

Covid-19: Supporting people with learning disability with or without autism

> 40% of deaths of people with LD are due to a respiratory cause, making them a vulnerable group. Please consider the following.

Diagnostic overshadowing

- People with learning disability and or autism may communicate symptoms of Covid-19 differently
- NICE have advised that Rockwood should not be used for people with learning disabilities or autism.



Health Passports (baseline physical obs)

- Some people may have a health/hospital passport. Ask them or their family/carer if they have one & make it available
- Check Summary Care Record – Additional Information



Listen to those who know them!

- They know the individual best! They will have information about when the person is well, for example behaviour, videos.
- During COVID lockdown, the person with the patient may not be their usual carer, so please check how well they know them



Reasonable adjustments

- This is a legal requirement. Equalities Act 2010.
- Speak with the patient, their family / carer about what adjustments can be made (LD/Autism/Down Syndrome are not reasons for DNACPR)



Communication

- Speak to the person with learning disabilities/autism, not about them. Easy read resources are available on G:Care.
- No jargon, simple sentences and questions. Use pictures.



PINCHME

Pain, Infection, Nutrition, Constipation, Hydration, Medication, Environment

- Sometimes people with LD/Autism cannot tell us that they are unwell, but have a change in their behaviour.
- When considering this it is useful to think of the mnemonic PINCH ME as this helps to understand why their behaviour has changed.



Mental Capacity

- People with LD/Autism do not lack capacity for every decision.
- Assess and document capacity in line with their needs and the decision.
- Consider an advocate (IMCA) if no family to support decision making. Referrals can be made via the POHWER website <https://www.pohwer.net/gloucestershire> or by contacting **0300 003 1162** or email glosadvocacy@pohwer.net



Mental Health & Wellbeing

- Change in routine may cause distress e.g. no visitors.
- PPE may be frightening – Useful poster <https://www.keepsafe.org.uk/resources/why-we-wear-ppe-poster>



GHT LD Liaison Nurses: **0300 422 4953**
CLDT: **01452 894280** (Glos), **01242 634300** (Chelt),
01453 563103 (Stroud), **01594 593050** (Forest)