

Health and well-being

Annual health check (AHC)



Free GP AHCs for people who have learning disabilities started in 2008.

Before a GP practice can offer AHCs their employees must attend an education session run by the local NHS Trust. The practice gets a sum of money for every AHC they do.

GP practices do not have to provide this service.

Who can have one?

Any person who has Down's syndrome (age 14 year +) can have a free AHC.

The benefits of AHCs

- additional support to get the right healthcare
- increased chance of detecting unmet, unrecognised and potentially treatable health conditions
- action can be taken to address these health needs.

How to get an AHC

If a person who has Down's syndrome is on their GP practice Learning Disability Register (see below), the practice should get in touch to offer an AHC- but this does not always happen.

A person who has Down's syndrome and/or a supporter can ask their GP for an AHC. The person does not need to be getting support from social services to ask for an AHC.

Not all GPs do AHCs for people with learning disabilities but they should be able to provide details of other GPs in the area who offer this service.

What happens next?

- The GP practice may send out a pre-check questionnaire for the person to fill out (with support if needed) before the AHC takes place.
- The GP may arrange for the person to have a routine blood test a week or so before the AHC.

Who attends the AHC?

If the person who has Down's syndrome (age 16 years or over) has capacity and gives their consent, a parent or supporter can attend the AHC as well.

There is information about making [everyday health, financial and welfare decisions post here](#).

How long should an AHC take?

Guidance from the Royal College of GPs suggests half an hour with the GP and half an hour with the practice nurse.

What needs to be checked?

There is a DSA checklist for GPs which has information about what should be included as part of a comprehensive and thorough AHC. This includes a list of checks that everyone with a learning disability should have as part of an AHC and a list of checks specific to people who have Down's syndrome. [The check list can be downloaded here](#).

What happens after the AHC?

The GP should tell the person who has Down's syndrome what they have found during the AHC. They should ask if the person has any questions and, if needed, they may refer them to specialist services for further tests. The GP will use what they found at the AHC to make a Health Action Plan. This should set out the key actions that need to be taken that have been agreed with the person who has Down's syndrome and (where applicable) their parent or supporter.

The Learning Disability Register (LDR)

Everyone who has Down's syndrome should be registered on their GP practice Learning Disability Register (LDR). You can join the register at any age. If the GP practice knows a person has additional needs they can put reasonable adjustments in place to make sure they get the right healthcare when they need it. Registration is not automatic so it is a good idea to ask the receptionist at the GP practice to check if the person is on the LDR. If the person is not on the LDR, the receptionist will ask about their needs. This information will be put on the

person's Summary Care Record (SCR) so all health professionals at the practice know about their needs and how best to support them.

If the person is aged 16 years or older and they have capacity, they must give their consent:

- for information about their support needs to be added to their SCR
- to which information can be shared and with whom

There is information about making [everyday health, financial and welfare decisions post 16 here](#).

NB: The LDR is NOT the same as the Disability Register held by the Local Authority (Social Services)

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