

Studies

[The use of language in autism research](#)

The past three decades have seen a major shift in our understanding of the strong links between autism and identity. These developments have called for careful consideration of the language used to describe autism. Here, we briefly discuss some of these deliberations and provide guidance to researchers around language use in autism research.

[Defendants with intellectual disability and autism spectrum conditions: the perspective of clinicians working across three jurisdictions](#)

The treatment of vulnerable defendants by criminal justice systems or correctional systems varies within and between countries. The purpose of this paper is to examine three legal jurisdictions – New South Wales in Australia; Norway; England and Wales – to understand the extent of variation in practice within the court systems for defendants with intellectual disabilities (ID) and/or autism spectrum conditions (ASC).

[People with a learning disability have a higher rate of fractures](#)

People with a learning disability have a higher rate of fractures compared with people of the same age and gender without a learning disability, according to new research. The study by researchers at the University of Oxford and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, published in [eClinicalMedicine](#), was the most comprehensive study of its kind.

[Young people with Down's syndrome four times as likely to have diabetes](#)

Annual health checks for children and young people with Down's syndrome need to more closely monitor excess weight, obesity and early signs of diabetes, according to a group of researchers. The advice comes following results from a study which found children and young adults with Down's syndrome are four times more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes compared to those without.

[Digital support can significantly reduce anxiety and self-injurious behaviour in autistic people](#)

A digital self-management support tool has been shown to reduce anxiety, self-injurious behaviour and memory, orientation and communications problems in autistic people. A study which assessed the efficacy of 'Brain in Hand' also found that the technology helped to participants increase confidence and feel a greater sense of self-awareness.

[Detecting dodgy behaviour: The role of autism, autistic traits and theory of mind](#)

We examined whether theory of mind difficulties often considered to characterise autistic individuals impair their ability to detect the presence of dodgy or suspicious behaviour in interactions, thereby rendering them especially vulnerable to becoming involved in criminal activity or being victimised.

Legislation

[Draft Mental Health Bill 2022: easy read](#)

Plans to change the law that tells people what to do when you need to stay in hospital after a mental health crisis.

Reports

[Youth Justice Report](#)

Autistic people, like anyone else, can sometimes come into contact with the criminal justice system. Our new report illustrates how lack of support for young autistic people, both before entering and within the system, can have profoundly negative consequences on future life chances. The experiences of people in our report illustrate clearly what changes need to happen, reaffirming recommendations we have been calling and campaigning for.

Systematic reviews

[Overall prognosis of preschool autism spectrum disorder diagnoses](#)

Autism spectrum disorder is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by social communication difficulties, restricted interests and repetitive behaviours. The clinical pathway for children with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder is varied, and current research suggests some children may not continue to meet diagnostic criteria over time.

[A systematic review of telehealth screening, assessment, and diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder](#)

There is a significant delay between parents having concerns and receiving a formal assessment and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis. Telemedicine could be an effective alternative that shortens the waiting time for parents and primary health providers in ASD screening and diagnosis. We conducted a systematic review examining the uses of telemedicine technology for ASD screening, assessment, or diagnostic purposes and to what extent sample characteristics and psychometric properties were reported.

Statistics

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

The latest monthly Assuring Transformation NHS Digital data shows that in September 2022:

- In total 1,965 autistic people and people with learning disabilities are in inpatient mental health hospitals in England
- 1,195 (61%) of these people are autistic

Around 175 of these are autistic people under 18.

Surveys

[Joint Committee on the Draft Mental Health Bill release Easy read survey](#)

Following the Government's publication of its [Easy Read version of the draft Mental Health Bill](#) on 26 September, the Joint Committee is inviting patients, service users and others to complete a short [Easy read survey](#). A summary of responses will be published with the report. Extracts from individual responses may be included in the report anonymously. We ask that you please complete this survey before 30 October.

Online learning

[Positive Behaviour Support for Families](#)

Buckinghamshire Council, in collaboration with Bild (British Institute of Learning Disabilities), is piloting a free PBS training programme for families.

The aim of the training is to provide PBS support to the network of people around a child – enabling a consistent approach that encourages engagement in education and the community.

Blogs

[Designing autism-friendly trials: Q&A with Caroline Averius and Zachary Williams](#)

Clinical trials can't run without participants, but the demands of these trials — including traveling to clinics, tolerating tests and procedures, and keeping in touch for follow-up assessments — can be difficult for autistic people and their families to manage.

[Boosting brain power: A conversation with Damien Fair](#)

The ability to see inside the human brain has improved diagnostics and revealed how brain regions communicate, among other things. Yet questions remain about the replicability of neuroimaging studies that aim to connect structural or functional differences to complex traits or conditions, such as autism.

News

[Providing the right support in challenging times: 3 perspectives](#)

The cost-of-living crisis has not just been affecting individual members and their families. Businesses, including support providers, have also been facing an increase in bills and costs when budgets are already tight.

[World Sight Day 2022](#)

Last Thursday was World Sight Day. This guest blog is by SeeAbility's eye care champion team, Lance Campbell, Joanne Kennedy, Rebecca Lunness, Grace McGill.

['Insulting': shock as NHS uses offensive term for people with learning disability](#)

Category of 'mental retardation' in NHS Digital's annual statistics demeans patients, campaigners say.

[Autistic scholar Temple Grandin: 'The education system is screening out visual thinkers'](#)

By favouring verbal thinkers, says the author and animal scientist, essential skills are being lost. Her new book aims to demonstrate the power of processing information in different ways.

[Tony Hickmott to be released after 21 years in hospital](#)

A BBC article released today (4th October 2022) provides an update on Tony Hickmott, an autistic man who is detained in an Assessment and Treatment Unit (ATU) rated as “inadequate” by CQC. Tony has been in hospital for 21 years, away from his family and subjected to restrictions despite being declared ‘fit for discharge’ over 9 years ago.

[Panorama “Will the NHS Care for Me?”](#)

Panorama “Will the NHS Care for Me?” led by actor Tommy Jessop highlighted why people with a learning disability are more than twice as likely to die from avoidable causes than the rest of the population.

[New project aims to support 10,000 people with SEND into paid employment by 2030](#)

A national charity is leading a campaign which aims to boost the number of people with a learning disability or autism in paid employment.

[Training providers can now claim support funding for apprentices with learning disabilities](#)

The government has released new guidance about how training providers can claim learning support funding for apprentices with learning difficulties and disabilities.

[New research on how community spaces can improve the health of people with a learning disability](#)

People with a learning disability and their carers are part of 10 different communities who took part in a new research project looking at how they access and use repurposed NHS community spaces. The communities are those disproportionately affected by health inequalities across the UK and the research was commissioned by NHS Property Services and carried out by the Health Creation Alliance.

[Panorama abuse: NHS chief urges mental health leaders to tackle ‘toxic and closed cultures’](#)

Provider bosses told to take ‘this could happen here’ approach in reviewing use of restraint, seclusion, whistleblowing and patient voice in wake of Edenfield Centre scandal.