

Learning Disabilities

Sep 2020a

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COVID-19

[Left stranded: our new report into the impact of coronavirus](#) The coronavirus outbreak has affected everyone. But it's left many autistic people and their families completely stranded. This new report, supported by four other leading autism organisations, highlights the often disproportionate and devastating impact the mental health, wellbeing and education prospects of hundreds of thousands of autistic people and their families.

[Beyond COVID: New thinking on the future of adult social care](#) This latest report summarises a wide range of different contributions and discussions surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic and the social care sector. It makes a number of recommendations and details three key shifts for the future which are needed to overcome the immense challenges we face in adult social care.

[Digital innovation in adult social care: how we've been supporting communities during COVID-19](#) What we have done, what we have learned and what next for digital innovation in adult social care.

News

[Cannabis and autism, explained](#) Autistic people and their families are increasingly experimenting with marijuana to try to ease problems such as insomnia, epilepsy and chronic pain — and traits of autism. But there is little evidence for its safety or effectiveness.

[Bumetanide may benefit only a subset of autistic children](#) Contrary to previous results, the blood pressure drug did not uniformly improve autism traits in a new clinical trial.

[Autism genetics, explained](#) The more scientists dig into DNA, the more intricate its contribution to autism seems to be. Here, updated information about the complex genetics of autism is presented.

[Introducing the Autism Inpatient Mental Health casework service](#) The new service provides:

- confidential information, advice and support by phone and email
- details about mental health rights and entitlements, to help prevent or challenge detention and secure the care and support autistic people need in their communities
- guidance and support to help autistic people and their families explore their options and make informed decisions
- guidance and support on specific issues, such as getting help from an advocate, finding the right provision in the community, making a complaint or appealing against a decision
- signposting to advice and support from other parts of our charity, including education rights, transition support, the autism helpline, and parent to parent.

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Guidance

[DoLS practitioners encouraged to carry out face-to-face assessments in updated Covid-19 guidance](#)

Practitioners should carry out Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards assessments (DoLS) face-to-face where needed, the government has said, reversing its previous Covid-19 guidance, which had said they should generally be conducted remotely. Face-to-face visits are “an important part of the DoLS legal framework” and should be carried out when needed to meet people’s communication needs, in cases of urgency or where there are human rights concerns, said [the updated Department of Health and Social Care guidance on DoLS, and the Mental Capacity Act.](#)