

24 November 2015

Health and Adult Social Care Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Health Checks for People with Learning Disabilities

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to describe the programme for providing health checks for people with learning disabilities, to clarify that this is separate from the NHS Health Checks programme, to present the latest activity data and to highlight the recent engagement with service users that has taken place and the actions that are being taken to improve take up of the service.

Background

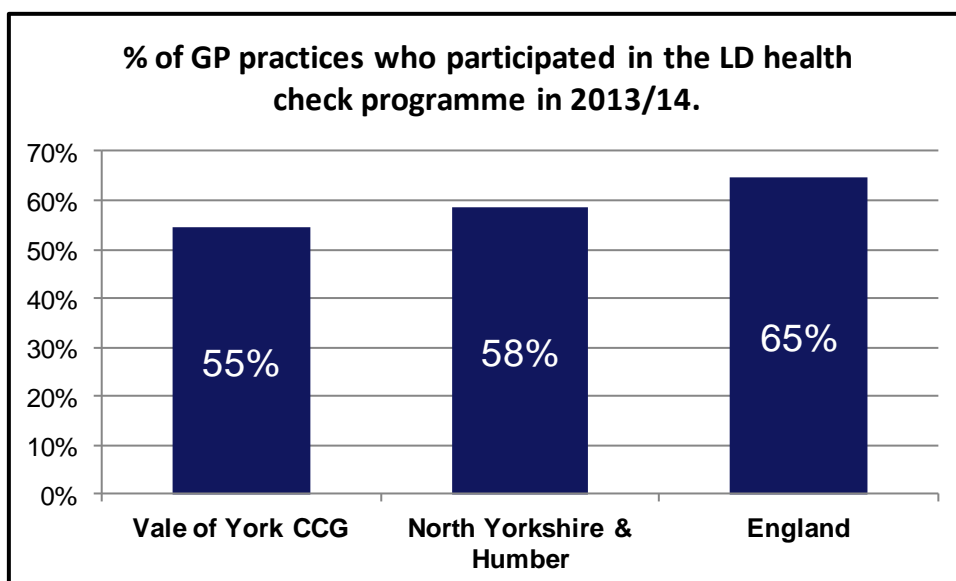
2. People with learning disabilities have significantly poorer health than their non-disabled peers. In part this is because they have more difficulty in identifying important symptoms and getting access to appropriate care.
3. The learning disability health check was originally introduced in 2008/09. The service was introduced in primary care and GPs were paid for this as a directed enhanced service (DES). GPs could choose whether or not they wanted to opt into the scheme.
4. The DES was based on evidence about the effectiveness and value of health checks in mitigating the health inequalities faced by people with learning disabilities. Annual health checks were offered to those people aged 18 and over who were on the learning disability registers of participating practices.
5. A new enhanced service (ES) was introduced from April 2014. This built on the DES and extended eligibility to young people with learning disabilities aged 14 and over. There is an added requirement to produce a health action plan.
6. It is important to note that the learning disability health check is distinct from the NHS Health Check programme which offers all adults, aged 40 to 74, who do not already have a cardiovascular condition a 5 yearly check.

The NHS Health Check programme in York is funded by the City of York Council Public Health Team. The learning disability health check programme is commissioned by NHS England as one of a suite of Enhanced Services.

Local data on health checks for people with Learning Disabilities

7. The most recent published data on learning disability health checks is for 2013/14 and it is provided at CCG level. In the Vale of York, 18 out of 33 GP practices participated in the programme and 343 out of 1,040 people on learning disability registers received a health check.
8. Vale of York CCG has a lower GP participation¹ rate (55% compared with 58% regionally and 65% nationally). Therefore patients with a learning disability registered with 15 out of 33 practices in the Vale of York effectively did not have access to the programme².

Figure 1: Practice participation in the health check programme.

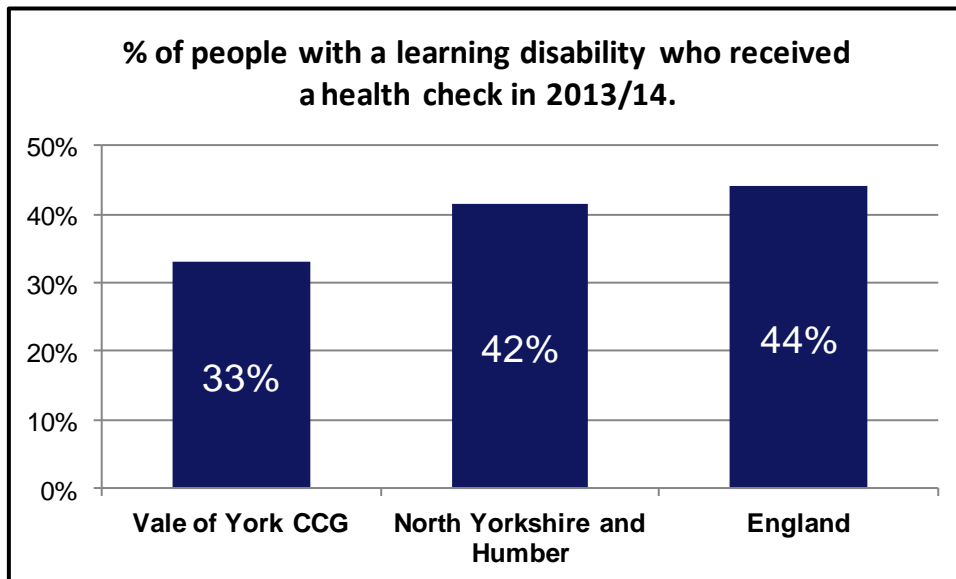


9. Vale of York CCG had a lower health check rate i.e. health checks done as a percentage of those with a learning disability (33% compared with 42% regionally and 44% nationally).

¹ Participation is defined as those practices registered for participation on the CQRS system who reported at least one LD Health Check in 2013/14.

² Details of which individual practices participated are not provided in the published data.

Figure 2: % of people with a learning disability who received a health check



10. Activity data for 2014/15 is expected to be available in November 2015.

Engagement with people with learning disabilities re: health checks

11. In the 2014 Joint Health and Social Care Learning Disabilities Self-Assessment Framework, the indicator relating to health checks had been flagged as a 'red' as less than 50% of annual health checks had generated specific health improvement targets (Health Action Plan). In response to these findings an engagement session took place with a range of service users and professionals on the issue of health checks at the mental health and learning disabilities partnership board in March 2015
12. Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of those with a learning disability, in attendance at the meeting, had been offered and had accepted the offer of an annual health check. There was some positive feedback about the health checks but there were also some suggestions for improvement. Suggestions included: a more accessible invite letter; follow up telephone calls/reminders and more information about the checks as some people are scared about having one.
13. Following the engagement session, the Acting Director of Public Health met with the Local Medical Committee who were very receptive to using an 'easy read' letter. It was agreed that a standard invitation letter for Annual Health Checks, in easy read format, would be worked up and circulated to all GP practices.

Example letters have been drafted by Inclusion North and feedback on these will be sought from the learning disability community prior to them being sent to GPs for use.

14. Further details about the engagement can be found here:
https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/6039/mental_health_and_learning_difficulties_baord_26_may_2015
15. Guidance on the programme, with examples of best practice, can be found here:
https://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/publications/1243/Health_checks_for_people_with_learning_disabilities_including_young_people_aged_14_and_over_and_producing_health_action_plans

Council Plan

16. The information included in this report is linked to the Protect Vulnerable People and Build Strong Communities elements of the Council Plan 2011-15.

Implications

17. There are no direct implications arising from this report.

Recommendations

18. As this report is for information only there are no specific recommendations.

Reason: To provide an update on the position in York on health checks for people with learning disabilities as requested by the committee.

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**Report
Approved**

Date 6/10/15

Specialist Implications Officer(s) None

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers

None