

# Strengthening the Commitment

## Easy read summary

### Introduction



In 2011 and 2012 there was a **review** of learning disabilities nursing. A **review** means that people look at lots of information and make a plan for what will happen next.



**Strengthening the Commitment** is a report about that review. The review happened in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland.



This is an easy read version of the report, called **Strengthening the Commitment**.

## Why do a review?



We know that there will be more people with learning disabilities in the future. This is because there are more things doctors and nurses can do for people with learning disabilities. This means people are living longer lives. This might mean that more people will need support from a learning disabilities nurse.



We know that the number of learning disabilities nurses is going down.



The kind of support that people want from learning disabilities nurses has changed a lot.



Learning disabilities nurses work in lots of different places now. The government in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland want there to be enough learning disabilities nurses to support people.



The government also want learning disabilities nurses to get good training so they can do their job well.



The government did the review to find out what learning disabilities nursing is like now. The government thought about what it needs to change about learning disabilities nursing. This is to make healthcare work better for people now and in the future.



The **Strengthening the Commitment** report makes 17 **recommendations** about what needs to change.

A **recommendation** is a good idea from a report to help people work better.

## What recommendations did the review make?



1. There will be a national group who understand and plan for all learning disabilities nurses. This should include people from Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland.



2. The group need good information about where learning disabilities nurses work. They also need to know how many nurses there are.



The group need to know this information to make a good plan for people with learning disabilities and their families. The plan needs to include learning disabilities nurses that do not work for the NHS.

3. There should be jobs for learning disabilities nurses with:



- people who are in prison
- people with mental health issues
- people with autism
- older people
- people with **dementia**.

**Dementia** is the name for an illness. When a person has dementia they might forget things, get confused or lose skills they had before.

4. Each country must make a clear **career** plan for learning disabilities nurses.



**Career** is another word for job. A career plan will say what learning disabilities nurses need to know and do well in all the places they work.

Each country could work together to make these plans look the same.

## What other recommendations did the review make?



5. People who plan services and teach learning disabilities nurses need to plan how to teach new nurses.

There need to be enough learning disabilities nurses in the right places now and in the future.



They need to be trained in the right things. All learning disabilities nurses need to have the right values.



This means they need to believe in people's rights. They should work in a person-centred way. They should see what people are good at, not just what they cannot do. They should support people to do the things they want to do in their lives.

6. Learning disabilities nurses need to be allowed to work with people of all ages and during all parts of the person's life.



They need to have the right skills and experience to do this. They need to work with other people working in health and community care to do this well.



7. Learning disabilities nurses should support people to use all the health services they need and not just learning disabilities ones. This should help services to work together.



Learning disabilities nurses should support people to keep well. They should not just deal with the health problems they already have.



## What other recommendations did the review make?

8. There need to be enough learning disabilities nurses working in services for **people with complex needs**.



**People with complex needs** are people who need a lot of support every day. They might need support with things like eating, drinking, washing, dressing, and toileting. They might have more than one disability. They might not speak but use other ways to communicate.

9. There needs to be a way to measure the difference learning disabilities nurses make to people's lives.



10. Learning disabilities nurses should work smarter and better.







11. Trainers must teach learning disabilities nurses about the things that the **Strengthening the Commitment** report says.



12. There needs to be a good plan about teaching learning disabilities nurses. This will mean that there will be enough nurses in the right places with the right skills.



13. Places that teach staff and services need to work together. This will make sure that everyone who works with people with learning disabilities can learn more about working together.



14. Learning disabilities nurses need chances to learn about ideas that make people's health better. They need good support from their managers to do this.

## What other recommendations did the review make?

15. Learning disabilities nursing needs to have strong and clear leaders all over Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. They will receive support from learning disabilities leaders who have a lot of experience.



16. Learning disabilities nurses need to share good ways to work with people with learning disabilities.



17. There needs to be research done to find out what bits of a learning disabilities nurse's work really helps people. Research will show **evidence** of what works and what does not work. Learning disabilities nurses should know about evidence so they only work in the ways that work well. Learning disabilities nurses need to be good at understanding research and doing research.



## More information

This easy read summary was made by the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability and the Modernising Learning Disabilities Nursing Reference Group.



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You can find the full version of the Strengthening the Commitment report

at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/04/6465>

