

Additional Notes on Health Action Planning

Q- LD staff in your area provide Health checks for people with learning disabilities- many undetected and untreated health conditions have been found. Why do you need to change your practice?

A-There is a danger of focussing energies on the health checks leaving insufficient time for the subsequent actions.

- Valuing People is clear in its commitment to including people with learning disabilities in mainstream provision of all sorts including health

-Health checks may not lead to a greater understanding of their own health for people with learning disabilities and their carers.

So- Learning disability staff can support primary care staff to provide health assessments what may be needed. The focus of learning disabilities staff can then be re oriented to facilitation and helping to ensure that necessary actions arising from such assessments are carried through.

For persistent questioners. Remind them that Valuing People says Because mainstream services have been slow in developing the capacity and skills to meet the needs of people with learning disabilities some NHS specialist services have sought to provide all encompassing services of their own. As a result the wider NHS has failed to consider the needs of people with learning disabilities. This is the most important issue, which the NHS needs to address for people with learning disabilities.

Q- some mainstream health providers in your area are not keen on co-operating to maintain and improve the health of people with learning disabilities. They feel this is additional work for which they have insufficient time, skills or resources

A- People with learning disabilities have an equal right to access mainstream health services. Primary care Trusts are responsible for the health of everyone in their area including people with learning disabilities.

So- Build a close and effective relationship between the learning disability Partnership Board and the Primary Care Trust and plan together how to overcome this barrier.

-Look for and create champions among professional groups who can help to influence their peers to include people with learning disabilities in the services they provide.

- Offer training and support to staff in mainstream services to help them meet the needs of people with learning disabilities. Include people with learning disabilities as trainers
- -Look for opportunities to include the needs of people with learning disabilities in initiatives that target vulnerable people in mainstream settings.

Q- some members of your local community argue that it is not right for people with learning disabilities to have Hasp when they are not offered to anyone else. They may believe this goes against normalisation or gives a privilege that others do not have

- A- People with learning disabilities continue to experience inequalities in health that must be addressed. People's health related needs have not been adequately considered and services and supports have not satisfactorily ensured good health.
- Haps offer a structure and individual approach to tackling such deficiencies. Sometimes it is appropriate for disadvantaged groups to have a different approach to get them to the same place as others.
 - So
 - HAPs must be offered and implemented in a person centred way. They should be offered when appropriate and with support to ensure that the person understands why a health action plans has been suggested.
 - Confidentiality and privacy must be protected to ensure that HAPs become a way of tackling inequalities and not an oppressive mechanism
 - Caldicot Guardians in each NHS trust will advise on data protection issues
 - PCTs could extend the use of HAPs to other vulnerable groups if they find them a useful way of improving the health of such people.

All the above is from the detailed guidance
Networks that may be helpful are

Primary Care Network led by Janet Cobb details on www.nwtdt.com given as an example the guidance.

Access to acute network A2A led by Rick Robson is about improving access to acute hospitals. Contact Rick on Rick.Robson@shropcomm.wmids.nhs.uk

The CCDC primary care network has contacts across our regions are in a separate attachment .

Sue Carmichael July2002