

Studies

[One size doesn't fit all: new insights into eating disorders and autism](#)

Summary of a qualitative research study that looks at the experiences of women with eating disorders and autism, their parents and health professionals.

[Placental hormone loss spurs autism-like traits in mice](#)

Mice exposed to unusually low levels of the placental hormone allopregnanolone in the womb show atypical brain development and autism-like behaviours.

[Protein inhibitor normalises neuronal migration in organoid model of autism](#)

Inhibiting a protein that helps cells move or change shape prevents atypical neuronal migration in 3D clusters of brain cells carrying autism-linked genetic variants.

[Model mice hint at sodium channel gene's contribution to autism](#)

Altered electrical activity in the neurons of mice with a mutated copy of SCN2A may explain the animals' autism-like social behaviours.

[Visual response shows promise as biomarker in autism-linked condition](#)

Brain responses to visual stimuli are smaller and weaker in children with Phelan-McDermid syndrome, an autism-linked genetic condition, than in non-autistic children.

[Prenatal exposure to antipsychotic medication does not increase odds of autism, ADHD](#)

Children born to mothers who take antipsychotic drugs during pregnancy are not more likely to have autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, or to be born preterm or underweight.

[Brain's sensory processor may prompt memory problems in autism](#)

Mice with autism- or schizophrenia-linked mutations only in the anterodorsal thalamus have problems with long-term and working memory.

[More than half of people with learning disabilities affected by loss or change of care due to austerity measures](#)

More than half (56%) of people with learning disabilities experienced a loss or change of care since 'austerity' measures (cuts to social care spending) were introduced a decade ago, according to a new study published in the Journal of Long-Term Care. The research aimed to investigate the extent to which austerity measures had impacted the lives of people with learning disabilities in England, and whether their support costs were associated with their characteristics, needs and outcomes.

Position Statement

[Stopping the overmedication of people with learning disability, autism or both \(STOMP\) and supporting treatment and appropriate medication in paediatrics \(STAMP\)](#)

STOMP has formalised the need to ensure that children or adults with learning disabilities use psychotropic medication appropriately. Clinicians in primary and secondary care services should prioritise plans to reduce psychotropic medication in a safe and closely monitored way. In certain clinical situations, medication is beneficial and necessary. Prescribers should have clear evidence to demonstrate this and medication should routinely be utilised in conjunction with other therapies.

Guidance

[COVID-19: supporting adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults](#)

Updated to include guidance on self-isolation that came into effect on 16 August.

[COVID-19: providing unpaid care to adults with learning disabilities and autistic adults](#)

Updated to include guidance on self-isolation that came into effect on 16 August.

[How to adapt mental health talking therapies for autistic children and adults](#)

The National Autistic Society and Mind are proud to launch a free good practice guide to help mental health professionals adapt talking therapies for autistic adults and children, alongside new research into autism and mental health.

Research

[Disruptions to brain's 'thermostat' may underpin autism traits](#)

Mounting evidence suggests that autism often involves upsets in homeostatic plasticity, a set of processes neurons use to stabilize their activity. These disruptions result from a range of autism-linked mutations and may help to explain the condition's famed heterogeneity.

[Sibling conflict in families with SEND increased during the first lockdown](#)

The frequency with which young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SENDs) were picked on or hurt by their siblings increased during the first lockdown in the UK, according to new research.

Statistics

[Latest statistics on use of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards in England are published](#)

The latest figures on applications to legally deprive a person of their liberty, where that person lacks the mental capacity to consent to their care or treatment, have been published by NHS Digital.

[Number of autistic people in mental health hospitals: latest data](#)

The latest monthly [Assuring Transformation NHS Digital data](#) shows that in July 2021:

- In total 2,050 autistic people and people with learning disabilities are in inpatient mental health hospitals in England.
- 1,175 (57%) of these people are autistic.

Project

[New landmark autism project raises concerns about reuse of DNA data](#)

A new landmark research project will examine how biological and environmental factors impact on the wellbeing of autistic individuals. Spectrum 10K will recruit 10,000 autistic UK individuals, as well as their relatives, and aims to identify types of support and treatment which alleviate unwanted symptoms and co-occurring conditions that cause autistic people distress. The team were keen to stress that it views autism as an example of neurodiversity and is opposed to eugenics or looking for a cure for preventing or eradicating autism itself.

Resources

[Video: Wearable sensors pick up early signs of autism](#)

Audio and motion-sensor recordings offer a remote window into a baby's first years and make it easier for families to participate in research.

[Ambitious about Autism's Youth Network create resources about diagnosis](#)

A group of autistic young people have created resources to share their experiences of receiving an autism diagnosis and to help others going through the process feel 'less alone'. Members of the charity Ambitious about Autism's Youth Network have created [a series of new videos and blogs](#) in which they talk about what it felt like to be diagnosed - some as children, teenagers or as young adults.

[Free training course for GP staff to make primary care fair for people with learning disabilities](#)

A new campaign by Dimensions, #MyGPandMe, is providing training for all GP surgery staff to make primary care fair for people who have a learning disability and/or autism. The free [course](#) shares information and resources with patients and support teams, advising staff on the ways in which they can make their practice more accessible and inclusive. The launch of the course comes after [research](#) by Dimensions found that almost a third of people with learning disabilities or autism feel less likely to be treated with care and concern at the doctors, and two thirds said their GP did not make reasonable adjustments for them.

News

[Lack of psychologists hits pupils with special educational needs](#)

Councils are struggling to complete children's education and care plans before the new school year because of a shortage of specialists.

[By the Numbers: Coronavirus infection odds, Medicaid waivers, correlating conditions](#)

This edition of By the Numbers discusses the outsize burden of COVID-19 among some groups of autistic people and how an autistic person's age at diagnosis may affect their risk for other conditions.

Online Seminar

[Online Seminar and workshop: Not your neurotypical client: Autism, alcohol, and other substances](#)

Alcohol Change UK, the Centre for Applied Autism Research at the University of Bath, and the Royal College of Psychiatrists present this free online event: 9.30am, 6 September 2021.