

LEARNING DISABILITIES DIRECTED ENHANCED SERVICE (DES) SPECIFICATION 2026-27

1. Introduction

This is a Directed Enhanced Service (DES) for the provision of health checks for people with learning disabilities. Valuing People (2001) outlined the government's vision for people with learning disabilities. One of the key areas was health. The paper identified particular health challenges for people with learning disabilities stating that people with learning disabilities should have equal access to services.

Evidence shows that:-

- *People with learning disabilities, as a group, have much greater health needs than the general population. They are more likely to have general health problems, sensory impairments, mental health problems, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, and other physical disabilities*
- *There is poor uptake of breast and cervical screening by women with learning disabilities and poor uptake of prostate cancer screening by men with learning disabilities*
- *People with learning disabilities tend to access primary care much less than they need to*
- *Many people with learning disability have undetected conditions that cause unnecessary suffering to reduce the quality or length of their lives*

The DES is designed to encourage practices to identify those patients with moderate to severe LD as defined by the same criteria used by the Local Authority (LA).

The pre-requisites for taking part in the DES are as follows:

- *Practices will have liaised with the LA to share and collate information, in order to identify the people on their practice LD register with learning disabilities who are also known to social services primarily because of their learning disability.*
- *Practices will include those of its registered patients identified by this liaison in a health check learning disabilities register*
- *Practices will keep this register up-to-date and ensure that their QOF learning disabilities register includes all patients on the health check register*
- *Practices providing this service will be expected to have attended a multi-professional educational session. The minimum expectation of staff attending will include the lead General Practitioner (GP), lead practice nurse and practice manager/senior receptionist. Practices may also wish to involve specialist LD staff from the community learning disability team to provide support and advice.*

2. Service Outline

Practices delivering the DES will be required to:

- *Set up and agree with the ICB a Health Check Learning Disabilities Register, the purpose of which is to identify those of its registered patients with learning disabilities who are to be invited for an annual health check under the arrangements;*
- *In order to establish which of their registered patients should be included on the health check learning disabilities register, the contractor will liaise with the Local Authority social services department or departments of the area or areas from which their registered patients are drawn and establish which of their registered patients are known to the Local Authority social services primarily because of their learning disabilities;*
- *The contractor is required to include those of its registered patients identified by liaison with the Local Authority or authorities in its health check learning disabilities register;*
- *The contractor is required to review any learning disabilities register it has already set up under Quality and Outcomes Framework arrangements under its contract and ensure that such learning disabilities register includes all those registered patients that have been identified for inclusion in the health check learning disability register;*
- *The contractor is required to take reasonable steps to keep the health check learning disabilities register up to date throughout the period of the arrangements by removing and adding registered patients as appropriate;*
- *The contractor is required to provide the ICB with such information as the ICB may reasonably require to demonstrate that it has robust systems in place to maintain such register accurately; removing and adding registered patients as appropriate;*
- *The contractor is required to offer an annual health check to each patient on its health check learning disabilities register;*
- *Where the patient consents, the health check provided under these arrangements will involve any carer, support worker or other person considered appropriate by either the patient or the contractor;*

Any health check provided under the arrangements will, as a minimum, include:-

- *A review of the patient's physical and mental health that includes;*
- *the provision of relevant health promotion advice,*
- *a chronic illness and system enquiry,*
- *a physical examination,*
- *a consideration of whether the patient suffers from epilepsy,*
- *a consideration of the patient's behaviour and mental health,*
- *a specific syndrome check;*
- *check on the appropriateness of any prescribed medicines;*
- *a review of coordination arrangements with secondary care;*
- *where appropriate, a review of any transitional arrangements on the patient attaining the age of 18;*

In carrying out any health check provided under the arrangements the contractor will use:

- *The —Cardiff health check protocol which is available through the Royal College of General Practitioners website
www.rcgp.org.uk/PDF/clinical_welsh_health_check_newA.pdf*
- *or a similar protocol agreed with the ICB;*

The Practice is required to make relevant entries in the patient's medical record, including any refusal by a patient to take up the offer of a health check;

Learning Disabilities Directed Enhanced Service Specification (2026/27)

3. Accreditation

Before undertaking any health checks under these arrangements the contractor will arrange a training session for its staff which meets the following requirements:-

- *The training session must be attended by such members of the contractor's staff as are agreed between the contractor and the commissioner which must include a minimum, the lead GP, the lead Practice Nurse and either the practice manager or senior receptionist, if the contractors staff includes staff with those designations or*
- *Where the contractor's staff does not include staff with those designations, those members of the contractor's staff whose roles are analogous to those designations*
- *the training session must consist of a multi-professional education session approved by the commissioner;*
- *the training session must include instruction on overcoming any attitudinal barriers of the staff with a view to improving their communication with patients with learning disabilities;*
- *The contractor must make relevant entries in the patient's medical record, including any refusal by a patient to take up the offer of a health check;*

Training will be provided free of charge by the Learning Disability nurses and support will be given to practices in validating registers.

Further information regarding training for primary healthcare staff, together with good practice examples, is available on the NHS Primary Care Commissioning website at:

<http://www.pcc.nhs.uk/management-of-health-for-people-with-learning-disabilities>

4. Audit Requirements

The Practice may be asked to provide an audit of those health checks undertaken.

5. Monitoring Arrangements

Practices should record activity carried out under this enhanced service on their clinical system using the READ code:- Learning disabilities – Required coding		
Description	Recording rules	
918e	On learning disability register	Every 12 months
9HB3 Learning	Learning disability health assessment	Every time a health assessment is done for a patient on the learning disability register
9HB5	Learning disability annual health assessment	Every time an annual health assessment is done for a patient on the learning disability register

6. Price

Collection Frequency:	Monthly via CQRS
Payment Period:	Monthly via CQRS
Manual / Automatic:	Automatic CQRS data extraction
Included in Data Collection:	All GP system suppliers

In 2026/27 GP practices will be entitled to a monthly health check completion payment as agreed by the contractual negotiations comprising £140.00 for each patient aged 14 or over in the financial year on the practices agreed learning disabilities register who received a compliant health check delivered by the practice in that month. Only one payment may be made as regards to any patient in any one financial year.

On CQRS there is one indicator for this enhanced service:

- **LDHC021:** *Monthly count of patients aged 14 years or over and on the QOF Learning Disability register who received a Learning Disability Annual Health Check from the GP Practice, and who have not previously received an Annual Health Check within the financial year.*

The [Calculating Quality Reporting Service \(CQRS\) user guides](#) describe how to participate and declare achievement for this service.

7. Duration

Practices may sign up to provide the DES from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027, unless formally extended or terminated before that date.

8. Termination and Change Arrangements

The DES terminates on 31st March 2026 or earlier by either party at three months' formal notice.

