



# Living well with a learning disability in Devon

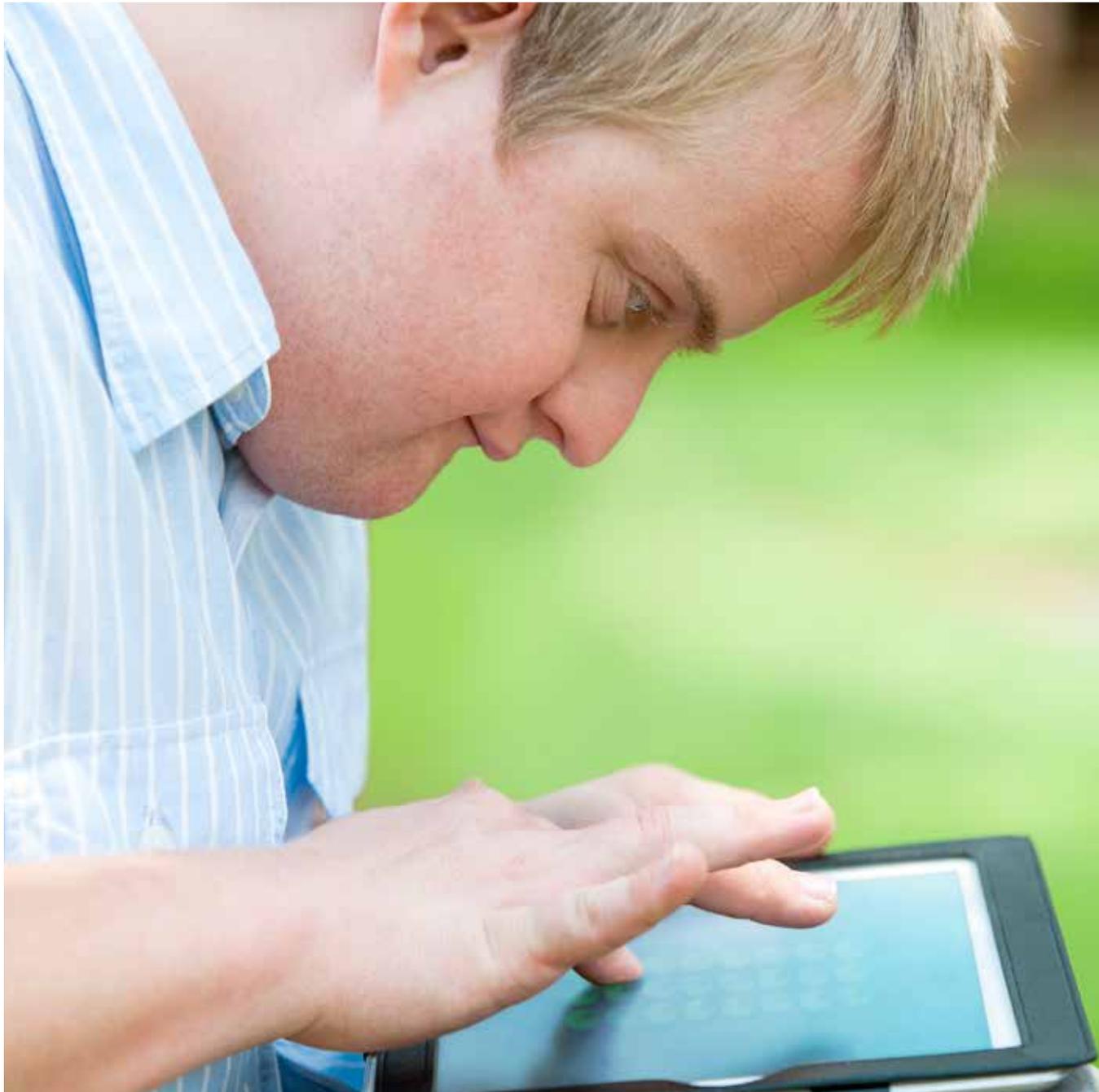
## 2014-2017

Joint Commissioning

Living well with a learning  
disability in Devon

2014-2017





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# The joint commissioning strategy for services for adults with a learning disability

This strategy sets out our high-level approach, which will be underpinned by local action plans. It covers the key areas of work we will undertake to improve the lives and wellbeing of adults who have a learning disability, although some of our work starts with young people before they reach age 18, as they approach adulthood. The strategy has to accommodate the fact that we are experiencing increasing numbers of people who have a learning disability using services, at a time when budgets are under severe pressure.

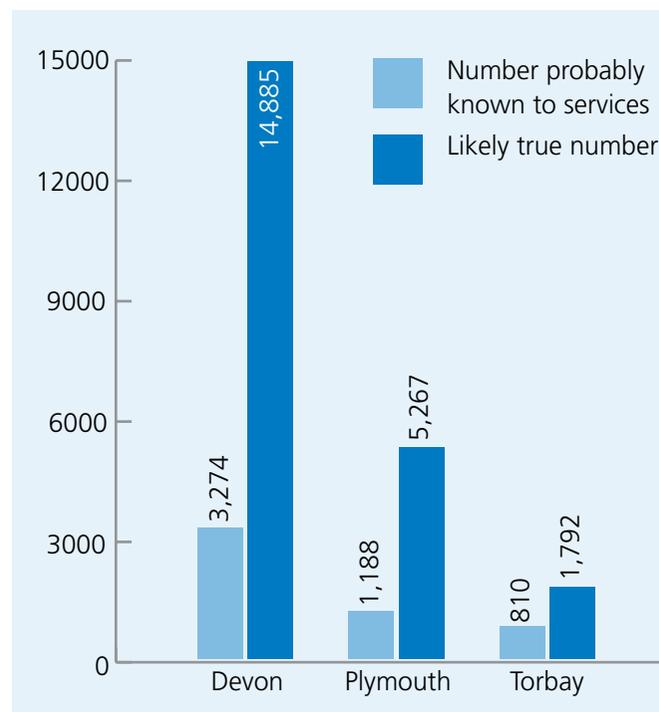
A learning disability is a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities – for example, household tasks, socialising or managing money – which affects someone for their whole life.

This strategy encompasses the geographical area of Devon, including Plymouth and Torbay. It spans the work undertaken by the two clinical commissioning groups and three local authority areas.

This document provides a summary of key values, outcomes, and actions that we will undertake in the coming three years.

Since the publication of 'Valuing People' in 2001 there have been some significant improvements in the lives of people who have a learning disability, but there is still more work that we need to do.

We will respond to the views of the local population as expressed through the Health and Wellbeing Board in this refreshed joint commissioning strategy, reviewing our progress and reaffirming our approach and commitment to the needs and preferences of people with learning disabilities and their carers.



NUMBER OF ADULTS WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY KNOWN TO SERVICES AND THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN OUR POPULATION

## Population

The graph here shows the number of adults who are known to services who have a learning disability. The actual number of people who have a learning disability is likely to be much higher.

We need to be constantly aware that not all people who have a learning disability are in contact with specialist services, nor need to be.

We need to ensure people know about the specialist services they may need, and we also need to support universal services, like hospitals or employment services, to ensure that they are easy to use for people who have a learning disability.

## Our commitment

We have set out our commitment to improving outcomes for people who have a learning disability and their carers, recognising that it is imperative to work together to achieve this.

It is very important that the values underpinning this strategy are upheld in our local communities and also within the services we all use in our lives, such as employment support, transport, leisure and accommodation.

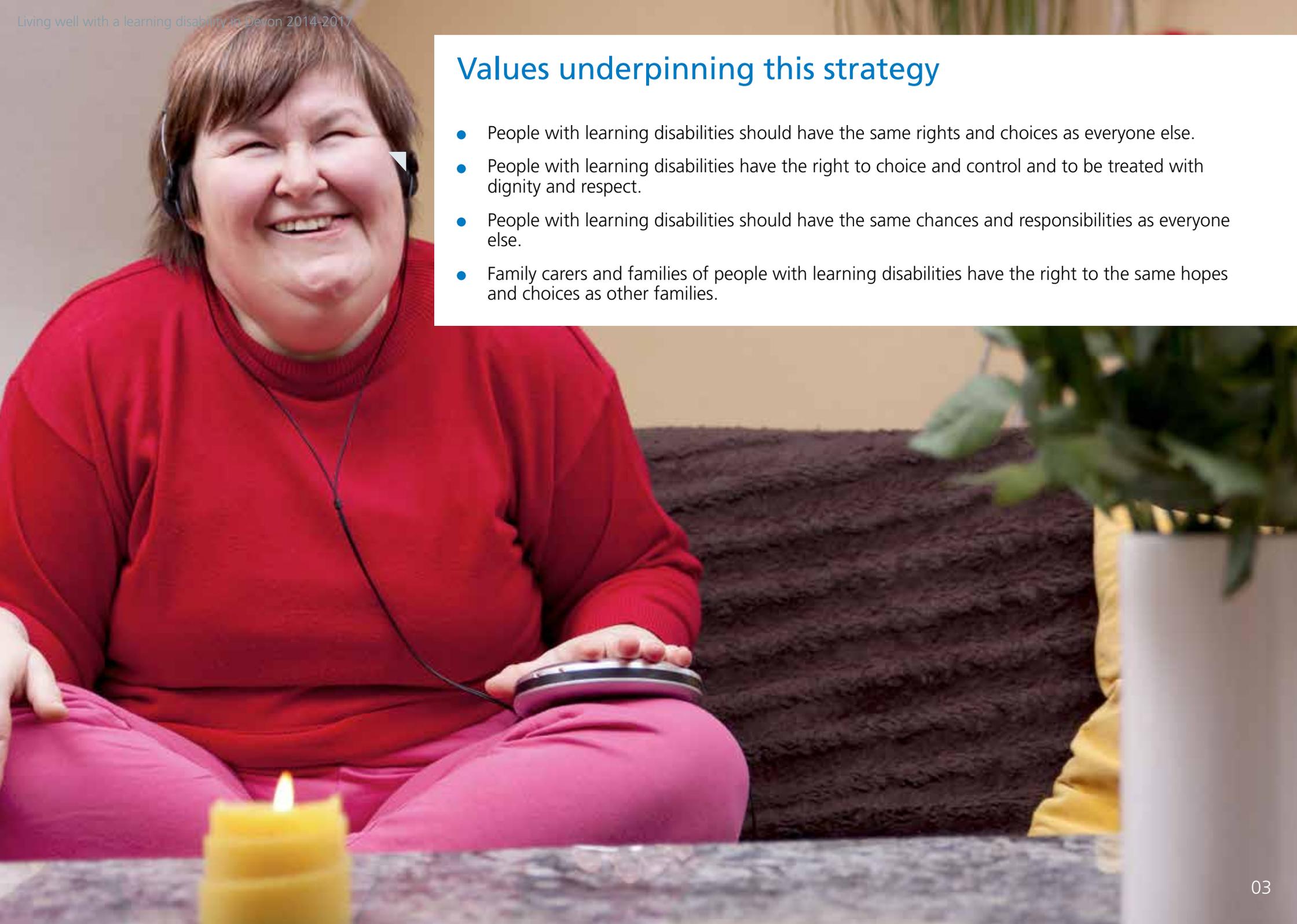
This means that a wide range of services need to be easy to use for people who have a learning disability.

We want people to experience care and support that is personalised and co-ordinated. It should be delivered in the right place at the right time, and we will continue to work in partnership to achieve this.

We will also set out how we aim to measure and report our progress on delivering better outcomes and will oversee our planning and activity through a clear governance structure.

We will respond to the new duties for local authorities laid out in the Care Act 2014, recognising its importance in reforming care and support and prioritising wellbeing.





## Values underpinning this strategy

- People with learning disabilities should have the same rights and choices as everyone else.
- People with learning disabilities have the right to choice and control and to be treated with dignity and respect.
- People with learning disabilities should have the same chances and responsibilities as everyone else.
- Family carers and families of people with learning disabilities have the right to the same hopes and choices as other families.

## Reviewing our progress

We will review our progress in respect of the outcomes we expect to achieve. There are a series of measures for each outcome that helps us review our progress.

We will describe what we have achieved so far and what still needs to be done.

We will use our understanding of the needs of the population now and in the future, our understanding of the current provider market and the way services are designed and delivered, and our understanding of people's experience to shape and inform our local action plans and the range of services available across Devon.



## Outcomes

There are seven key outcomes that this joint strategy supports; they are expressed as 'I' statements:

- I have an improved quality of life because any health and/or support needs I have are identified quickly and addressed.
- I have information and advice that I can understand.
- I receive early help so that I can look after myself as much as possible. This means that any need for care in a hospital happens only when absolutely necessary and appropriate.
- I have a positive experience of care and support.
- I feel safe, and I am protected from avoidable harm. I am able to take positive risks because I am supported.
- I will have the correct care and support across health services so that I receive any diagnosis and treatment at the right time. Services will make reasonable adjustments to make sure that I get the help I need.
- I am helped to recover from episodes of ill health or injury in services that are as close to home as possible. I get the right amount of support to keep me as independent as possible.

Each of these outcomes is supported through the outcomes frameworks for Health and Social Care.

There are a series of measures that sit beneath each outcome to help us see how we are meeting them.



## Policy and evidence

There are a number of important reports steering the policy development for services affecting people with a learning disability, including:

- The Care Act (2014) and Children and Families Act (2014)
- The Winterbourne View Final Report (2012)
- Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework 2013-14 (ASCOF)
- Think Local, Act Personal?
- Public Health Outcomes Framework 2013-2016 (PHOF)
- National Health Service Outcomes Framework 2013-14 (NHSOF)
- Health Equalities Framework.

## Health inequalities

Public concerns about access to healthcare have been raised through Mencap's report, Death by indifference, in 2007.

More recently the Confidential Inquiry into the Premature Deaths of People who have Learning Disabilities (CIPOLD) in 2013 showed that on average "women with a learning disability were dying 20 years before women in the general population and men, on average, 13 years earlier."

Even though people are accessing their GP at the same time as the general population, there are often problems getting quick diagnosis and treatment.

We know that there is more that needs to be done in acute and primary care to establish good care by offering expertise around learning disabilities to staff working in these services.

In 2013, when people who have a learning disability and their carers were asked about annual health checks, many people said that they had had one, but not everyone had a health action plan as a result.

Reducing health inequalities requires closer working between universal services and specialist learning disability services.

## Living well

In Devon and Torbay, despite improvements in recent years, there is a higher than average number of people who have a learning disability living in accommodation that does not give them longer-term, settled accommodation that is protected through a tenancy agreement.

We know that in Devon we have significantly more people using day services than other local authorities across England, but that we have similar rates of people who are in paid employment compared to the England average.

This means that we need to focus on people living full and independent lives, where secure homes and fulfilling lives are a priority. We will help people work out what they want from life and let them know what options they have to help them achieve their goals.

Our local joint health and social care self-assessment work has identified where community services need to improve the accessibility of their services to people who have a learning disability.

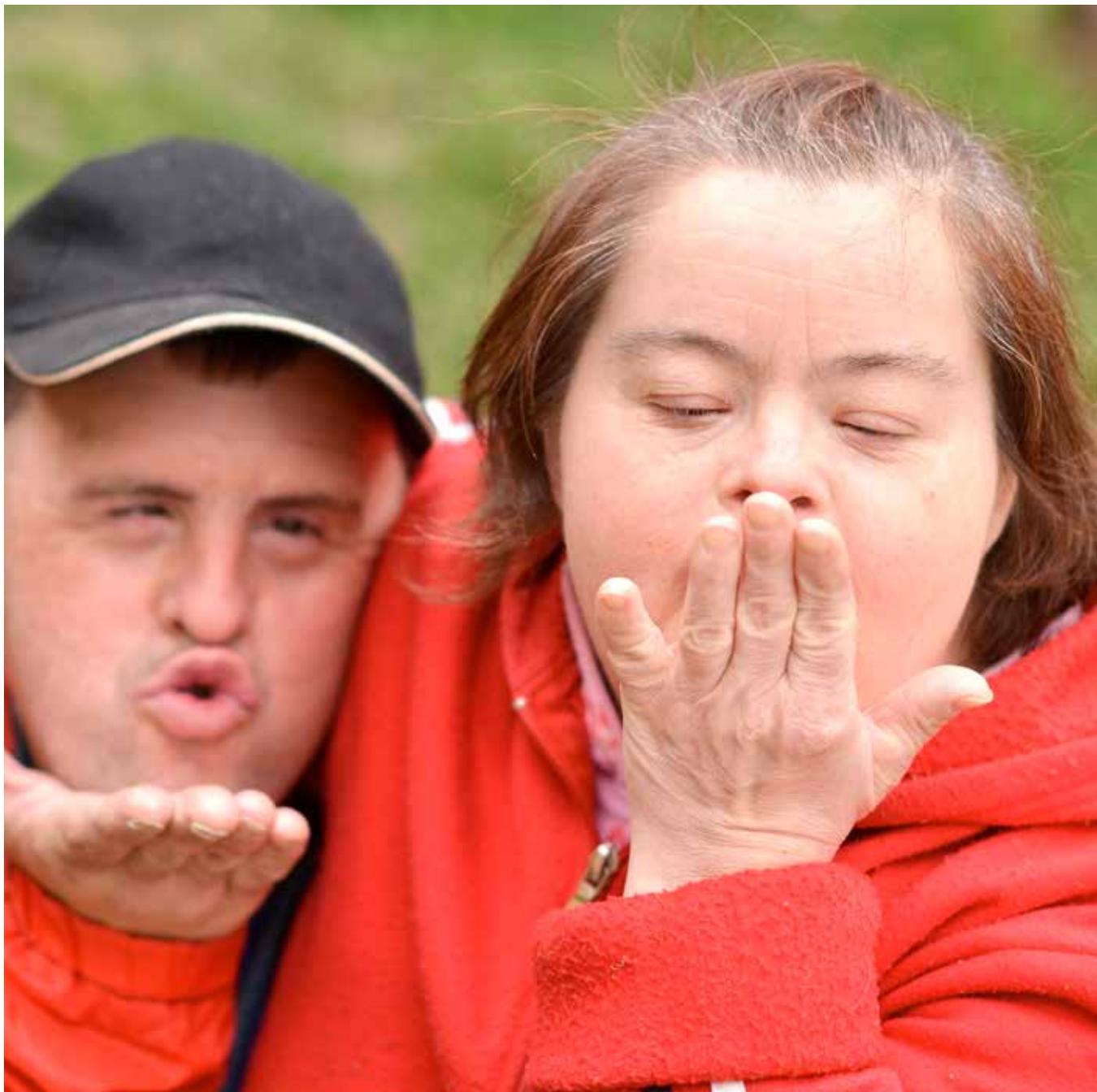
In 2013, when people who have a learning disability were asked what service could be improved, the key areas identified across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay related to access to employment and housing.

## Families and relationships

One area of work we will undertake is in supporting people who have a learning disability with understanding relationships, sexual health and also in parenting effectively.

The work undertaken in this area will link to strategies developed across each council area on early help, maternity services and work related to emotional health and wellbeing.

We also recognise that a growing number of people who have learning disabilities are also carers themselves – often caring for older relatives.



## Working with people who have complex needs

The reports stemming from the scandal of Winterbourne View highlight that:

“... nationally there are still too many people placed in hospitals far away from home because their needs have not been met by local services.”

We know that when people are in hospital they still stay there far too long. As part of our own independent review into care in Devon and Torbay in 2012, we identified people who had been placed in hospitals in Devon and had been there for long periods, and, in a few cases, up to 16 years. Every person we spoke to said they “want to go home”.

Devon has a number of people placed in care outside of our local area, when they have not chosen to be there.

For people in hospitals outside of Devon, we will help them as much as possible to be in appropriate community placements.

This means that we need the right skilled providers locally to support people who may have very complex needs.

We have to develop our provider market to make sure that we can meet the needs of people returning home. We also need to make sure that we support people to remain locally in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, avoiding placements outside the area wherever possible.

To do so we will need to ensure the right housing choices are available to meet people’s specific needs.

Improvements in care, medicine and assistive technology also mean that people can live more independently with the right support; therefore we have to make sure that we offer innovative support fairly across our community.



## End-of-life care

There is a need to ensure that people who have a learning disability, and their carers, are supported with end-of-life care.

There is evidence to suggest that people are using some services that are there to help, but this needs to be planned well, to include the person, their family members, and providers where appropriate.

Additionally, this strategy recognises the need to support people who have a learning disability with their own bereavement processes, if they lose a friend or loved one.

## Safeguarding

Keeping people safe, and staying safe, has been identified as a key area in our self-assessments year on year. We need to ensure that staff are well trained to support prompt responses to any allegation of abuse. We will support individuals to speak out with the help of trained advocates if required.

All services we provide or commission need to be fully up to date in training their staff, not only in safeguarding processes, but also in respect of the Mental Capacity Act and in relation to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

Our aim is to commission services containing kind and compassionate staff that help to keep people safe. Workforce development should be a major priority for us all.

## Carers

The role of caring is important within the strategy and we acknowledge that while carers' needs are addressed in separate strategies, the needs of carers of people who have a learning disability are supported in tandem through the commissioning actions taken across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay.



## Our achievements so far

The numbers of people who have a learning disability who are known to their GPs are significantly higher in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay than in the rest of England.

We have exceptionally high numbers of people having an annual health check in our three local authority areas; our performance is among the best in the country.

Our co-ordination and local planning performance is also significantly higher in Devon and Torbay, demonstrating effective joint working, with increasing work across the three local authorities.

All three local authorities are working with clinical commissioning groups that have signed up to the 'Getting it Right' charter for commissioning health services for people who have a learning disability.

We have successfully supported the use of apprenticeships for people who have a learning disability with Project Search in the majority of our acute hospitals. This has led to people achieving paid employment in the longer term.

### Devon

The Department of Health Review of learning disability services 2011 noted: "There is effective integrated and innovative working between health and social care with some examples of excellent practice." The Community Enabling team is helping people develop skills for daily living in Devon.

We have successfully increased the range of options for all job seekers including increasing the range of supported employment providers and internship programmes for young people still within education.

In 2009 the spend on direct payments was £1.2m, in 2013 it is over £5.5m, showing that people are having more choice control over their lives.

### Plymouth

Plymouth City Council has achieved very high numbers of people using community services, with less people using day care services. This demonstrates high levels of community participation.

Acute hospital services in Plymouth are excellent at identifying people who have a learning disability, this helps better planning for people when they come into hospital. The hospital has a highly regarded Project Search initiative offering apprenticeships.

Plymouth has advocacy support services involving people who have a learning disability in the improvement and evaluation of universal services, including 'quality checkers'.

Plymouth has also started offering personal health budgets.

### Torbay

Torbay is piloting improvements in primary care, with a learning disability nurse based in a GP practice. Such nurses will support people to attend health checks, and help people access diagnostic and treatment services.

Torbay is improving standards of care for people by reviewing the quality of health checks, using an audit.

The refreshed Health Sub-Group's key aims are to check the quality and provision of the annual health check for people with learning disabilities, and support the reduction of 'out of area placements' and the development of local services.

## Commissioning intentions

- We will support people to be independent and self-reliant. We need to take a long-term view of care by supporting individuals by the use of good prevention approaches. We will ensure that people are supported in their communities and through a range of services that are least restrictive and maximise the independence of each person according to their needs.
- We will develop effective local housing options and care and support responses.
- We will work with the Department of Work and Pensions and relevant partners to help people into employment that can offer income as well as other social benefits. This requires employment support agencies to offer the right help to get people into work.
- We will improve the experience of young people and their carers as they move between child and adult services. This work will span health and social care services.
- We will address the health inequalities of people who have a learning disability by ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made in services to enable faster diagnosis and treatment. In addition, we note that access to disease prevention needs to be improved in relation to obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and epilepsy.
- We will provide fast and targeted help for people in times of crisis, with the aim of supporting each person as close to home as possible.
- We will review the provision of therapies for people who have a learning disability, concentrating on access and equity across Devon.
- We will ensure that people are supported to have relationships of their choosing.
- We will support parents who have a learning disability by offering specialist support to agencies working with them.
- We will support people who have a learning disability to access those services that they may need as they grow older, including dementia services.
- We will ensure that people who have a learning disability and their carers will have effective and tailored support at the end of life.
- We will continue to support people to access personalised services across health and social care, including access to direct payments or personal health budgets.
- We will seek to influence other decision makers to ensure that citizens who have a learning disability will have improved access within our communities across Devon.
- We will continue to support the use of the Mental Capacity Act in services.
- We will continue to help people keep safe, working within safeguarding processes and working closely with police and other public services to achieve this.



## Key actions

1. To develop a care market that can meet the complex needs of individuals. This will mean some new procurement around services that can support people with very complex needs.
2. To improve access to the right housing. This will mean improving our data gathering and planning so we understand the amount, location and type of housing required.
3. Undertake some targeted project work in relation to people who have a learning disability who are parents, establishing clear support and advice mechanisms.
4. Our care management processes and specialist health services need to be equipped to manage and plan personalised care for individuals living in Devon, and for those returning from out of our area. We need to make sure people receive the support they need as close to home as possible.
5. We will reconfigure our healthcare services in Devon to support our primary care and acute hospital services in order to reduce health inequalities. This will be achieved through the use of expert learning disability liaison roles.
6. We will review learning disability inpatient care, and will help universal mental health delivery to meet the needs of people who have a learning disability. We will ensure that universal providers of services reasonably adjust services to fit the needs of each person, and that the needs of people who have a learning

disability are reflected in each commissioning strategy prepared by Health and Social Care.

7. Ensure that universal providers of services reasonably adjust services to fit the needs of each person, and that the needs of people who have a learning disability are reflected in each commissioning strategy prepared by Health and Social Care.
8. Improve the involvement of people who use services and their carers by making sure they are involved in major service redesign. The views of individuals and carers will be used to monitor the impact of any service changes.
9. To commission services that support citizenship and independence, through providing effective support and accommodation.
10. Support people to access universal employment support, and help people to earn an income wherever possible.
11. Support the development of the proposed health, care and education plans for young people as outlined in the Children and Families Act.

## Making progress

The improvements in care and support within this strategy will be monitored locally by each local authority and CCG with regular reports to Health and Wellbeing Boards in each council area. A report of progress will be prepared annually.

The Learning Disability Partnerships Board will also have an important role in the monitoring of any local action plans, ensuring the full involvement of people who have a learning disability and their family carers.



## Getting involved

Every year each local authority in Devon undertakes a self-assessment to check up on how well we are doing.

This process involves a number of events where people can give direct feedback about the services that they use in their local authority area.

The results of the self-assessment are available on the Improving Health and Lives website. It is useful to compare how well we are doing compared to other local authorities across the country. This is the link:

<http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk>

Devon, Plymouth and Torbay also operate effective partnership boards which include a range of service providers, carer representatives, commissioners and people who have a learning disability.

All local authority areas have a health sub-group that focuses on healthcare as a part of the Learning Disability Partnership Board. There are a number of events we hold throughout the year to monitor our progress and to hear directly from carers and people using services about what needs to be improved upon.

## Useful links

### DEVON

Devon County Council

<http://www.devon.gov.uk/learning-disability.htm>

Northern, Eastern and Western Devon CCG

<http://www.newdevonccg.nhs.uk/partnerships/learning-disabilities/100085>

Devon Partnership Trust

<http://www.devonpartnership.nhs.uk/Learning-Disabilities.68.0.html>

### PLYMOUTH

Plymouth Council

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/learningdisabilities.htm>

Plymouth Community Healthcare

<http://www.plymouthcommunityhealthcare.co.uk/services/community-learning-disabilities>

### TORBAY

Torbay Council

<http://www.torbay.gov.uk/index/adults/adult-health/learningdisability>

Torbay and Southern Devon Health and Care Trust

[http://www.tsdhc.nhs.uk/yourlife/adult\\_social\\_care/pages/learningdisabilityservices.aspx](http://www.tsdhc.nhs.uk/yourlife/adult_social_care/pages/learningdisabilityservices.aspx)

Torbay and Southern Devon Clinical Commissioning Group

<http://southdevonandtorbayccg.nhs.uk>



This guide is  
also available  
in Braille, large  
print and other  
languages  
on request.

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