



## **Neurodevelopmental, intellectual and social disability**

### **The Role of the GP and emerging issues in primary care**

- Recognise, monitor, coordinate and review patients with difficulties in communication, relationships, and managing their own affairs
- Help tailor resources and facilities to their needs
- Carry out annual health checks for people with intellectual disability
- Signpost patients and their families or carers to appropriate resources, and how to seek specialist help
- Support people transitioning from paediatric to adult services
- Advocate for people with developmental disabilities; promote fairness, empowerment and equity in the community, and the health system
- Understand diagnostic overshadowing: when presenting symptoms are attributed to the disability, rather than another, potentially treatable cause
- Understand the natural history of different disorders

### **Knowledge and Skills Self-Assessment Guide**

#### **Symptoms and signs**

- Behavioural problems and possible underlying causes, eg pain, illness, or abuse
- Delayed or altered development in children
- Difficulties processing sensory information
- Symptoms, signs and features of specific underlying conditions
- Atypical presentation of psychiatric or physical illness because of sensory, communication or cognitive difficulties

### **Common and important conditions**

- Autism and autism spectrum disorder
- Dyspraxia
- Genetic causes of intellectual disability
- Non-genetic causes of intellectual disability
- Commonly associated physical health disorders
  - cardiovascular disease
  - type 2 diabetes
  - epilepsy
  - musculoskeletal problems
  - endocrine and obesity
  - sleep disorders
  - visual, speech, hearing and mobility problems
- Commonly associated mental health problems
  - Alzheimer's disease
  - Depression and bereavement reactions
  - ADHD

### **Examinations and procedures**

- Tailored physical and mental state assessments in patients with intellectual disability
- Screening tools for autism
- Screening tests to detect neurological and psychiatric problems such as dementia and depression
- Skills to discuss the genetic and heredity implications of a patient's disability with family
- Reasonable adjustments to accommodate those with intellectual disability in primary care

### **Investigations**

- Prenatal screening for genetically-linked conditions
- Appropriate referral for specialist assessment and diagnosis

### **How this might be tested in MRCGP**

#### **AKT**

- Increased risks of physical disease in Down syndrome
- Genetic causes such as Fragile X
- Statutory legislation for vulnerable adults

#### RCA

- Young woman with mild intellectual disability requests contraceptive advice
- Phone call: Carer wants to discuss diagnoses and management for a young man with autism who has recently developed sudden jerky movements
- Woman with moderate intellectual disability is brought to the surgery because she is limping. Her medications are Depo-Provera and Na valproate

#### WPBA

- COT about the communication skills required to teach a patient with intellectual disability to use an inhaler
- Log entry about a child with autism and liaison with the child health team to get a statutory statement for school
- Case discussion about a couple struggling to cope with caring for the husband's middle-aged sister who has a brain injury and lives with them

# How to learn this topic

This section describes *examples* of opportunities for learning.  
We recognise that Covid-19 restrictions have significantly affected their accessibility



## Other Relevant Specialties

- Psychiatry (Learning Disability)
- Psychology (Family Therapy)
- Nutrition
- Prosthetics and wheeled mobility
- Genetics

## Acute

- Acute Confusional State
- Acute exacerbations of chronic illness
- Psycho-social issues and influences
- Behavioural Change
- Unusual presentations of acute illnesses



## Primary Care

- Health Checks
- Home visits
- Support for carers
- Chronic illnesses
- Care plans
- Screening Programs

## Core themes

- **Communication and Consultation** - Carers, consent, communication skills
- **Prescribing** - polypharmacy, concordance
- **Co-morbidity** - multiple pathology, psychosocial issues
- **Teamworking** - across health and social care, Multi-disciplinary Team
- **Safeguarding and protecting** - abuse, vulnerable groups
- **Ethical and medico-legal** - power of attorney, capacity, equality act 2010

## Community/MDT

- Liaison, Co-ordination & Advocacy of patients & carers
- Third Sector, charities, local authorities
- Assistance with finance, enablement and community integration
- Community resources: OT/physio/DN



## Tips

- Audit eg health checks
- Significant Event Analysis
- Clinical governance eg missed diagnoses
- Risk Assessment
- Leadership eg care homes
- BNF eg drug side effects