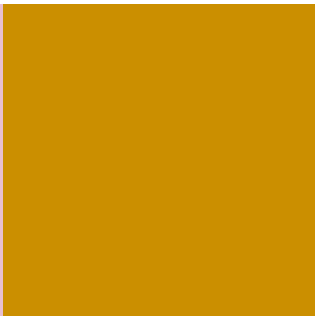


Health Action Planning and Health Facilitation for people with a learning disability: Good Practice Guide



This easier to read version was
written by Inclusion North

We want to thank everyone who helped
by sharing ideas and checking what we wrote.

Especially thank you everyone from Scarborough, Whitby and
Ryedale who spent a lot of time thinking about this with us.

Speak Up Sunny group helped organise a meeting –
Thank you again



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Summary – what this guide says



This guide has ideas for making Health Action Plans and Health Facilitation better.



Health Action Plans and Health Facilitation can help people with learning disabilities get good health care.



The important points for people that buy services are:

1. Find out what people need and check it is being done right.



2. Make sure Health Checks happen.

Health Checks are a special meeting with a doctor or nurse to check your health. They should happen every year.



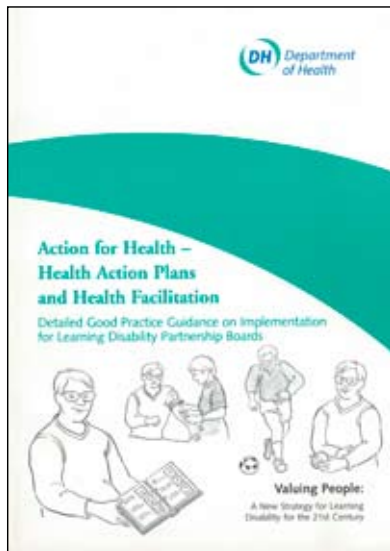
3. Make sure everyone is treated equally and included.



4. Include people with learning disabilities in big health plans.



5. Use Health Sub Groups to make sure things happen.



6. Use 'Action for Health' to plan.

This a guide on how to plan for making health services better.



7. Make sure staff are well trained.



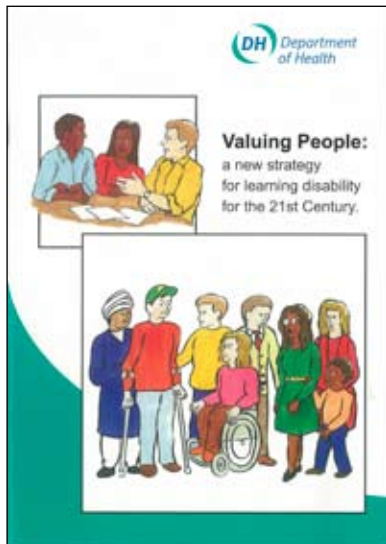
8. Support people and their families to get the services they need.



9. Include everyone.

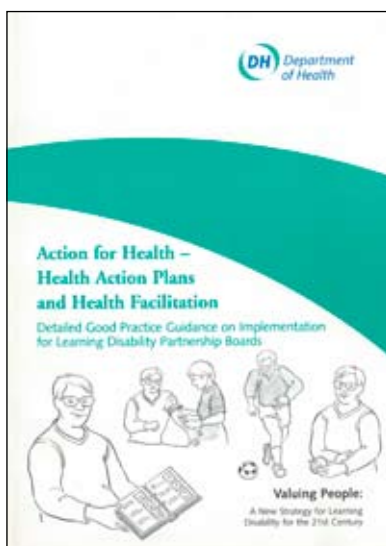
Introduction

In 2001 the Government wrote '*Valuing People*' – the white paper to help people with learning disabilities get a good and full life.



'*Valuing People*' included 3 targets for health:

1. There should be health facilitators (both personal and those who help to develop health services). These health facilitators can support people with their health needs and help them and people who work in health services to make sure they get the right treatment by Spring 2003.
2. Everyone with a learning disability should be registered with a GP (local Doctor) by June 2004.
3. Everyone with a learning disability should have a health action plan by June 2005.



To help make this happen the Department of Health wrote a guide for Partnership Boards in 2002.

This guide was called *Action for Health*.

What do these words mean



Health Action Planning

A health action plan is a guide to a person's health. It is made by the person with a learning disability and the people who know them best.

It tells doctors and hospitals about the person's health and the best ways to support them to get the right treatment and health care.



Health Facilitation

Health Facilitation is a way of working to help people get the right health services from the different parts of the National Health Service (NHS).

This can be done in 2 ways:

1. By helping health services to plan for and provide equal support and health treatment for people with learning disabilities. This is called Strategic Health Facilitation.

or

2. By helping people themselves to get the services they want to stay healthy and well.

This may be a family carer or someone who works closely with a person. This is personal health facilitation.

Health Facilitator

A Health Facilitator is a person who works to help people get the right services from the NHS to stay healthy and well.



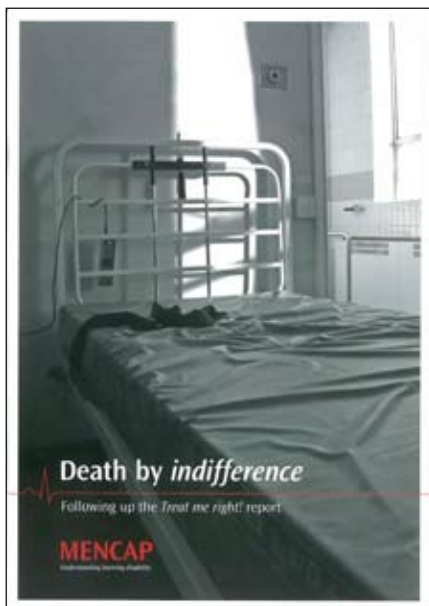
Why we have written this guide



In 2007 '*Valuing People Now*' consultation report said that there has not been enough change in Health services for people.

People with learning disabilities still do not get a good service from the NHS some of the time.

There have been other Government reports and papers that say what needs to be changed to make Health services better.



The Government has said that Health services should be as good for people with learning disabilities as they are for anyone else.



There has been some good work done to make things better. Everyone can learn from the good work other people have done.

This guide has been written to share good ideas about health facilitation and health action planning.

This guide wants to help people who have the job of making health services better.

This guide may also be helpful for Self Advocates and family carers who use health services. It may help then to make sure that things get better for people who use health services.

The important things to remember in making Health Services better

This guide says what different groups or organisations should do to make health action planning and health facilitation happen.



The groups who need to do things are:

Primary Care Trusts

– they buy and organise health services.



Learning Disability Partnership Boards

– they bring together everyone to make sure Valuing People targets happen.



Local Authorities

– they buy and organise support for people and their families.

Sometimes they also provide services for people.



Strategic Health Authorities – they make big plans for Health Services and check the services are right.



NHS Trusts – they support people who need special support because of their learning disability or health needs.

All these groups need to make sure that there is:



1. Leadership:

Everyone knows what should happen and when it should be done.



2. Knowledge and information:

The information we use is up to date. This information is used to create new services that people want in their local communities.



3. **Services bought that make things better:**

Services are the right ones that people want.



4. **People with learning disabilities and family carers are involved:**

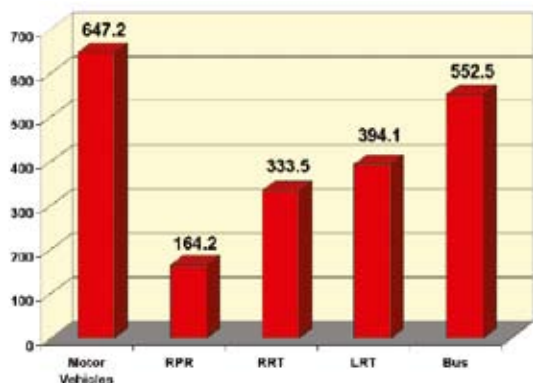
Make sure that information is easy to understand and people and their families are involved in deciding what happens.



5. **People work together to make things better in health:**

Make sure that people in different jobs work together. Work with people in different areas to get new ideas.

Ideas for making health action plans and facilitation happen



1. Find out what people need and check it is being done right

People that buy services need to find out what is needed now and in the future.

This includes:

1. How many people need health services.
2. What kind of health services they want.

They also need to check that the services are working well and that they are easy to use.

Doctors in Leeds filled in a form saying how many people with learning disabilities were registered at their practice.

The numbers were different from what the Council had.

It showed that they needed to work together to get proper ideas of what people need.

2. Make sure Health Checks happen



People can have a special meeting with their doctor or nurse to check all parts of their health. This can help people stay safe and healthy.

Information from this meeting will help doctors and the people who buy services know more about what service people need to be healthy.



People with learning disabilities who are known by councils (this will mostly be people who have medium to high support needs) should be asked if they want a Health Check every year.



Councils should work with health services to make this happen.



In South Birmingham they have looked at what people said they needed in their Health Checks

This means they know what extra services they need to help people.

3. Make sure everyone is treated equally and included



Some people get worse services from the NHS because of who they are.



This includes people with complex health needs and people from black and minority ethnic communities.

It is the law that the NHS changes things to make it easier for people to use services and be included.



In Shropshire there is a special nurse in the hospital.

She tells other nurses and doctors how to do things better for people with learning disabilities whilst they are in hospital.

4. Include people with learning disabilities in big health plans



There are big plans in each area to help everyone stay healthy. These include information for people on how to stay well and healthy.

People with learning disabilities are not usually included in these plans. The information is often not easy to understand.

People with learning disabilities should be included in these big plans.



Partnership Boards and health services need to make sure the information on staying healthy is easier for people to understand.



In Bristol and North East Somerset there is a Learning Disability Nurse in the Primary Care Trust.

She works with Self Advocates to make sure they know about staying healthy. For example, like not eating too much salt.



5. Use Health Sub Groups to make things happen

Every area has a Learning Disability Partnership Board.

The health sub group has the job of checking the health targets in Valuing People.

They should make plans for changing things and check what is happening.

They should also work with other local sub groups like person centred planning.



The sub group should include:

1. People with learning disabilities.
2. Family members and carers.
3. People from ordinary health services.
4. People from learning disability services.
5. People who buy services.

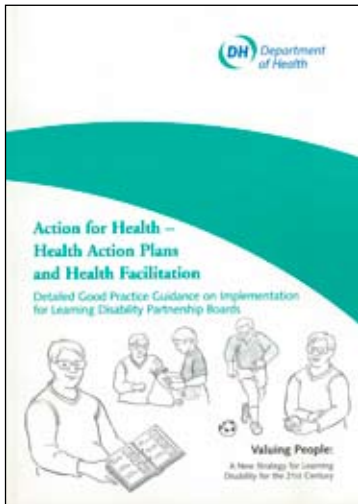


People from black and minority ethnic communities and people with complex health needs should be included.



In Greenwich the Partnership Board and the sub group are co chaired by a person with learning disabilities.

The meetings happen in the local hospital.



6. Use 'Action for Health' to plan

The guide 'Action for Health' has good ideas for making plans to change different health services.

Lots of areas have plans but they are not checked regularly.

Partnership Boards should make sure that plans:

1. Have clear targets based on the big Government plans
2. Everyone is included in writing the plan.
3. Everyone's needs are included in the plan.
4. Are updated regularly with new ideas
5. Are checked regularly and the Learning Disability Partnership Board knows what is happening.

There is a National Library for Health. It has good ideas and papers that can help.

There is a special learning disability library. It is at www.library.nhs.uk/learningdisabilities



7. Make sure staff are well trained

People who work in ordinary Health services do not always know the best way to support people with a learning disability.

Special learning disability health staff can help ordinary staff to learn the best way to support people.

Some support staff do not know how important it is to help people stay healthy and well. They do not support people in the right way when they visit the doctors or hospital.

If staff have the right skills people get better support from services.

Local staff plans need to include:

1. How to keep or make the right kinds of jobs – like health facilitators.
2. Training for health staff on working with people with learning disabilities.
3. Training for support staff and families on how to help people stay healthy and use health services.



In Sheffield special learning disability staff are linked to different doctors.

They help them to work in good ways for people with learning disabilities.

8. Support people and their families to get the services they need



Most people with learning disabilities live with family carers.

Their families are not usually involved in the planning for health action plans or facilitation.

People and their families know the most about what health services they need.



If people get good training and information it can help make services better for them. It is better for the professionals too.

Good health action plans can make it easier for people to stay more independent as they get older or if they need more support.



Training on Health Action plans and facilitation should be offered to people and their families.

People and their families should be offered the chance to train other people.

Special training on how to use the NHS and take care of yourself should include people with learning disabilities and their families.



In Tamworth some families were trained to be able to help their family member keep their body shape comfortable and safe.

9. Include everyone

Everyone needs to be able to have a Health Action Plan if they want one.

Some people have missed out in the past because they have high support needs or challenging behaviour.

Some people with autism, mental health problems or from black minority ethnic communities have found it difficult to get good health services.

People with learning disabilities who are in prison or a secure unit can be forgotten.

Partnership Boards should make sure everyone can have a Health Action Plan if they want one.

They should check that some groups of people are not being forgotten.

Ordinary health services should make sure they are person centred so different people can be included.



In Leicestershire and Rutland they have made a DVD explaining to families what tools and support they can get to help.

Quality



Health Action Plans should be good quality.

This means making sure the plans are good and can help people stay healthy. The important things to look for are listed on the next page.

Every plan should make sure:

1. That the way of checking the plan and changing it when things change is clear.
2. That a nurse or doctor helps write the plan.
3. That people with a learning disability have had the opportunity to talk about their plan.



Partnership boards and health sub-groups should make sure that plans are good quality.

People and families need to be at the centre of checking quality as they are the true 'experts'.

What is good health facilitation?



Health Facilitation

Health Facilitation is a way of working to help people get the right health services from the different parts of the National Health Service (NHS).

This can be done in 2 ways:

1. By helping health services to plan for and provide equal support and health treatment for people with learning disabilities. This is called Strategic Health Facilitation.
2. By helping people themselves to get the services they want to stay healthy and well.



This may be a family carer or someone who works closely with a person. This is personal health facilitation.

Health Facilitator

A Health Facilitator is a person who works to help people get the right services from the NHS to stay healthy and well.

On the next page are some ideas to help you decide what is good or bad in your area.

You could use these ideas to work together to make things better.



A good Strategic Health Facilitator should work in this way and know these things:

Points to look for	Is this happening in your area?
1. A good leader.	
2. Knows about the health needs of people with learning disabilities.	
3. Understands how health service work.	
4. Knows ways to check services to make sure they are equal and include everyone.	
5. Can work with different people and groups in the area to make things happen.	
6. Understands the policies for ordinary and special health services.	



A good personal health facilitator should be someone like this:

Points to look for	Is your health facilitator like this?
1. They are someone you know and trust.	
2. They listen and put you at the centre of the plan.	
3. They work with you and those who love and support you.	
4. They know a lot about your health needs, wishes and rights.	
5. They know how to access local health services, dentists, opticians, etc.	
6. They can communicate with different people.	
7. They know how to write a good health action plan that makes sense to you.	

What is a good health action plan?

Since 2002 lots of people have tried different ways of doing Health Action Planning.

Self Advocacy and family groups have been involved in deciding what a Health Action Plan should look like.



Lots of people think it is a good idea to use the same style in local areas because:

1. It made it easier for health staff to know how to use them.
2. It made it easier to start planning by answering the questions.
3. It helped make sure no important parts were forgotten like hearing or dentists.
4. People liked to have a 'folder' where information about their health and important things like hospital appointment cards could be kept together.
5. It helped support workers understand what they should be doing to help people stay safe and healthy.





The plan must belong to the person not a service.

It could be part of their person centred plan.

Partnership Boards should make sure the right kind of Health Action plans are being offered to everyone.

Information from Health Action plans should help people who buy services understand what to buy in the future.



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