

Partnership checklist

This partnership checklist is to help everyone – **family members, support staff** and all **healthcare professionals** who may be involved in providing care for a patient with a learning disability – especially where the patient may be unable to make decisions about their care or treatment during a hospital stay.

This checklist is to use alongside the **hospital passport** (a document that has important information about the person's health and communication needs).

Whatever is agreed should be **recorded** in the patient's hospital notes and **communicated to all ward staff, including agency staff**. This is important to ensure that hospital staff are clear how and when the patient's family or support staff from home need to be involved, and how to contact them urgently if necessary.

This partnership checklist will help hospital staff to fulfil their legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with a learning disability under the Equality Act.

Partnership checklist: key issues to discuss

1. Make sure hospital staff have the right contact details

- Name of family and/or the person's support staff
- Emergency contact number for family/support staff

2. Does the person have a hospital passport?

If not, provide a blank hospital passport and ask the person and their family/support staff from home to fill it out. Here is a link to a generic hospital passport template, which may be helpful: [www.easyhealth.org.uk/listing/hospital-passports-\(leaflets\)](http://www.easyhealth.org.uk/listing/hospital-passports-(leaflets)). Are there any other important documents that hospital staff need to look at? Make sure all hospital staff working with the person read the hospital passport, check their Summary Care Record for Additional Information and read any other important documents.

3. How will the person and family/support staff be involved in decisions about the person's care and treatment in hospital?

Hospital staff must always follow the Mental Capacity Act. Discuss how the person will be supported to make decisions in hospital, including the type of information and who will support them.

If the person is found to lack capacity to make a decision (after being given as much support as possible to help them make their own decision and there has been a capacity assessment), a

decision will need to be made in the person's 'best interests'. Hospital staff must consult with those who know the person well such as family and support staff and involve the person themselves as much as possible. Find out how to involve the person as much as possible and how and when family and support staff want to be consulted. Sometimes a family member may be a court-appointed Deputy/ have Lasting Power of Attorney for Health and Welfare. This means they will have the authority to make certain decisions on behalf of the person.

4. Will family/support staff be involved in providing aspects of care and support whilst the person is in hospital?

The person may need care and/or support such as:

- Personal care: washing, changing, oral healthcare
- Support with eating and drinking
- Support with complex needs, for example postural care
- Support with managing anxieties or sensory sensitivities
- Communication support
- Support to keep safe.

Be clear **who** is doing **what, when** and **how**.

Remember hospital staff have a responsibility to make sure all the person's health and care needs are met while they are in hospital. They may need to fund 1:1 care from someone with the right skills and expertise. It is most beneficial for the person to be supported by someone who knows them well.

5. Does the person need family/support staff to be there to support and comfort them when difficult or painful procedures are happening, including surgery and post-surgery?

6. Does the person need family/support staff to have extended visiting hours?

7. Does the person need family/support staff to stay overnight?

If so, discuss what needs to be in place to enable this. For example:

- Where will family/support staff sleep and on what
- Can they get a pass for parking, access to the hospital canteen, washing facilities or other support to stay close to the person?

8. Any other requirements for a successful partnership?

This checklist is based on an idea and the experience of Sue Jones. Her son Nick had a learning disability and autism. Sadly he died a preventable death in hospital. Nick's legacy is to help save lives by having excellent communication and partnership working between families/ support staff and healthcare professionals, to ensure patients receive the very best care and treatment.