

Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG have been asked by Healthwatch Worcestershire to provide a response and summarise the changes that have been made to support people Learning Disability and Autism (LDA) services across Worcestershire during COVID19.

Throughout the year most of the recommendations have been taken into consideration and reasonable adjustments have been made to ensure that those in receipt of services are well informed and they are able to stay safe during this pandemic.

Worcestershire’s Learning Disability Partnership Board, which includes partners from across health and social care in Worcestershire, as well as expert members, family carers and voluntary and community sector partners, has held a number of focussed sessions on the impacts of COVID for people with learning disabilities. At the most recent meeting (February 2021) the partnership board heard directly from expert members with lived experience regarding their experiences of COVID. The board also received presentations from Public Health and Herefordshire & Worcestershire CCG, covering areas such as annual health checks, mortality impacts, health inequalities, DNAR and Respect forms and vaccinations. Actions were agreed, for example to work together to ensure that vaccinations are promoted effectively to people with learning disabilities in Worcestershire.

Speakeasy NOW are commissioned by Worcestershire County Council to deliver the “Giving People with a Learning Disability in Worcestershire a Voice” contract. As part of this contract, they hold the People’s Parliament, whose next debate (planned for 4<sup>th</sup> March 2021) is focussed on “The Coronavirus Experience for People with Learning Disabilities in Worcestershire”.

The system partners have a range of information that has been shared across the system via the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board and associated subgroups for example the Staying Healthy Subgroup.

- Information has also been shared with a range of providers of Learning Disability Services
- For people in in-patient services accessible information has been provided to services and printed and given to patients.
- Local self-advocacy and carer groups have shared and developed information with members and on social media sites.

## Summary of recommendations

Recommendation number	Response
<p>1. Ensure information about Coronavirus, how to keep safe and current guidance about restrictions, is available in an easy to understand format and that people, especially those without online access, can access visual and written information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy read information is available on LD on HWHCT website and is kept updated.</li> <li>• All service users known to health and social care services have received an easy read copy hard copy of information on COVID 19 distributed jointly by Health and social care.</li> <li>• Regular health and wellbeing calls are made and information given.</li> <li>• when phone calls to service users or carers are made they are asked if any additional support/information is required.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Consider how people can be supported to access / continue to access and engage with others online while restrictions on meeting face-to-face and daily activities continue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support to access webex, and other platforms to access online health appointments.</li> <li>• Continue to support to access health appointments at GP practices, Clinics and hospital ect.</li> <li>• Team continue to provide a service face to face and via online platforms considering appropriate reasonable adjustments if required.</li> </ul>

<p>3. Consideration of difficulties relating to communication, online access and privacy when planning further use of telephone and video calls for health appointments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On line appointments are carried out via webex platform. (secure network)</li> <li>• Reasonable adjustments are carried out if there are difficulties, examples of these are : service users using different platforms, encouraging service providers to purchase tablets.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Ensure people can access information and support when visiting health services, to reduce anxieties and understand changes implemented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support discuss and provide easy read information around specific health services/ changes re Covid -19 and support individual who need support to attend appointments.</li> <li>• Desensitisation work</li> <li>• Pre visits- tours</li> <li>• Ensure reasonable adjustments are made to meet individual need.</li> <li>• Good liaison with LD acute liaison nurse / primary LD nurse / GP surgeries .</li> </ul>
<p>5. Consider opportunities to signpost people to or develop visual resources to help people understand how visits to health services will work. E.g. videos or photos of health service locations and staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is how we support our service users accessing health appointments who may be anxious using easy read and other relevant visual resources provide easy read information.</li> <li>• Encourage service providers to provide personalised catalogue of photo's.</li> <li>• Work in partnership with healthy subgroup who are collating resources which will be used across Herford and Worcestershire.</li> <li>• Incorporated within Health Action Plan and Hospital Passport.</li> </ul>
<p>6. Encourage people to seek medical advice for any health-related concerns</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advise service users, carers, family and service providers to seek medical advice if health related issues are raised or identified.</li> </ul>
<p>7. Ensure people are receiving regular health check-ups and routine care, including Annual Health Checks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary liaison nurse – supports with monitoring surgeries providing Annual health checks and Educates and the importance of them to surgeries in annual training sessions.</li> <li>• Link nurses monitor LD registers and frequency of AHC and provides support to surgeries.</li> <li>• Follow up alerted DNA- provide education and support to Service users.</li> <li>• Good working partnerships with some surgeries who will alert the team to DNA's of AHC.</li> <li>• Provides health promotion which promotes annual health checks, screening, and health check-ups.</li> <li>• Working in Partnership with health subgroup to relaunch AHC's.</li> </ul>
<p>8. Provide assurance that people are receiving allocated / required levels of support at home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cross referencing support plans to ensure service users are getting the support that was agreed at last review/assessment. If needs are not being met, then we put in referrals for a review (social care or CHC). Listening carefully to service users and their family and carers</li> </ul>

<p>9. Consideration about how anxieties related to Coronavirus and changes to normal activities can be supported.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide regular contact to service users and discuss any concerns/ anxieties are raised.</li> <li>• Use appropriate resources to inform SU to reduce anxieties.</li> <li>• Regular fortnightly MDT meetings including psychology and social care</li> <li>• Refer to appropriate services if required.</li> <li>• Inform social care if there has been a change in normal activities and if this is having impact on service user and carers.</li> </ul>
<p>10. Recognise importance of opportunities for people to meet up face to face and activities to restart to emotional wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor activities are encouraged, and emotional wellbeing is monitored during contacts.</li> <li>• Assessing risk, encouraging outdoor meetings if they fall within the COVID restrictions at the time, whilst still social distancing etc. Bringing to the MDT if a member of the team becomes aware of a service user who has not met anyone face to face in a long time.</li> </ul>
<p>11. Ensure there is information and support available as people start going out more, to reduce anxieties and maintain independence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CLDT work closely together to ensure service users are receiving the appropriate information required to support with anxieties and work closely with social care with regards to supporting with activities and maintaining independence.</li> </ul>
<p>12. Ensure there is information and support available, which is appropriate and accessible for people with a learning disability and Autism, in relation to mental health and emotional wellbeing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy read accessible via LD HWCHT website or hard copies are sent to individuals.</li> <li>• Signpost to other resources as required.</li> </ul>
<p>13. Consideration about impact on family and carers of additional caring responsibilities and how this is being supported.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular contact with family and cares of service users open to the team.</li> <li>• Wellbeing conversations discussed and alert social care if required for additional support/ carers assessment and monitoring.</li> <li>• Social care also do a wellbeing check on all service users know the social care.</li> <li>• Encourage regular use of short break services.</li> <li>• Signpost to resources and services for families and carers.</li> </ul>

A list of Easy Read resources available on the HWHCT website the links are listed in Appendix 1

## Next Steps

The CCG recognise that whilst it is evident that significant processes were developed and put in place to support individuals and their families and carers there is more work do to implement the recommendations identified by the Healthwatch Report and embed this learning across the system partners. This work will continue via the Worcestershire's Learning Disability Partnership Board, and appropriate actions implemented. Discussions have been held about how to work in partnership on both a new communication strategy and community inclusion programme, and it is intended that these areas will form key parts of the refreshed Worcestershire Learning Disability strategy moving forwards, directly drawing on the experiences and learning from COVID. The recommendations also will form part of the priorities setting for the LDA STP Board and be included in the 2021/2022 Programme Plan for the Board.

## Appendix 1

[NHS is open](#)

[If you get ill](#)

[Why we wear PPE](#)

[Being on your own](#)

[Who gets the vaccine first](#)

[12 New Rules Poster](#)

[Stay home](#)

[Symptoms](#)

For a full list of easy read posters and audio options please visit the [Keep Safe website](#)

[Advice for patients, carers and families engaging with our services who have a learning disability, autism, dementia or a mental health condition.](#)

## Hospital Passport - important to complete beforehand

[2019 - Hospital Passport](#)

## Leaflets

[South Worcestershire LD Team Leaflet](#)

[North Worcestershire LD Team Leaflet](#)

[Annual Health Check Easy Read](#)

[Having a Health Check](#)

[Vitamin D Easy Read Document](#)

## Meaningful Activities

To find out about what activities you could do at home, why not check out this [Self Isolation Activities Sheet](#) There are a whole host of activities you could try out! Along with links and resources too.

But thats not all, there event more resources below to keep you busy!

[Slime! Edible and Non Edible Recipe](#)

[Skittles Instructions](#)