community.
- Awareness of local activities in the community and the role of other professionals, family carers and organisations that can support access and engagement.

- Ability to enable the person with a learning disability to engage in community activities.

The **Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** provides the baseline knowledge and skills required by all practitioners.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are not subject to discrimination linked to ethnicity, gender, behaviours, sexuality, appearance, physical features, chronic illness or speech differences.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Awareness of factors that may lead to discrimination against people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the effects of stigma and fear of stigma associated with learning disabilities.
- Understand the effects of stigma on families and family carers.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to ensure that people with learning disabilities and their families are not affected by discrimination.
- Engage with people with learning disabilities and their families in a way that recognises the negative impact of stigma and discrimination.
- Model non-discriminatory practice and behaviour when working with people with learning disabilities.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** provides the baseline knowledge and skills required by all practitioners.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have both their physical and mental health comprehensively assessed and understood.*

*People with learning disabilities have a right to an individual health passport.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Awareness of the importance of physical and mental health assessments.
- Knowledge of individual health passports.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to refer the person with a learning disability for physical or mental health assessments.
- Use health passports to gain an understanding of the needs of people with learning disabilities.

The **Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** provides the baseline knowledge and skills required by all practitioners.

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### Communication difficulties and health literacy

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel they can communicate effectively with their families and carers.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Awareness that people with learning disabilities may use alternative methods of communication.
- Awareness of Augmentive and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems and where to seek support.
- Knowledge that people with learning disabilities may have physical health problems and that they may not be able to communicate this to their families and carers.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to seek support to develop knowledge and skills to communicate effectively.
- Ability to refer to appropriate professional for further communication assessments.
- Ability to communicate with each person with a learning disability.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** provides the baseline knowledge and skills required by all practitioners.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have the highest attainable level of physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand the potential physical, social and environmental hazards and risks to the wellbeing and safety of people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the effects of fragility, adversity and isolation on people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the need for support or environmental adjustment to maintain active engagement in community life and valued activities.
- Awareness of the role of other professionals and family carers who can support the active engagement of the person with learning disabilities in community life and valued activities.
- Knowledge of how to respond to a person with a learning disability who exhibits behaviours that are perceived as challenging.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Recognise when the physical or social environment could compromise the health and safety of people with learning disabilities.
- Recognise when a person with a learning disability may have a physical health problem and respond appropriately.
- Support people with learning disabilities to manage situations where the environment is challenging or presents risks to them.
- Recognise when a person with a learning disability exhibits behaviours that are perceived as challenging and respond appropriately.
- Seek support from/make a referral to relevant others to support active engagement in community life and valued activities.

The **Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** provides the baseline knowledge and skills required by all practitioners.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel empowered and enabled to maintain their own safety.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand that people with learning disabilities may be at risk of experiencing neglect, harm or abuse – physical, sexual, psychological and financial.
- Understand that legislation exists to protect the rights of people with learning disabilities and safeguard them against any potential risk or harm.
- Awareness of local adult protection protocol and policy.
- Awareness of the benefits of risk enablement in enabling people to have more choice and control.
- Awareness of the role of other professionals, families and carers who can support the person with learning disabilities in taking appropriate risks that provide opportunities and benefits.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Recognise and respond when a person with a learning disability is experiencing neglect, harm or abuse.
- Take appropriate action according to organisational procedures when a person with a learning disability may be experiencing neglect, harm or abuse.
- Support the person with a learning disability to take informed risks that provide opportunities and benefits for him or her.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Informed Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** provides the baseline knowledge and skills required by all practitioners.

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities should not experience organisational barriers that may cause restrictions to access to services.*

*People with learning disabilities have the right to have consent and best interest processes applied rigorously and robustly.*

*People with learning disabilities have access to appropriate health screening.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of the organisational barriers and aspects of their own practice that could cause restrictions for a person with a learning disability accessing services.

- Knowledge of the consent and capacity issues that may affect people with learning disabilities.

- Awareness that people with learning disabilities have the right to have health screening.
- Knowledge of national screening programmes and their eligibility criteria.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to seek support and guidance to overcome barriers and make reasonable adjustments.
- Ability to make reasonable adjustments in relation to accessing services.

- Ability to identify when a person does not have capacity to consent.

- Ability to make reasonable adjustments in relation to accessing health screening.
- Ability to seek support and guidance to overcome barriers and make reasonable adjustments.

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## 7. Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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“ I had a great experience when I was admitted to hospital. The staff managed to get someone to look after my cats. ”

“ I managed to do the bowel screening test after staff went through it with me using the book without words. ”



The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

### Social determinants

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel empowered and enabled to exercise rights and choice and to be treated with dignity and equity.*

*People with learning disabilities live in settled and safe family accommodation or their own tenancy/ ownership, reflecting their personal choice.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of the human rights of people with learning disabilities.
- Knowledge that people with learning disabilities have a right to a life that is meaningful and valued.
- Knowledge that a good and valued quality of life should reflect the priorities of the person with learning disabilities, their family and carers.
- Knowledge of what is meant by the term person-centred support in relation to people with learning disabilities.
- Knowledge of the factors that make accommodation inappropriate.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Promote awareness of the human rights of people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- Support people with learning disabilities, their families and carers in a way that recognises their wishes and priorities.
- Support people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to have a good and valued quality of life that reflects the person's priorities.
- Support people with learning disabilities in a person-centred manner.
- Identify when a person with a learning disability lives in an inappropriate setting.
- Make judgements on whether the setting is compatible with meeting the person's needs.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are engaged in meaningful activities, paid employment or education.*

*People with learning disabilities have sufficient financial support.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand that people with learning disabilities may require support or environmental adjustment to maintain active engagement in community life and valued activities.
- Awareness of the benefits for people with learning disabilities of engaging in meaningful activities or employment as a means of maintaining their independence and enriching their lives.
- Understand the importance of supportive networks and/or therapeutic connections for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- Understand the effect that material poverty may have on people with learning disabilities.
- Understand how the FAIR approach can be employed to ensure that finances are used appropriately.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Make or refer to appropriate others to support environmental adjustments to suit the individual requirements of the person with a learning disability.
- Support and encourage the person with a learning disability to maintain his or her chosen activities, social life and/or work and community involvement.
- Refer to the appropriate professional for financial assessment and advice.
- Use the FAIR approach to enhance financial decision-making.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have a range of social networks.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Appreciate that people with learning disabilities have a right to engagement in life's roles and relationships.
- Understand the importance of maintaining the faith and cultural aspects of life for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- Recognise the role of other professionals, such as those in community-connector roles, and families and carers in identifying and supporting appropriate, meaningful and active engagement in community life.
- Understand that the environment incorporates physical, cultural and social aspects that can impact on the experience of people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the benefits of ongoing and supportive relationships to the health and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Support and encourage people with learning disabilities to develop roles, skills and relationships.
- Provide information or signpost to services, including those that reflect the person's faith and cultural wishes.
- Support people with learning disabilities to create and maintain their valued personal and community connections.
- Refer to appropriate agencies/professionals where there are specific cognitive, sensory, physical or emotional barriers to engagement in communities.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel safe and secure and are able to be as independent as possible.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of the services and supports that can help people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to maintain valued activities, social engagement and inclusion.
- Understand that stigma and the impact of learning disability may lead to social isolation and withdrawal from, or lack of creation of, valued social connections and activities.
- Understand how assistive and innovative technology can positively support and promote the independence, human rights and quality of life of people with learning disabilities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Provide information and access to services and supports that help people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to maintain valued activities, social engagement and inclusion.
- Prevent social isolation by creating valued social connections and activities.
- Use assistive technology where appropriate to promote people's independence and quality of life.
- Appropriately refer to other agencies/professionals to access support.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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## Social determinants

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### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are not subject to discrimination linked to ethnicity, gender, behaviours, sexuality, appearance, physical features, chronic illness or speech differences.*

### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Awareness of the discrimination that a person with a learning disability may experience.
- Knowledge of the law and legal processes relating to hate crime in Scotland.

### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to challenge any discrimination a person with learning disability is experiencing.
- Ability to report hate crime.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have both their physical and mental health comprehensively assessed and understood.*

*People with learning disabilities have a right to an individual health passport.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand the importance of physical and mental health assessments.
- Understand the implications of the results of physical and mental health assessments.
- Understand the importance of including family carers and recognising their role in physical and mental health assessments.
- Understand diagnostic overshadowing.
- Understand that the cause of the person's learning disability can predispose him or her to certain health conditions.

- Knowledge and understanding of the content of an individual health passport.
- Knowledge of how and when the individual health passport should be used.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Contribute or signpost people to an annual health check.
  - Ability to refer to the relevant professional, depending on information in the physical and mental health assessments.
  - Involve family carers in physical and mental health assessments.
  - Recognise when diagnostic overshadowing is occurring.
  - Recognise health conditions and refer appropriately.
- 
- Contribute to the development of an individual health passport.
  - Use the individual health passport to underpin care and support for people with learning disabilities.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

### Genetic and biological determinants

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have a person-centred care plan/health action plan.*

*People with learning disabilities have regular planned reviews of their needs.*

*People with learning disabilities have the appropriate plans in case of crisis or emergency.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of person-centred care plans/health action plans based on best evidence.
- Knowledge of established pathways for the treatment of, for example, dementia, epilepsy and diabetes.
- Knowledge of how care plans and care pathways are reviewed.
- Understand the role of family carers as equal partners in care within the pathway.
- Knowledge of plans in case of crisis or emergency.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to follow a person-centred care plan/health action plan.
- Contribute to the development of a person-centred care plan/health action plan.
- Ability to follow established care pathways.
- Ability to contribute to the review of care plans and care pathways.
- Ability to include the family and carers as equal partners in care.
- Ability to follow a crisis or emergency plan.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*Any medication that people with learning disabilities are receiving is reviewed regularly and administered appropriately.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of the medication that a person with a learning disability may be taking and of both its potential therapeutic effects and its side-effects.
- Knowledge of the effects of polypharmacy.
- Knowledge of when medication review is appropriate, depending on the medication the person is taking.
- Knowledge of the correct methods of medication administration.
- Understanding of the knowledge and role of family and carers in monitoring and administering medication.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to recognise both the therapeutic effects and side-effects of the medication that a person with a learning disability may be taking.
- Ability to recognise the effects of polypharmacy.
- Ability to contribute to medication review.
- Ability to administer medication.
- Ability to involve the family and carers in the monitoring and administering of medication.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have access to quality specialist learning disability services.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of specialist learning disability services, including community learning disability nurses, allied health professionals, psychologists and child and adolescent mental health services.
- Knowledge of the referral pathways to access specialist learning disability services.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to make referrals to community learning disability nurses, allied health professionals, psychologists and child and adolescent mental health services.
- Ability to make referrals to specialist learning disability services.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel empowered and enabled to exercise rights and choices and to be treated with dignity and equity.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of the types of health behaviours that can support physical health.
- Understand that people with learning disabilities have the right to be actively involved in all decisions.
- Knowledge of the FAIR approach in decision-making.
- Knowledge of risk enablement and risk assessments.
- Understanding of the effects of neglect, harm or abuse.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Provide people with a range of information about strategies and healthy lifestyle behaviour.
- Use legislative frameworks to support people with learning disabilities to exercise their rights and choices.
- Work with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to maximise their ability to participate in decisions and choices using the FAIR approach.
- Work with people with learning disabilities in a way that reflects their expressed choices, wishes and desires.
- Support people with learning disabilities in risk enablement by contributing to risk assessment and management.
- Contribute to the assessment and support of people with learning disabilities who may be experiencing neglect, harm or abuse.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Communication difficulties and health literacy

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel they can communicate effectively.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of a range of methods of communication with people with learning disabilities.
- Knowledge of Augmentive and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems and where to seek support.
- Awareness that people with learning disabilities may be restricted in reporting their own health needs.
- Knowledge of how pain, illness or distress may be communicated by people with learning disabilities.
- Knowledge of appropriate health information for people with learning disabilities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Use communication strategies, including alternative communication methods, appropriately.
- Ability to refer to appropriate professionals and recognise the knowledge of families and carers in relation to communication issues.
- Ability to recognise the signs of ill health that a person with a learning disability may display.
- Note the individual signs of distress that a person with a learning disability may display.
- Ability to source and use effectively appropriate health information for people with learning disabilities.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have a well balanced and nutritious diet and fluid intake.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of the components of a well balanced and nutritious diet and fluid intake.
- Understand that restrictions to healthy eating and drinking may compromise a person with a learning disability's long-term wellbeing and safety.
- Understand the effects of dysphagia and where to get expert advice and guidance.
- Understand that a person with a learning disability may eat inappropriate food and non-food items.
- Understand the role of other professionals in relation to diet or fluid issues.
- Recognise the experience, knowledge and role of families and carers.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Engage with people with learning disabilities to inform them about the value of a well balanced and nutritious diet and fluid intake.
- Maintain the person's healthy eating and drinking.
- Follow expert advice and guidance when a person has dysphagia.
- Respond quickly and safely when a person with a learning disability eats inappropriate food and non-food items.
- Seek advice/refer to other professionals and family carers when there are specific dietary or fluid issues to be addressed.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have adequate activity.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of the importance of physical activity for people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the restrictions a person with a learning disability may face in relation to physical activity.
- Understand the role of other professionals where there are issues with, or barriers to, physical activity.
- Recognise the role and expertise of families and carers in supporting physical activity.
- Awareness of the range of multi-sensory, therapeutic, recreational and active support activities that promote wellbeing and independence.
- Awareness of specialist services and professionals that support/enable access to a range of appropriate and therapeutic activities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Engage with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to inform them about the importance of physical activity.
- Encourage physical activity for people with learning disabilities.
- Seek advice/refer to specialist professionals where there are barriers to accessing physical activity.
- Utilise the expertise of families and carers in supporting physical activity.
- Encourage and support people with learning disabilities to participate in therapeutic, recreational and active support activities.
- Refer to specialist services and professionals to support/enable access to a range of appropriate and therapeutic activities.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities maintain an appropriate weight.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of body mass index (BMI) and central body mass.
- Understand the importance of achieving or maintaining an appropriate weight.
- Understand the role of other professionals where there are issues with maintaining appropriate weight.
- Understand the importance of the role of families and carers in maintaining appropriate weight.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Support a person with a learning disability to be weighed on a regular basis.
- Support a person with a learning disability to achieve or maintain his or her appropriate healthy weight.
- Engage other professionals when there are issues with maintaining appropriate weight.
- Support families and carers to enable the person with a learning disability to achieve or maintain an appropriate weight.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities do not engage in the harmful use of alcohol, cigarettes and non-prescription substances or other harmful substances.*

*People with learning disabilities engage in, and are educated about, healthy sexual activity.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Awareness of the effects of harmful substances to the health of a person with a learning disability.
- Awareness of the support and services available to people with learning disabilities who use harmful substances.
- Knowledge of sexual health services/education.
- Knowledge of safe sexual habits.
- Awareness of the effects of hazardous sexual behaviours.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to refer the person with a learning disability who is using harmful substances to the relevant support or service.
- Ability to support the person with a learning disability while he or she is receiving help from relevant services.
- Respect the rights of a person with a learning disability to engage in healthy sexual activity.
- Support families and carers to respect the right of a person with a learning disability to engage in healthy sexual activity.
- Ability to recognise when a person with a learning disability may be participating in hazardous sexual behaviours.
- Ability to refer to the appropriate sexual health services/education.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel empowered and enabled to maintain their own safety.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand the impact of the environment on the safety and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the ways in which the impact of environmental challenges can result in frustration and distress.
- Knowledge of a range of proactive strategies, including positive behaviour support and active support.
- Understand the expertise and role of families and carers as equal partners in care.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Use a range of proactive strategies, including positive behaviour support and active support.
- Engage with families and carers as equal partners in care and accept their unique expertise and positive behaviour approaches with their family member.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities can create their own life story.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- ▶ Understand the benefits for people with learning disabilities in creating their own life-story in relation to sense of self and value both now and for the future.
- ▶ Understand the value to families and carers of recording a life story to maintain the sense of the person and his or her relationships.
- ▶ Understand how life-story work can be used to communicate with people with people with learning disabilities and engage them in meaningful interactions and activities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- ▶ Use the person's life story to support his or her engagement in meaningful activities relating to interest and abilities.
- ▶ Use life-story work to enhance communication with people with learning disabilities.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities maintain their health.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand that people with learning disabilities have a right to eye tests, hearing tests and dental checks.
- Understand the range of anticipatory and preventative measures that can be put in place to prevent hospital admission for people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the role of other professionals and families and carers in the prevention of hospital admissions.
- Understand that acute hospital admission may have a negative impact on experiences and outcomes for people with learning disabilities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Enable people with learning disabilities to access eye tests, hearing tests and dental checks.
- Report changes that may compromise the person's health and wellbeing and/or safety and security.
- Support and engage with professionals and families and carers to prevent hospital admission.
- Mitigate the negative impacts of hospital admission.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities experience good end-of-life care.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of specific palliative and end-of-life care needs of people with learning disabilities.
- Understanding of bereavement and loss issues for families, carers and the teams involved with the person with a learning disability.
- Recognise the effects of bereavement on a person with a learning disability.
- Recognise the bereavement and loss needs that you may have.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Contribute to the palliative and end-of-life care of people with learning disabilities.
- Provide support to families, carers and other team members.
- Support a person with a learning disability through the grieving process.
- Seek support to ensure your own needs are also supported.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have access to quality services.*

*People with learning disabilities have successful transitions between services when these are necessary.*

*People with learning disabilities have access to health screening/promotion.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of the different forms of learning disability and the particular implications and impact on the person, family and carers.
- Knowledge of reasonable adjustments.
- Knowledge of local policies/protocols for transition between services.
- Knowledge of routine health screening procedures.
- Knowledge of a range of health promotion tools that have had reasonable adjustments made to enable the person with a learning disability to understand them.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Respond appropriately to the diverse range of challenges that people with learning disabilities may experience.
- Support mainstream providers to make reasonable adjustments.
- Ability to signpost to the relevant professional when required.
- Ability to arrange and support the person with a learning disability to access routine health screening procedures.
- Ability to source health promotion tools that enable a person with learning disability to understand them.
- Ability to support a person with a learning disability to understand health promotion tools.
- Develop/identify accessible information resources.

The **Skilled Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by all practitioners who have direct and/or substantial contact with people who have learning disabilities.

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are able to access primary/secondary care as required.*

*People with learning disabilities have consent and best interest processes rigorously applied.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of how to access primary/secondary care.
- Understand that acute hospital admissions may increase the impact of exposure to known determinants of health inequality.
- Understand the requirements of formal assessment of capacity under the terms of the legislation.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to support people with learning disabilities to access primary/secondary care.
- Signpost to learning disability liaison nurses.
- Recognise the impact of acute hospital admissions.
- Ability to identify situations/ circumstances when a person may require assessment of capacity.

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# 8. Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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“ *I want to stay healthy.* ”

“ *Keeping me alive.* ”



## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities live in settled and safe family accommodation or their own tenancy/ownership, reflecting their personal choice.*

*People with learning disabilities are not subject to discrimination linked to ethnicity, gender, behaviours, sexuality, appearance, physical features, chronic illness or speech differences.*

*People with learning disabilities have a range of social networks.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

➤ Knowledge of the factors that make accommodation inappropriate.

➤ In-depth knowledge of the types of discrimination that may occur.

➤ Knowledge of a range of social networks.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

➤ Ability to arrange for changes in accommodation as required.

➤ Practical housing support.

➤ Educate and engage people with learning disabilities, their families and carers about the effects of discrimination.

➤ Mitigate the effects of discrimination.

➤ Educate staff in relation to the importance of social networks for people with learning disabilities.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

### Social determinants

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are able to maintain valued relationships and networks, and have the opportunity to develop new ones, both personal and professional.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Detailed knowledge of local services and specialists, their roles and functions.
- Understand that people with learning disabilities may come from a diverse range of ethnic and cultural groups.
- Understand the importance of existing and new community resources that can support people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to maintain a valued and socially included quality of life.
- Understand the concepts of person-centred care and personalisation and the implications for how services and individual support is delivered.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Refer to services and specialists as required.
- Treat everyone with respect and dignity whatever their cultural and ethnic background.
- Contribute to practices that build on and expand community resources for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- Facilitate the development of new and supportive networks and connections through, for example, peer support, group support and virtual and internet supports.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are able to maintain valued relationships and networks, and have the opportunity to develop new ones, both personal and professional.  
(continued)*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand the importance of engagement in valued relationships and meaningful activities for people with learning disabilities.
- Knowledge and recognition of the need to balance dependence and interdependence to maximise social inclusion.
- Knowledge and understanding of self-directed support and how this can be enabled and maximised to support people with learning disabilities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Work in partnership in a way that reflects the diversity of people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to positively and constructively respond to their specific situation.
- Utilise the social networks and spiritual supports familiar to the person to maintain contact with his or her community, family, friends and carers.
- Contribute to practices that enable the person with a learning disability to actively find the right solutions for him or her and choose and access services, including the use of self-directed support.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have access to individuals, groups and organisations that can support their spiritual or personal beliefs and reflect their cultural wishes.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand that people with learning disabilities have a potential risk of social isolation.
- Understand the importance for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers in engaging in socially included roles, relationships and activities that support their independence and wellbeing.
- Understand the importance of peer and community support for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- Understand the importance of people maintaining the spiritual and cultural aspects of life.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Work to maximise social inclusion by supporting people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to access community organisations and supports and engage in meaningful activity.
- Engage with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to find out how their spiritual and cultural beliefs can be supported and harnessed to maintain their valued quality of life.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disability feel empowered and enabled to exercise rights and choice and to be treated with dignity and equity.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand the human and legal rights of people with learning disabilities to make decisions and take risks in the context of their own lives.
- Detailed knowledge of the principles and key provisions of legislation such as the Human Rights Act 1998, Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003, Adults with Incapacity Act 2000, Adult Support and Protection Act 2007 and the Equalities Act 2010.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Actively support people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to understand the legal frameworks that support choice and decision-making.
- Apply the principles and key provisions of legislation to safeguard people with learning disabilities.
- Identify the complexities associated with learning disabilities that may have legal and ethical implications and act to safeguard the best interests of people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

## Genetic and biological determinants

### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have access to quality services and can participate in community life and valued activities.*

### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- In-depth knowledge of the different forms of learning disability and the particular implications and impact on the person, family and carers.

### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to assess the impact of the learning disability.
- Ability to mitigate the effects of the learning disability.

*People with learning disabilities have both their physical and mental health comprehensively assessed and understood.*

- Knowledge of how to conduct assessments of physical and mental health.
- Knowledge of how to interpret the results of physical and mental health assessments.

- Conduct or refer for annual health checks.
- Make referrals to the relevant professional depending on information from the physical and mental health assessments.

*People with learning disabilities have a right to an individual health passport.*

- Knowledge of a range of individual health passports.

- Develop an individual health passport for a person with a learning disability.
- Support other practitioners to make use of the individual health passport.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have a person-centred care plan/health action plan.*

*People with learning disabilities have regular planned reviews of their needs.*

*People with learning disabilities have the appropriate crisis and emergency plans.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- In-depth knowledge of person-centred care plan/health action plans based on best evidence.
- In-depth knowledge of established care pathways for the treatment of, for example, dementia, epilepsy and diabetes.
- In-depth knowledge of how care plans and care pathways are reviewed.
- In-depth knowledge of crisis and emergency plans.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Create a person-centred care plan/health action plan.
- Develop a person-centred care plan/health action plan.
- Ability to implement and evaluate established care pathways.
- Ability to review care plans and care pathways.
- Ability to create crisis and emergency plans.
- Enhance the knowledge and skills of others in relation to crisis and emergency plans.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*Any medication that people with learning disabilities are receiving is reviewed regularly and administered appropriately.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- In-depth knowledge of the medication that a person with a learning disability may be taking and of both its potential therapeutic effects and side-effects.
- In-depth knowledge of the effects of polypharmacy.
- Knowledge of when medication review is appropriate, depending on the medication the person with a learning disability is taking.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to recognise both the therapeutic effects and side-effects of the medication that a person with learning disabilities may be taking.
- Ability to conduct a medication review.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities maintain their best level of physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of the range of assistive and innovative technologies available that support independent living and the evidence base for their use.
- Understand the range of environmental and person-centred approaches that can promote wellbeing for people with learning disabilities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Use signage, lighting and familiar objects to maximise orientation and reduce confusion.
- Assess needs and engage with assistive and innovative technology, such as pressure mats and door alarms, as appropriate to maintain the person's independence.
- Support and enable the person with a learning disability to remain active and mobile.
- Engage in implementing best practice in environmental adaptations to contribute to the privacy and safety of people with learning disabilities.
- Use a range of assessment strategies to identify changes in the person's emotional wellbeing.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are able to maintain valued relationships and lifestyles that are not affected by distress.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- ▶ Detailed knowledge and understanding that behaviours perceived as being challenging are often an expression of unmet needs.
- ▶ Understand the range of psychological, psychosocial and environmental interventions that can ease behavioural distress.
- ▶ Understand the range of multi-sensory stimulation, recreational activities and combined therapies that promote wellbeing and alleviate distress in people with learning disabilities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- ▶ Proactively intervene to support people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to manage stress and avert distress.
- ▶ Creatively use a combination of different levels of intervention, based on individual needs, to promote wellbeing and alleviate distress.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Communication difficulties and health literacy

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel they can communicate effectively with their families and carers.*

*People with learning disabilities have access to individuals, groups and organisations that can support their spiritual or personal beliefs and reflect their cultural wishes.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- In-depth knowledge of a range of methods of communication with people with learning disabilities.
- Awareness that people with learning disabilities may be restricted in reporting their own health needs.
- Knowledge of how a person with a learning disability communicates pain or distress.
- In-depth knowledge of appropriate health information for people with learning disabilities.
- In-depth knowledge of how life-story work can be used to communicate with people with learning disabilities and engage them in meaningful interactions and activities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Use communication strategies, including alternative communication methods, appropriately.
- Ability to assess when a person with a learning disability has a health need.
- Ability to assess when a person with a learning disability is in pain or distress.
- Ability to source and use effectively appropriate health information for people with learning disabilities.
- Monitor the use of a person's life story to identify if it leads to engagement in meaningful activities relating to his or her interest and abilities.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have a well balanced, nutritious diet and fluid intake.*

*People with learning disabilities have adequate activity.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- In-depth knowledge of the components of a well balanced, nutritious diet and fluid intake.
- Understand that modifications to diet and hydration may be required when a person with a learning disability has a long-term health condition.

- In-depth knowledge of the importance of physical activity for people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the restrictions a person with a learning disability may face in relation to physical activity.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Engage with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to inform them about the value of a well balanced and nutritious diet.
  - Monitor diet and hydration.
  - Modify diet and hydration as required.
- 
- Engage with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to inform them about the importance of physical activity.
  - Explore options for activity for people who may have restrictions.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities do not engage in the harmful use of alcohol, cigarettes and non-prescription substances or other harmful substances.*

*People with learning disabilities engage in, and are educated about, healthy sexual activity.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- In-depth knowledge of the effects of substances that are harmful to the health of people with learning disabilities.
- Knowledge of the support and services available to people with learning disabilities who use harmful substances.
- In-depth knowledge of the effects of hazardous sexual behaviours.
- Knowledge of safe sexual habits.
- Knowledge of sexual health services/education.
- Understanding of adult protection.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to support the person with a learning disability who is using harmful substances to access the relevant services.
- Ability to monitor the person with a learning disability to identify if he or she is receiving appropriate help from relevant services.
- Support people with learning disabilities to understand that they are using harmful substances.
- Ability to evaluate when the person with a learning disability may be participating in hazardous sexual behaviours.
- Support people with learning disabilities to engage in safe sexual activity.
- Ability to refer to and monitor the use of appropriate sexual health services/education.
- Support the person with a learning disability to be safe.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities do not present with risky behaviours/routines.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- In-depth knowledge of the impact of the environment on the safety and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the ways in which the impact of environmental challenges can result in frustration and distress.
- In-depth knowledge of the range of multi-sensory, therapeutic, recreational and active support activities that promote wellbeing and independence.
- In-depth knowledge of a range of proactive strategies, including positive behaviour support.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Engage with people with learning disabilities, their families and carers in a warm and empathic manner when responding to frustrations and distress.
- Ability to assess environments and make appropriate changes to reduce frustration and distress.
- Implement and evaluate therapeutic, recreational and active support activities.
- Develop, implement and evaluate a range of proactive strategies, including positive behaviour support.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel safe and secure and are able to be as independent as possible.*

*People with learning disabilities maintain their best level of physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Knowledge of all annual health checks that are required.
- Knowledge of how to identify the person's abilities and strengths.
- In-depth knowledge of the possible negative impacts of acute hospital admission.
- In-depth knowledge of the range of anticipatory and preventative measures that can be put in place to prevent hospital admissions for people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the contribution that can be made to the quality of life of people with learning disabilities through timeous gathering of personal details and information from all sources, including families, carers and friends.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Adopt a strengths-based approach to holistically assessing the person's physical health needs and observe for changes and deteriorations in health.
- Promote and maintain the person's current abilities and strengths related to health.
- Ability to prepare the person with a learning disability and educate staff in acute services to ensure that admissions have no negative impacts.
- Implement and evaluate a range of anticipatory and preventative measures.
- Work in partnership with the person with a learning disability, their family and carers to gather pertinent information to support promotion of the best quality of life.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel empowered and enabled to exercise rights and choices and to be treated with dignity and equity.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand the requirements of appropriate current legislation on informed consent, confidentiality and advance planning and the implications for the person with a learning disability and his or her family and carers.
- Knowledge of the principles of determining capacity in any given situation.
- Knowledge of a range of communication tools and techniques, including the FAIR approach, that can support the person with a learning disability in decision-making.
- Knowledge of how the potentially reduced capacity of the person with a learning disability can impact on his or her ability to effectively communicate choices, wishes and needs.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Actively support the person with a learning disability and his or her family and carers to implement legal aspects regarding informed consent, confidentiality and advance planning.
- Actively seek the person's consent before any intervention is carried out.
- Ascertain whether the person with a learning disability has a guardian or attorney appointed.
- Refer for assessment when no guardian or attorney has been appointed.
- Actively support the person with a learning disability to maximise his or her ability to communicate needs, wishes and desires.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviour and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities and their families, friends and carers have access to information, education and support that enhances their wellbeing.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand how human rights legislation can contribute to person-centred planning for people with learning disabilities.
- Knowledge of appropriate current legislation on informed consent and confidentiality.
- Knowledge of the elements of relevant legislation that can support people with learning disabilities, such as power of attorney, guardianship and advocacy.
- Appreciate the role of families and carers who support people with learning disabilities and their right to assessment and support to promote their own health and wellbeing.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Actively support the person with a learning disability, family and carers to exercise their rights, entitlements and choices.
- Provide information and guidance for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers regarding welfare and finance.
- Provide information for the person with a learning disability, family and carers about the ongoing implications for them of legislation regarding informed consent, guardianship, power of attorney and advocacy.
- Engage with families and carers as equal and expert partners in care and support.

The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have successful transitions between services when these are necessary.*

*People with learning disabilities have access to quality services and can continue to participate in community life and valued activities.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- In-depth knowledge of local policies/protocols for transition between services.
- Understand the concept of outcomes- and asset-focused approaches to treatment and support.
- Understand the importance of identifying and focusing on outcomes that are important to the person with a learning disability.
- Knowledge of evidence-based, solution-focused psychological interventions.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ability to enable smooth transitions.
- Manage referrals, transfers, transitions and discharges.
- Produce transition plans.
- Engage with the person with a learning disability to establish the outcomes that are important to him or her, and support him or her to prioritise and achieve these outcomes.
- Maintain a positive and solution-focused approach that encourages and supports the person with a learning disability, family and carers to build on their strengths and abilities.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Enhanced Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required by practitioners who have more regular and intense contact with people with learning disabilities, provide specific interventions and/or direct and manage care and services for people with learning disabilities.

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel safe and secure and are able to be as independent as possible.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Understand the principles, approaches and practices that promote outcomes- and asset-focused approaches to care of people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the importance of evaluating personal outcomes.
- Understand that respite and short breaks are key support interventions to maximise carers' contributions and enhance the wellbeing of the person with a learning disability.
- Understand the importance of, and opportunities presented by, risk enablement in promoting independent living for people with learning disabilities.
- Knowledge of evidence-based approaches and techniques for assessing neglect and abuse and identifying appropriate responses.
- In-depth knowledge of environmental issues that may challenge safety and quality of life.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Adopt an outcomes-based approach, building on people's existing capabilities, when assessing the support needs of people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- Undertake person-centred assessments focused on the outcomes for the person with a learning disability.
- Encourage and support the person with a learning disability, family and carers to identify respite and short-break interventions that meet their individual needs.
- Support people with learning disabilities in risk enablement through involvement in risk assessment and management.
- Work with the person with a learning disability to assess risk, including areas of potential neglect and abuse.
- Enable people with learning disabilities to address the environmental issues that may provide challenges to their safety and quality of life.

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# 9. Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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*“ The Health Club is really useful. ”*

*“ Staff keep it real for me. ”*

*“ The Community Learning Disability Team are running a really good course on relationships. ”*



The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

## Social determinants

### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities live in settled and safe family accommodation or their own tenancy/ownership, reflecting their personal choice.*

*People with learning disabilities feel empowered and enabled to exercise rights and choice, maintain their identity and to be treated with dignity and equity.*

### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of the factors that make accommodation inappropriate.
- Comprehensive knowledge of positive approaches to enable and support people to be empowered to exercise rights and choices.
- Advanced understanding of the value of person-centred approaches in therapeutic relationships and communication.

### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Make recommendations about a range of appropriate accommodation options using a FAIR approach.
- Promote awareness of the person's right to exercise choice, social inclusion and citizenship.
- Advise on the use of a range of person-centred assessment approaches.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are not subject to discrimination linked to ethnicity, gender, behaviours, sexuality, appearance, physical features, chronic illness or speech differences.*

*People with learning disabilities have a range of social networks.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

➤ Comprehensive understanding of the impact that discrimination and stigma may have on the life of the person with a learning disability, family and carers.

➤ Comprehensive knowledge of a range of social networks.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

➤ Challenge any discrimination and stigma people with learning disabilities may face in health and social care services and wider communities.

➤ Support people to exercise their rights if they experience discrimination and stigma.

➤ Promote the use of social networks for people with learning disabilities.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

### Social determinants

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are able to maintain valued relationships and networks and have the opportunity to develop new ones, both personal and professional.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the principles, processes, implications and procedures involved in using self-directed support.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the principles and options for the application of outcomes- and asset-based approaches.
- In-depth knowledge of person-centred and relationship-focused approaches to the care and support of people with learning disabilities.
- Comprehensive knowledge of a range of methodologies for delivering, measuring and monitoring outcomes to ensure that the needs and wishes of people with learning disabilities, their families and carers are met.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the importance of continued engagement in valued relationships and meaningful activities for people with learning disabilities as their condition progresses.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- When appropriate to role, support the person with a learning disability, family and carers to understand and make informed choices about self-directed support.
- Support the person with a learning disability, family and carers to access self-directed support if desired.
- Promote the use of an outcomes- and asset-based approach.
- Use person-centred and empathic approaches to assessment, treatment and support for people with learning disabilities.
- Promote partnership-working.
- Promote engagement in valued relationships.
- Promote social inclusion.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have access to individuals, groups and organisations that can support their spiritual or personal beliefs and reflect their cultural wishes.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- ▶ Comprehensive knowledge of the risks of social isolation.
- ▶ Comprehensive knowledge of the importance for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers in engaging in socially included roles, relationships and activities that support their independence and wellbeing.
- ▶ Comprehensive knowledge of the importance of peer and community support for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- ▶ Comprehensive knowledge of the importance of people maintaining the spiritual and cultural aspects of life.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- ▶ Promote social inclusion by demonstrating how to access community organisations and supports.
- ▶ Promote engagement with people with learning disabilities to identify their individual spiritual and cultural beliefs.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Social determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel safe and secure and are able to be as independent as possible.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive understanding of environmental adaptations that may be required.
- Expert knowledge of the range of measures that can contribute to the safety and privacy of people with learning disabilities without compromising their right to dignity or independence.
- Expert knowledge of different perceptions of risk and the range of approaches to management of risk.
- Understand the reasons and rationale behind some people having an aversion to risk-taking.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Make recommendations regarding the various ways in which the environment and environmental adaptations can contribute to the person's privacy and safety.
- Make recommendations regarding environmental design, including signage, to assist people with learning disabilities to be orientated and independent.
- Act as a source of expert advice on the benefits of risk enablement in supporting people with learning disabilities to have choice and control.
- Apply flexible and responsive approaches to eliminating risk aversion.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have both their physical and mental health comprehensively assessed and understood.*

*People with learning disabilities have a right to an individual health passport.*

*People with learning disabilities have regular planned reviews of their needs.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

➤ Comprehensive knowledge of physical and mental health assessments.

➤ Comprehensive knowledge of a range of individual health passports.

➤ Comprehensive knowledge of established care plans and care pathways.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

➤ Instigate and involve others in conducting and following-up physical and mental health assessments.

➤ Make recommendations about the use of individual health passports for people with learning disabilities.

➤ Ensure the use of care plans and care pathways.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

### Genetic and biological determinants

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have a person-centred care plan/health action plan.*

*People with learning disabilities have the appropriate crisis and emergency plans.*

*Any medication that people with learning disabilities are receiving is reviewed regularly and administered appropriately.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of person-centred care plan/health action plans based on the best evidence.

- Comprehensive knowledge of crisis and emergency plans.

- Comprehensive knowledge of the medication that a person with a learning disability may be taking and its potential therapeutic effects and its side-effects.

- Comprehensive knowledge of the effects of polypharmacy.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Ensure the use of evidence-based care plans and health action plans.

- Recommend the use crisis and emergency plans.

- Advise on both therapeutic effects and side-effects of medication.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities maintain their best level of physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of the range of assistive and innovative technologies available to support independent living and the evidence base for their use.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the range of environmental and person-centred approaches that can promote wellbeing for people with learning disabilities.
- Expert knowledge of the range of options and interventions that support people with learning disabilities who are experiencing mental health problems.
- Expert knowledge of the complexity of diagnostic overshadowing.
- Thorough understanding of evidence-based approaches that can enhance psychological, social and physical wellbeing.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Advise on environmental and person-centred approaches that promote wellbeing for people with learning disabilities.
- Provide role-appropriate social, emotional and psychological support and interventions to help people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to address mental health issues.
- Recognise and advise when diagnostic overshadowing occurs.
- Draw on a range of different social, psychological and psychosocial approaches to provide support appropriate to the person with a learning disability.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities maintain their best level of physical, mental, social and emotional wellbeing.  
(continued)*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of appropriate interventions, based on a knowledge of the person with learning disabilities and behaviours that may be perceived as challenging, and the best evidence available.
- Expert knowledge of the benefits of multi-sensory stimulation, recreational activities and use of combined therapies.
- In-depth knowledge of approaches and evidence-based interventions to support people who cannot communicate their needs.
- Comprehensive knowledge of approaches that promote multidisciplinary assessment and interventions to support people with learning disabilities with behaviours perceived as challenging.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Advise on appropriate interventions for people with learning disabilities who have behaviours perceived as challenging.
- Act as a source of expert advice and guidance in sensory stimulation, recreational activities and use of combined therapies.
- Expertly use person-centred interventions to support people with learning disabilities who may not be able to communicate their needs.
- Promote and lead on multidisciplinary assessment and interventions to support people with learning disabilities with behaviour that may be perceived as challenging.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities and their families, friends and carers have access to information, education and support that enhances their wellbeing.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of the different forms of learning disability and the particular implications and impact on the person, family and carers.
- Expert understanding of advance planning processes, such as, advanced statements, power of attorney and end-of-life care.
- Expert understanding of the sensitivities associated with advance planning processes for a person with a learning disability their family and carers.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Advise on the impact of the learning disability.
- Support people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to engage in advance planning.
- Provide support and advice to services and professionals involved in supporting people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to engage in advance planning.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are able to maintain valued relationships and networks and have the opportunity to develop new ones, both personal and professional.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- ▶ Comprehensive knowledge and understanding that behaviours perceived as challenging are often an expression of unmet needs.
- ▶ Understand the range of psychological, psychosocial and environmental interventions that can ease behavioural distress.
- ▶ Understand the range of multi-sensory stimulation, recreational activities and combined therapies that promote wellbeing and alleviate distress in people with learning disabilities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- ▶ Proactively intervene to support the person with a learning disability, family and carers to manage stress and avert distress.
- ▶ Creatively use a combination of different levels of intervention, based on individual needs, to promote wellbeing and alleviate distress.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Genetic and biological determinants

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel empowered and enabled to exercise rights and choice, maintain their identity and to be treated with dignity and equity.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Expert knowledge of specific palliative and end-of-life care needs of people with learning disabilities.
- Expert knowledge of legal, ethical and human rights issues relevant to people with learning disabilities at the end of life.
- Expert knowledge and understanding of the complexity of interactions and potential conflicts that arise which may compromise the wishes of the person with a learning disability.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Provide expert advice on meeting the specific needs of people with learning disabilities to promote comfort and dying well.
- Act as a source of expert advice on legal, ethical and human rights issues relevant to people with learning disabilities at the end of life.
- Act as a source of expertise in conflict resolution relating to decision-making and compliance with the wishes of the person with a learning disability.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

### Communication difficulties and health literacy

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel they can communicate effectively with their families and carers.*

*People with learning disabilities have access to individuals, groups and organisations that can support their spiritual or personal beliefs and reflect their cultural wishes.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of a range of methods of communication with people with learning disabilities.
- Comprehensive knowledge that people with learning disabilities may be restricted in reporting their own health needs.
- Comprehensive knowledge of how a person with a learning disability communicates pain or distress.
- Comprehensive knowledge appropriate health information for people with learning disabilities.
- Comprehensive knowledge of how life-story work can be used to communicate with people with learning disabilities and engage them in meaningful interactions and activities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Advise on the use of communication strategies, including alternative communication methods.
- Advise on how to assess when a person with a learning disability has a health need.
- Advise on how to assess when a person with a learning disability is in pain or distress.
- Recommend appropriate health information for people with learning disabilities.
- Advise on the use of a person's life story to identify if it leads to engagement in meaningful activities relating to his or her interest and abilities.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviours and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have a well balanced and nutritious diet.*

*People with learning disabilities have adequate exercise.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of the components of a well balanced and nutritious diet.
- In-depth understanding that modifications to diet and hydration may be required when a person with a learning disability has a long-term health condition.

- Comprehensive knowledge of the importance of physical exercise for people with learning disabilities.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the restrictions that a person with a learning disability may face in relation to physical exercise.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Act as a source of knowledge on well balanced and nutritious diets.
- Recommend when modifications to diet and hydration may be required when a person with a learning disability has a long-term health condition.
- Advise on the use of physical exercise for people with learning disabilities.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviours and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities do not engage in the harmful use of alcohol, cigarettes and non-prescription substances or other harmful substances.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Expert knowledge of the effects of harmful substances to the health of a person with a learning disability.
- Expert knowledge of the support and services available to people with learning disabilities who use harmful substances.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Recommend and instigate relevant support and services for people with learning disabilities who use harmful substances.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Personal health behaviours and lifestyle risks

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities engage in, and are educated about, healthy sexual activity.*

*People with learning disabilities do not present with risky behaviours/ routines.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of the effects of hazardous sexual behaviours.
- Comprehensive knowledge of sexual health services/ education.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the impact of the environment on the safety and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the range of multi-sensory, therapeutic, recreational and active support activities that promote wellbeing and independence.
- Comprehensive knowledge of a range of proactive strategies, including positive behaviour support.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Recommend and instigate the use of sexual health services/ education.
- Advise on environmental issues that may impact on the safety and wellbeing of people with learning disabilities.
- Advise on the use of therapeutic, recreational and active support activities.
- Advise on a range of proactive strategies, including positive behaviour support.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

### Personal health behaviours and lifestyle risks

#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel safe and secure and are able to be as independent as possible.*

*People with learning disabilities, their families, friends and carers have access to information, education and support that enhances their wellbeing.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of all annual health checks that are required.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the possible negative impacts of acute hospital admission.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the range of anticipatory and preventative measures that can be put in place to prevent hospital admissions for people with learning disabilities.
  
- Expert knowledge of specific assessment tools and techniques.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Advise on the use of strengths-based approaches to holistically assessing people's physical health needs and observe for changes and deteriorations in people's health.
- Advise on acute hospital admissions.
- Advise on anticipatory and preventative measures.
  
- Adopt a person-centred approach to regular assessment and review of people with learning disabilities.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel empowered and enabled to exercise rights and choice, maintain their identity and to be treated with dignity and equity.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge, understanding and synthesis of rights-based legal, ethical and professional guidance to inform practice in relation to learning disabilities.
- Comprehensive understanding of the principles of assessment of capacity for people with learning disabilities and the underpinning evidence and legislation.
- Expert knowledge in the application and understanding of the legislation, guidance and policy in all pertinent areas, including ethical decision-making in relation to people with learning disabilities.
- Expert knowledge and in-depth understanding of the impact a learning disability may have on communication.
- Expert knowledge and skill to individually tailor evidence-based psychological interventions relevant to people with learning disabilities.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Act as a source of expert advice when informed consent may be compromised.
- Sensitively carry out assessments to inform consent and capacity where this may be compromised in relation to people's rights and choices.
- Actively promote ethical decision-making in relation to people with learning disabilities.
- Respond expertly to the diversity of communication challenges experienced by people with learning disabilities.
- When appropriate to role, individually tailor evidence-based psychological interventions relevant to people with learning disabilities.
- When appropriate to role, modify and adapt social, psychological and psycho-social interventions and evaluate effectiveness for people with learning disabilities.

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have successful transitions between services when these are necessary.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of local policies/protocols for transition between services.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Advise on transitions between services.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities have access to quality services and can continue to participate in community life and valued activities.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of the concepts of person-centred care and personalisation, and their implications for practice, service design and delivery.
- In-depth understanding of the need for citizen leadership, user and carer expertise and participation in creating systems and services that meet the individual needs of people with learning disabilities.
- Understand the principles and roles of co-production, participation, empowerment, enablement and community capacity-building in promoting independence.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Support and enable people with learning disabilities to find the right solutions for them and actively design and select the services they require.
- Contribute to the development of practices and services that meet the individual needs of people with learning disabilities.
- Provide expert advice on strategies to adapt lifestyles to support engagement in communities, employment, relationships and social networks.
- Support and encourage all staff to adopt attitudes and practices that value the importance of existing natural community resources in supporting people with learning disabilities.
- Demonstrate leadership in shaping service design and delivery to reflect co-production, participation, empowerment, enablement and community capacity-building.

The **Specialist Practice Level in Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities** outlines the knowledge and skills required for practitioners who by virtue of their role or practice setting play an expert specialist role in the care, treatment and support of people with learning disabilities.

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities feel safe and secure and are able to be as independent as possible.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of the principles, approaches and practices that promote outcomes- and asset-focused approach to care of people with learning disabilities.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the importance of, and approaches and methods that should be used to measure, the impact of support against outcomes.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the importance of respite and short breaks.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the importance and opportunities of risk enablement in the promotion of independent living for people with learning disabilities.
- Knowledge of evidence-based approaches and techniques for assessing neglect and abuse and appropriate responses.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Adopt an outcomes-based approach, building on people's existing capabilities, when assessing the support needs of people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- Advise on person-centred assessments focused on outcomes for the person with a learning disability.
- Advise on respite and short-break interventions that meet individual needs.
- Advise on risk enablement.
- Advise on potential areas of neglect and abuse.

## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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### Deficiencies in access to, and quality of, health provision

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#### Outcome

*People with learning disabilities are able to maintain valued relationships and networks and have the opportunity to develop new ones, both personal and professional.*

#### What practitioners know (knowledge)

- Comprehensive knowledge of a range of person-centred approaches to support people with learning disabilities who have unmet needs or whose ability to communicate needs is compromised.
- Understand the importance of partnership-working in the provision of support, care and services for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.
- Expert knowledge of the opportunities and challenges in implementing outcomes- and assets-based approaches to provision of support for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers.

#### What practitioners are able to do (capability/skill/ability)

- Actively promote person-centred responses to people with learning disabilities with unmet needs or whose ability to communicate their needs is compromised.
- Actively liaise with partners in care to promote best practice in learning disability care.
- Act as a source of expert advice in implementing outcomes- and assets-focused practices and services for people with learning disabilities, their families and carers to drive continuous improvements.

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## Equal Health

An Educational Framework on Health Equalities for People with Learning Disabilities

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# Appendices

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### Appendix 1. Critical readers

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Dave Atkinson, Independent Consultant Nurse.

Hazel Powell, Programme Director, NHS Education for Scotland.

Heather Duff, Project Manager – Health Equalities Framework, Learning Disability Managed Care Network.

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### Appendix 2. NHS Education for Scotland Learning Disability Forum

David Ledner

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Caroline Buchan

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This resource may be made available, in full or summary form, in alternative formats and community languages. Please contact us on 0131 656 3200 or email [altformats@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:altformats@nes.scot.nhs.uk) to discuss how we can best meet your requirements.



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