

Studies

[The potential for medicinal cannabis to help manage challenging behaviour in people with intellectual disability: A perspective review](#)

Around 2% of the population have intellectual disabilities. Over one-third people with intellectual disabilities (PwID) present with 'challenging behaviour', which nosologically and diagnostically is an abstract concept. Challenging behaviour is influenced by a range of bio-psycho-social factors in a population, which is unable to suitably comprehend and/or communicate concerns. This predisposes to poor health and social outcomes. There is no evidence-based treatments for managing challenging behaviour. Cannabidiol (CBD) and tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) are being trialled for a range of disorders, which are over-represented in PwID and provoke challenging behaviours, such as severe epilepsy, spasticity, post-traumatic stress disorder, social phobia, pain, etc.

[The importance of cancer prevention policies to inform and guide preventative and screening measures for people with intellectual disabilities: The COST project "Cancer- Understanding Prevention in Intellectual Disabilities"](#)

Cancer is a global public health problem, but its exact prevalence in people with intellectual disabilities is still uncertain. This population, with limited health skills and complex health needs, faces many challenges in cancer prevention, screening, timely diagnosis and treatment. Furthermore, they are often underrepresented in general cancer prevention and screening policies across Europe, leading to widened disparities in health outcomes and premature mortality. Thus, unified national and local policies are needed to reduce inequalities and promoting a pan-European inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities. Our goal is to raise public awareness of this issue, including the involvement of people with intellectual disabilities, and promote engagement from relevant stakeholders.

[Specific brain imaging alterations underlying autistic traits in children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder](#)

Autistic traits (ATs) are frequently reported in children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This study aimed to examine ATs in children with ADHD from both behavioral and neuroimaging perspectives.

[Clinical implications of ADHD, ASD, and their co-occurrence in early adulthood—the prospective ABIS-study](#)

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are childhood-onset disorders associated with functional and psychosocial impairments that may persist into adulthood, leading to serious personal and societal costs.

[Health equity for persons with disabilities: a global scoping review on barriers and interventions in healthcare services](#)

Persons with disabilities experience health inequities in terms of increased mortality, morbidity, and limitations in functioning when compared to the rest of the population. Many of the poor health outcomes experienced by persons with disabilities cannot be explained by the underlying health condition or impairment, but are health inequities driven by unfair societal and health system factors. A synthesis of the global evidence is needed to identify the factors that hinder equitable access to healthcare services for persons with disabilities, and the interventions to remove these barriers and promote disability inclusion.



[The views of people using homeless services about learning disability](#)

People with a learning disability are at increased risk of becoming homeless, but little is known about how learning disability is viewed by people accessing homeless services. This study aimed to obtain the views of people experiencing homelessness about learning disability, in the context of a project that was exploring how to increase identification of learning disability.

[Mental Health in Emerging Adults With ADHD and/or Specific Learning Disabilities: A Scoping Review](#)

The transition to adulthood, including mental health, has been a focus of research; however, little is known about the mental health outcomes of emerging adults with high incidence diagnoses including ADHD and specific learning disabilities (SLD). This scoping review describes the current state of the research on our understanding of both positive and negative mental health outcomes in these populations.

Reports

[Baroness Hollins' final report: My heart breaks - solitary confinement in hospital has no therapeutic benefit for people with a learning disability and autistic people.](#)

This report focuses on people with a learning disability and/or autistic people who are detained in mental health and specialist learning disability hospitals.

[Short report: Evaluation of wider community support for a neurodiversity teaching programme designed using participatory methods](#)

Children with neurodevelopmental diagnoses often experience discrimination from their peers at school. This may result from a lack of understanding, and intolerance of differences in their thinking, communication and social interactions. Learning About Neurodiversity at School (LEANS) is a teaching programme designed to educate primary school children about the concept of neurodiversity. The LEANS programme was created by a neurodiverse team, using participatory methods. In the current study, we evaluated whether the wider neurodiverse community endorsed the planned design generated by our participatory approach.

Guidance

[Independent Care \(Education\) and Treatment Reviews: final report, 2023](#)

A letter, final report with recommendations, and a proposed code of practice framework from Baroness Hollins on the use of long-term segregation for people with a learning disability and/or autistic people.

Public Advice

[Continuous positive airway pressure \(CPAP\) resources](#)

Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) is a treatment for obstructive sleep apnoea (OSA), which can be life-threatening for people with a learning disability. The risks of non-compliance with CPAP treatment are often not understood by people with a learning disability and their carers.



[Treatments for COVID-19 – Easy Read](#)

The NHS offers treatment to people with COVID-19 who are at the highest risk of becoming seriously ill. This guidance explains how eligible patients can access free rapid lateral flow tests and how to receive an assessment for treatment if they test positive.

Blogs

[Embracing Neurodiversity: My journey from diagnosis to psychiatry trainee](#)

As a core trainee in psychiatry in Wales, my journey has been both challenging and enlightening. Diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder during my second year of medical school, I faced significant hurdles that required me to take two gaps of three years each to complete MBBS. However, it wasn't until I arrived in the UK and the commencement of my training that I received additional diagnoses of ADHD and Autism. These revelations gave me a framework to understand many aspects of myself that I had long suspected but couldn't quite grasp.

[Life as a neurodivergent psychiatrist](#)

I am a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist and enjoy a portfolio career. My current job plan spans across the community and forensic CAMHS with additional roles in safeguarding and medical management. I enjoy the variety of a portfolio career and I could write a blog encouraging you to choose psychiatry from any of those perspectives but today I would like to share with you my experience of being a neurodivergent doctor.

News

[Autism Alliance responds to the final report from Baroness Hollins](#)

The final report from Baroness Hollins and her Oversight Panel on Independent Care (Education) and Treatment Reviews shows powerfully that the health and care system in England continues to fail autistic people and people with a learning disability. Her findings are distressing and should be cause for shame across the sector, and for all of us across society.

[CBF response to Baroness Hollins' final report](#)

The government has published the final report by Baroness Hollins on the Independent Care, Education and Treatment Reviews programme, which aimed to move people with a learning disability and autistic people out of long-term segregation, alongside its response to this report.

[DHSC rejects experts' plan to curb 'inhumane' solitary confinement of disabled people in hospital](#)

Panel finds "no therapeutic benefit" to long-term segregation of autistic people and people with learning disabilities, but government says proposal to severely restrict practice is not deliverable under current law.

["Those who must not be forgotten": Why the Mental Health Act needs to be reformed.](#)

On Tuesday 7 November 2023, The Government's promise of a Bill to reform the Mental Health Act was dropped from the King's Speech. The next day, a four-year long enquiry led by Baroness Hollins was published, condemning the government's failure to end the "inhumane treatment" of autistic people and people with learning disabilities.



[Christmas product partnership](#)

Christmas is always an interesting time of year. In a recent survey conducted by Music Magpie, 58 per cent said that they will try to be sustainable this Christmas, with 39 per cent adding that they would only buy things which will help the planet, such as donations to charity. National Autistic Society have worked with a number of organisations that sell their products to give a percentage of their profits or sales to the National Autistic Society.

[Boshier Grants announced for five charities that support autistic people and their families](#)

The National Autistic Society is delighted to announce the five charities which will be awarded grants for their work to support autistic people and their families. Our charity launched the new Boshier Grant Scheme in partnership with Thea and Peter Boshier. Thea and Peter have both personal and professional connections to autism and have experienced first-hand the challenges faced by autistic people and their families.

[How autistic parents feel about breastfeeding and the support they receive – new research](#)

Surprisingly little is still known about autism and breastfeeding. A few years ago, we reviewed all of the research evidence and found limited information about the experiences of autistic parents – beyond highlighting that the sensory differences when breastfeeding could be very challenging for them. We also found that communication by health professionals didn't always meet the needs of autistic parents.

[Autistic people experience loneliness far more acutely than neurotypical people – new research](#)

Autistic people are up to four times more likely to experience loneliness than non-autistic people. Despite enduring stereotypes that autistic people lack the desire for meaningful social connections, new research from my colleagues and I unveils the profound distress they experience due to loneliness. It also shows the unexpected role that differences in the ways individuals receive and interpret different stimuli through their senses – their “sensory processing” – may play in this phenomenon.

[Adult social care waiting list grows to 470,000](#)

A learning disability charity says it is clear that “current funding and action are not keeping up with demand” after new research has revealed the adult social care waiting list has grown by 8% to 470,000.

[Employment support launched for over a million people](#)

New Back to Work Plan to help up to 1,100,000 people with long-term health conditions, disabilities or long-term unemployment to look for and stay in work.

[Number of autistic people in mental health hospitals: October 2023](#)

The latest monthly [Assuring Transformation NHS Digital data](#) shows that in October 2023:

- In total 2,035 autistic people and people with learning disabilities are in inpatient mental health hospitals in England
- 1,335 (66%) of these people are autistic

There are 210 under 18s in inpatient units that are autistic or have a learning disability. Of these, 93% are autistic.

