

Top Tips for Carers of people with a learning disability – dealing with GPs and health staff

GP's/Doctors

- Find out about your General Practitioners surgery's appointment booking system, you may need to contact the Surgery at 8am to book an appointment.
- When you ring be prepared to explain the situation and background to who you care for and explain what help you think is required and what you would like to happen.
- The receptionist might ask you a lot of questions, this is to direct you to the right person.
- If you can't see a GP quick enough ask to see a Nurse.
- Ask for a double appointment.
- Make sure the person you care for who has a learning disability has had an annual health check.
- If you have a Personal Health File remember to take it the appointment.
- Make sure the person with a learning disability is registered at the Surgery.
- Ask the practice to put an alert onto their electronic system which identifies what kind of help/reasonable adjustments the person with an LD requires including their communication needs.
- Register yourself as a Carer at your Surgery.
- You may be entitled to your own health check.
- Ask the GP to tell the Out Of Hours service that you care for a person with a learning disability.

Referrals to other services

- Ask the GP to make the appointment for you, ask the GP to write the information down in your Health Action Plan.
- Know the name of the Acute Liaison Nurse at your local Hospital and tell your GP. The Learning Disability Nurse will be able to meet you before your appointment and speak to other nurses if necessary.
- Ask for a Hospital Passport, this should hold all the relevant information about the cared for such as communication preferences, pain thresholds and the nature of their learning disability.
- When the person is referred to another NHS service ask for their referral to include information about their learning disability and what would make the appointment more successful e.g. extra time.