

Worcestershire Health & Well-being Board

JSNA Briefing on the Health of People with Learning Disabilities

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Summary

- People with learning disabilities have poorer health than the general population and experience health inequalities in a number of different ways
- They are more likely to experience poorer self-rated health, psychological distress, arthritis, diabetes, epilepsy or multiple disease
- In 2017-18, across all three CCG's in Worcestershire, there was a reduction in the proportion of people on the Learning Disability Register who had undergone a Learning Disabilities Health Check in the last 12 months
- Cervical Screening uptake rates for women with a Learning Disability are less than half that of women who don't have a learning disability. Breast Cancer Screening rates are also lower than women who do not have a learning disability
- Colorectal Screening rates are similar for people with learning disabilities compared to people who do not have a disability

Purpose of this Briefing

Each year NHS Digital produces data about the health of people with learning disabilities.¹ This data has been collected since 2014-15 and spans 77 different indicators including demographics, Body Mass Index (BMI), Screening tests, long-term conditions, asthma, cancer and diabetes. This briefing examines trends in this data over time and by Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

In this data set patients who have a record of a learning disability are compared to a control cohort of all patients not recorded as having a learning disability registered at the GP practice.

¹ NHS Digital (2018) Health and Care of people with Learning Disabilities [Online], Available from: <https://digital.nhs.uk/dataand-information/publications/statistical/health-and-care-of-people-with-learning-disabilities> [Accessed: 8 February 2019]

Why is this Topic Important?

People with learning disabilities have poorer health than the general population and experience health inequalities in a number of different ways. A study undertaken by Public Health England² found that people with learning disabilities were more likely to experience poorer health across a range of different indicators.

They were more likely to experience poorer self-rated health, psychological distress, arthritis, diabetes, epilepsy or multiple disease. A number of risk factors for poor health were more common for people with learning disabilities including obesity, lower grip strength and poor lung function. Behavioural risk factors were also more common such as poor diet, low levels of physical activity, smoking, alcohol use and hospital admission for a newly diagnosed condition. The study also found that people with learning disabilities experience significant socioeconomic inequality and are less likely to be in employment, have financial stability and to have two or more friends when compared with those without learning disabilities.

What is Known?

In 2016-17, across Worcestershire, 61.3% of adults with a Learning Disability underwent an annual Health Check with their GP. This is significantly higher than the England rate of 48.9%.

The most recent annual report on the health and care of people with learning disabilities produced by NHS Digital (2017-18), showed that in Worcestershire, compared to a control cohort, a **higher** proportion of people on the GP practice Learning Disability register:

- Had a **blood pressure measurement** in the last 5 years
- Had a **BMI assessment** in the last 5 years
- Were **underweight or overweight/obese**
- Had an active diagnosis of **Asthma**
- Had a diagnosis of **Dementia**
- Had a diagnosis of **Gastric Oesophageal Reflux Disease (GORD)**
- Had a diagnosis of **Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)**
- Had a diagnosis of **Depression**
- Had a diagnosis of **Severe Mental Illness**
- Had a diagnosis of **Hypothyroidism**
- Had an active diagnosis of **Diabetes**
- Had an active diagnosis of **Epilepsy**

In Worcestershire a **lower** proportion of people on the GP practice Learning Disability Register:

- Had a diagnosis of **Cancer**
- Had a **Cervical Cancer screen**
- Had a **Breast Cancer screen**
- Had an active diagnosis of **Chronic Kidney Disease**
- Had an active diagnosis of **Coronary Heart Disease, Hypertension, Heart Failure**

The data presented in the following sections is broken down by Clinical Commissioning Group.

² Public Health England (2017) Health inequalities and the 'hidden majority' of adults with learning disabilities, [Online], Available at: <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2016/10/04/health-inequalities-and-the-hidden-majority-of-adults-with-learning-disabilities/> [Accessed: 5 Jun. 2018]

Learning Disability Health Check

The Learning Disabilities Health Check Scheme is designed to encourage practices to: identify all patients aged 14 and over with learning disabilities, to maintain a learning disabilities 'Health Check' register and to offer patients an annual health check, which includes producing a health action plan.³



Source: NHS Digital, 2019

In 2017-8, across all three CCG's in Worcestershire, there was a reduction in the proportion of people on the Learning Disability Register who had undergone a Health Check in the last 12 months.

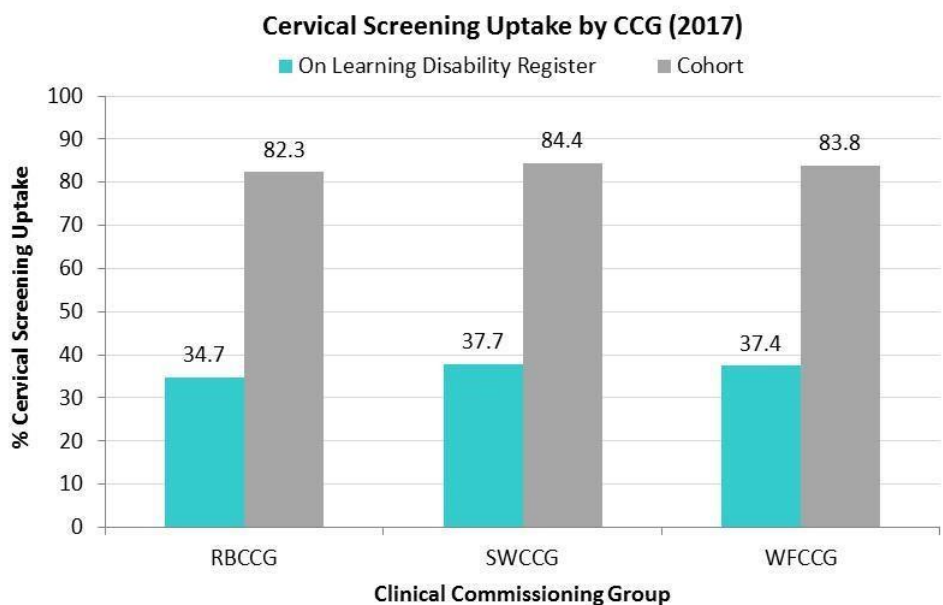
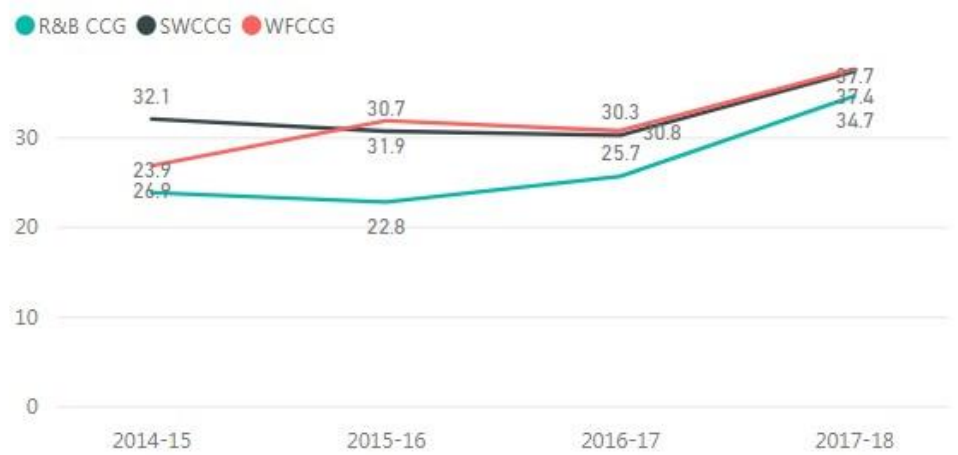
³ NHS Digital (2017) Learning Disabilities Health Check Scheme [Online], Available from: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180307181814/https://digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB30148> [Accessed: 8th February 2018].

⁴ R&B CCG= Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG, SW CCG= South Worcestershire CCG, WF CCG= Wyre Forest CCG

Cervical Screening

Cervical screening supports detection of cell abnormalities that may become cancer and is estimated to save 4,500 lives in England each year.³

Patients recorded on their general practice's Learning Disabilities Register and who are eligible for cervical cancer screening being female aged 25 to 64 with no history of hysterectomy, on whom an adequate cervical smear test has been performed in the five years prior to Reference Year End Date.



Source: NHS Digital, 2019

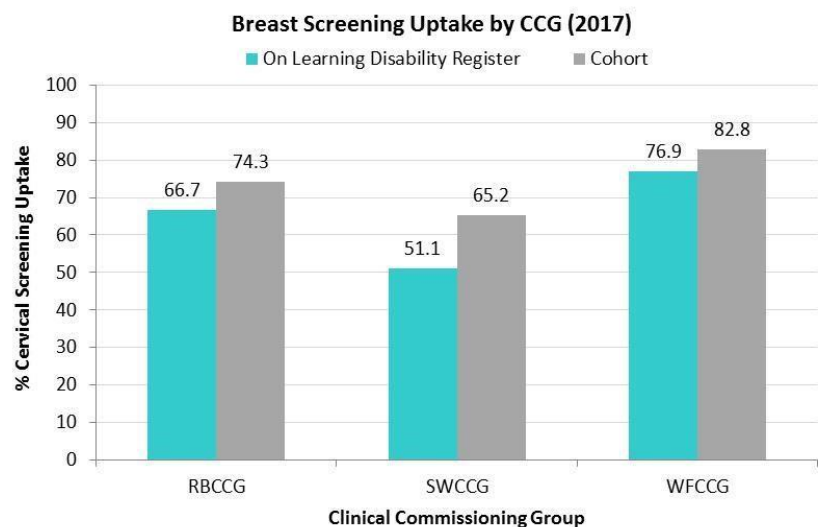
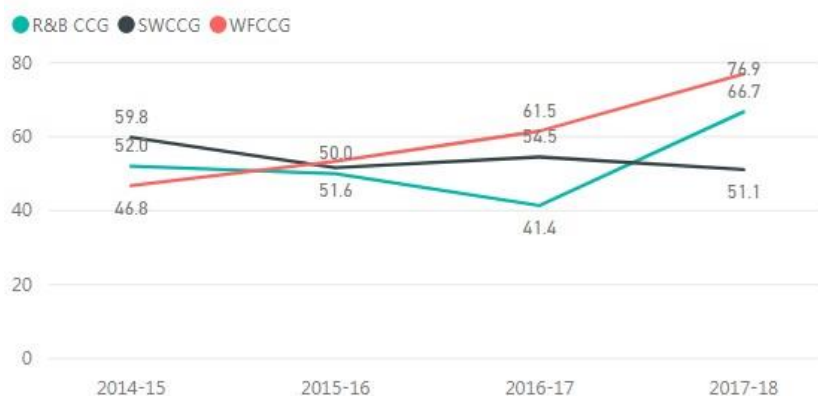
Between 2014-15 and 2017-18 there has been a gradual increase in cervical screening for patients on the Learning Disabilities Register and uptake has increased across all CCGs. However, the screening rate in women recorded as having a learning disability is still much lower than in women not recorded as having a learning disability at less than half.

³ Public Health England (2019) Indicator Definitions and Supporting Information: Cervical Screening, [Online], Available from: <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/public-health-outcomes-framework/data#page/6/gid/1000042/pat/102/par/E10000034/ati/101/are/E07000234/iid/22002/age/167/sex/2> Accessed: 8th February 2019

Breast Cancer Screening

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among females in the UK, yet women with a learning disability eligible for breast cancer screening are the least likely to attend, even though it can save their life.⁴

Patients recorded on their general practice's Learning Disabilities Register being female aged 50 to 69 who received breast cancer screening in the five years prior to Reference Year End Date.



Source: NHS Digital, 2019

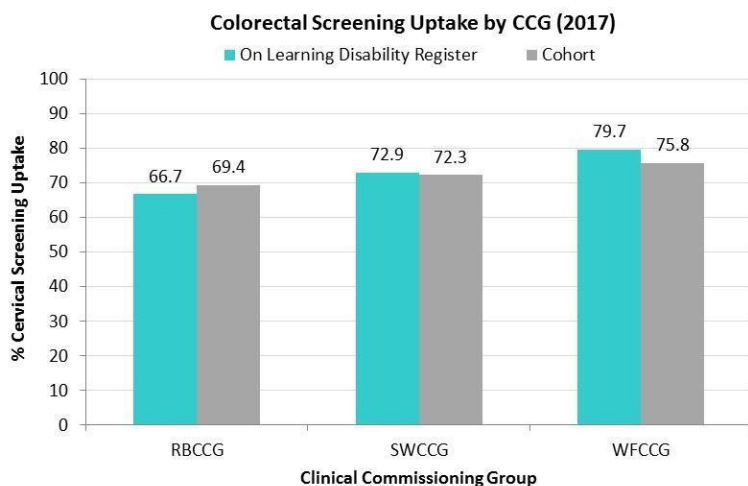
In 2017-18, there was an increase in breast cancer screening rates for patients on their GP practice Learning Disabilities Register in Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG and Wyre Forest CCG. However, screening rates decreased in South Worcestershire CCG between 2016-17 and 2017-18.

⁴ NHS England (2019) Campaign launched to help women with learning disabilities access breast cancer screening, [Online], Available from: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/south/2017/10/02/learning-disabilities-breast-screening/> Accessed: 8th February 2019.

Colorectal Screening

The NHS bowel cancer screening programme offers screening every 2 years to all men and women aged 60 to 74.

Patients recorded on their general practice's Learning Disabilities Register and aged 60 to 69 who are eligible for colorectal cancer screening and who have a record of having a colorectal cancer screening result recorded in the five years prior to Reference Year End Date.



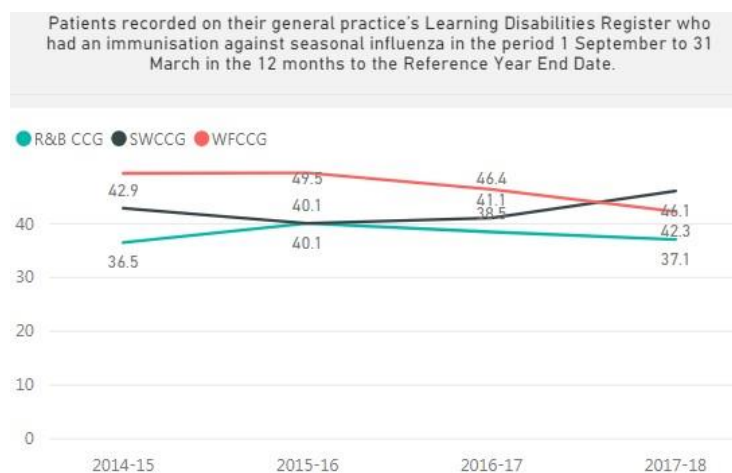
Source: NHS Digital, 2019

Between 2016-17 and 2017-18 there was a slight increase in the bowel cancer screening rate for Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG, an increase in the rate for South Worcestershire CCG and a decrease in the rate for Wyre Forest CCG. Encouragingly, rates of screening uptake are similar in both people who are on the GP Practice learning disability register and those who are not.

Influenza Vaccination

Several studies, including data emerging from the Learning Disabilities Mortality Review Programme (LeDeR), have shown that respiratory problems are a major cause of death for people with learning disabilities. From 2014 people with learning disabilities have been eligible to have a free flu vaccination, however, there has not been an appreciable rise in the numbers receiving one.⁵

Public Health England are coordinating their efforts with local stakeholders to improve vaccination uptake in this group of individuals, who have lower rates of vaccination in comparison to the overall Worcestershire population. This includes exploring the administration of flu vaccination via nasal spray, particularly for individuals with needle phobias.



NHS Digital, 2019

Source:

Indicator	RBCCG	SWCCG	WFCCG	Worcestershire Uptake (Under 65's at Risk)
Patients with a Learning Disability receiving a seasonal influenza vaccination	37.1	46.1	42.3	52.9

Rates of influenza vaccination have fallen in both Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG and Wyre Forest CCG between 2016-17 and 2017-18. In South Worcestershire CCG, there was an increase in influenza vaccination from 2016-17. Across all CCG areas, vaccination uptake rates are lower than the Worcestershire uptake overall.

⁵ Public Health England (2018) Guidance: Flu vaccinations: supporting people with learning disabilities, [Online], Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccinations-for-people-with-learning-disabilities/flu-vaccinations-supporting-people-with-learning-disabilities> , Accessed: 8th February 2019.

Diabetes

Prevalence of diabetes in people with a learning disability is unknown but recent data indicate it is around 10% - nearly double the rate in the general population. In most cases this is Type 2 diabetes.⁸



Source: NHS Digital, 2019

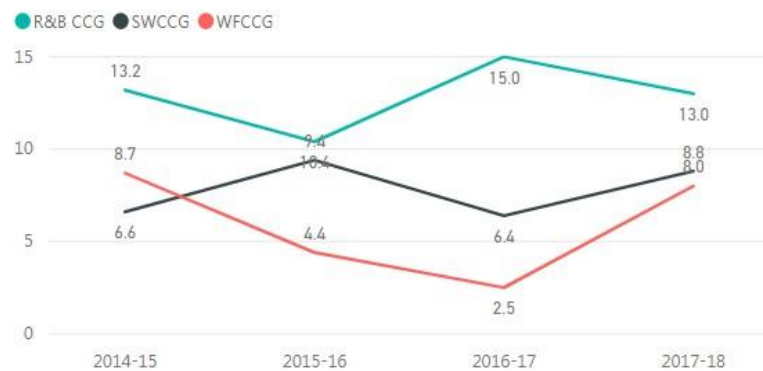
In Worcestershire, people who were on the GP Practice Learning Disability Register were more likely to have an active diagnosis of diabetes and a record of IFCC-HbA1c (a measure of blood sugar control) in 12 months in comparison to the control cohort.

⁸ Diabetes UK (2018) Why is improving diabetes care for 1people with a learning disability important?, [Online] Available from: <https://www.diabetes.org.uk/resources-s3/2018-02/Improving%20care%20for%20people%20with%20diabetes%20and%20a%20learning%20disability%20%20Fact%20sheet%201.pdf> Accessed: 11/02/2019

Epilepsy

Rates of epilepsy in people with Learning Disabilities are over 20 times higher in comparison to the general population.⁶

Patients recorded on their general practice's Learning Disabilities Register who have an active diagnosis of epilepsy, on drug treatment for epilepsy and have a record of seizure frequency in the 12 months to Reference Year End Date and have been seizure-free in this period.



Source: NHS Digital, 2019

In Worcestershire, across all CCGs, there has been an improvement in the proportion of people who have an active diagnosis of epilepsy, on treatment, and who have a record of seizure frequency in the last 12 months and who have been seizure free. This is a measure of how well controlled their epilepsy is.

Associated Documents and Best Practice

- Public Health England - Learning Disability Applying All Our Health
- The Learning Disabilities Mortality Review Programme (LeDeR) - Annual Report 2017
- Worcestershire's Adult Learning Disability Strategy 2016-2018: Better outcomes for people with a Learning Disability and their families
- NICE Guideline [NG11] - Challenging behaviour and learning disabilities: prevention and interventions for people with learning disabilities whose behaviour challenges
- NICE Guideline [NG93]: Learning disabilities and behaviour that challenges: service design and delivery
- NICE Guideline [NG54]: Mental health problems in people with learning disabilities: prevention, assessment and management
- NICE Guideline [NG96]: Care and support of people growing older with learning disabilities

⁶ Heslop, P., Blair, P., Fleming, P., Houghton, M., Marriott, A. and Russ, L. (2013). The Confidential Inquiry into premature deaths of people with learning disabilities (CIPOLD). [online] Bristol: Norah Fry Research Centre, pp.1-128. Available at: <https://www.bristol.ac.uk/medialibrary/sites/cipold/migrated/documents/fullfinalreport.pdf> [Accessed 4 Jun. 2018].

Reasonable Adjustments for People with a Learning Disability

Public Health England have produced a number of guides on reasonable adjustments that should be made to health services and to help people with learning disabilities to access services including:

- Health Checks
- Cancer Screening
- Constipation
- Dementia
- Dysphagia
- Obesity and Weight Management
- Pharmacy
- Postural Care
- Substance Misuse

These are available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/reasonable-adjustmentsfor-people-with-a-learning-disability>

Flu Vaccinations for People with Learning Disabilities

Public Health England have also published guidance on how to encourage the uptake of the free flu vaccination in people with learning disabilities. This is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flu-vaccinations-for-people-with-learningdisabilities>

Who Might find this Report Useful?

- Adult Social Care
- Children's Social Care
- Schools Education and Learning
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- NHS England

Data Notes

Organisations who carried out the original collection and analysis of the data bear no responsibility for its further analysis or interpretation.

Further Information and Feedback

This report has been written by Worcestershire County Council's Public Health Team. We welcome your comments on these reports and how they could better suit your requirements. Please do contact us with your ideas.

This document can be provided in alternative formats such as large print, audio recording or Braille.

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