

# Getting it right

when treating people with a learning disability



# Who we are

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**Getting it right** is a group of organisations working towards better healthcare, wellbeing and quality of life for people with a learning disability.

People with a learning disability experience poorer healthcare and health than the general population.

We aim to provide healthcare professionals with information on best practice, and where to go for information and support so all people with a learning disability get the best health treatment possible.



# See the person – not the disability

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- ✓ Find time to:
  - listen to the person
  - listen to the family.
- ✓ Find the best way to communicate:
  - pay attention to facial expressions
  - notice gestures and body language
  - try pointing to pictures
  - try signing
- ✓ Keep information simple and brief
- ✓ Avoid using jargon

# Don't make assumptions about the person's quality of life

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- ✓ People with a learning disability feel pain too.
- ✓ People with a learning disability get ill too.
- ✓ Don't confuse a learning disability with illness.
- ✓ Be suspicious about serious illness – act quickly!
- ✓ Get to know some of the health conditions that are more common for people with a learning disability.

# The law and you

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- ✓ You must make reasonable adjustments to ensure that each person has the same opportunity for health, whether they have a learning disability or not.  
(Disability Discrimination Act 2005)
- ✓ Capacity is specific to a particular decision and time. You must assume the person has capacity. If assessment shows they don't, a decision must be made in their best interest.  
(Mental Capacity Act 2005)
- ✓ Everyone has a right to expect and receive appropriate healthcare.  
(Human Rights Act 1998)



# Where to find help and more information

Call your local community learning disability team.

Go to

[www.mencap.org.uk/gettingitright](http://www.mencap.org.uk/gettingitright)



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