

Joint Protocol - Working Together to Support Parents with a Learning Disability



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Contents

1. Executive Summary.....	3
2. Purpose and Scope of the Protocol:.....	4
3. Introduction:	5
4. Legislative and Policy Context:.....	6
5. Key Principles:	8
6. Good Practice Principles:	9
7. Advocacy:	10
8. Eligibility for assessment and Accessing Services	11
9. Accessible Information and Communication:	11
10. Confidentiality and Information Sharing:.....	11
11. Referral Pathways and Co-ordination of Support:.....	11
12. Roles and responsibilities of the Adult Health and Social Care Teams:.....	12
13. Pre Birth and Early Help Services Roles.....	12
14. Responsibilities of Early Help and Children’s Social Care Teams:.....	13
15. Self Directed Support:	13
16. Parental Engagement in Learning and Education:	13
17. Needs of Parents Unable to Care for their Child:.....	14
18. Funding for Support and Care:.....	14
19. Review of the Protocol:.....	15

1. Executive Summary :

This joint protocol has been put in place to make sure that arrangements for the support of parents with a learning disability in Torbay were reviewed and improved.

According to "Valuing People" (DoH, 2001, 2009), people who have learning disabilities are among the most socially excluded and vulnerable groups in Britain. Parents with learning disabilities are often multiply disadvantaged and data suggests these families experience very significant levels of health and social inequality compared to other families. Nationally parents with a learning disability also have a high risk of their children being subject to Child Protection Plans and Care Proceedings.

Although people with learning disabilities can be good parents, many require support to do so. They may need support to develop their understanding, resources, skills and experience to meet the needs of their children. They may also need services for their broader individual needs. This requires children and adult health and social services teams to work closely together to develop a common approach.

We have a duty to safeguard the welfare of children, and in some circumstances a parent with learning disabilities will not be able to meet their child's needs. However good interagency working and effective care pathways for support are needed to ensure this is not the result of agencies not arranging for appropriate and timely support.

The aim of the protocol is to improve joint working to support adults with learning disabilities who are also parents in a way that -:

- Improves interagency communication and information sharing through the use of a common protocol.
- Acknowledges and understands the impact of learning disabilities on parents and children.
- Considers the needs and safety of children
- Recognises the needs of adults with learning disabilities and as parents
- Supports family life and positive parenting
- Promotes early identification of and early help for families of parents with learning needs during pregnancy.

In line with National Best practice, Principles from 'Think Child, Think Parent, Think Family' are embedded within the guidelines. This whole family approach requires Adult and Children's Services to work together to offer co-ordinated support to help families overcome challenges and work towards positive outcomes for parents and their children.

In determining eligibility for services, the protocol recognises the importance of the parenting role and acknowledges the need to provide additional support to families who may not previously have met the threshold for services. The guidance acknowledges that parents should be assessed, not only in their right as adults, but also as potentially needing support to maintain family life. In this way the protocol aims to enable services to work jointly to offer early

help and to prevent families reaching crisis and the children, where appropriate, reaching child protection thresholds.

The document describes a number of key Recommendations for professionals and services in how they should support and provide services to parents with a learning disability. These include:

1. Accessible information and communication
2. Clear and co-ordinated referral and assessment procedures and processes, eligibility criteria and care pathways
3. Support designed to meet the needs of parents and children based on assessments of their needs and strengths
4. Long-term support where necessary
5. Access to independent advocacy
6. Early help and intervention
7. Support for parents who are unable to care for their child
8. Parental engagement in learning and education
9. Flexible funding and co-ordinated packages of support
10. The welfare and safety of children is paramount. All professionals involved have a responsibility for the safety and well-being of children
11. A multi-agency co-ordination group and training opportunities.

2. Purpose and Scope of the Protocol:

The protocol has been developed to improve positive joint working between services for adults with additional support needs and services for children.

It takes a 'whole' family approach with the use of a common protocol in a way that:

- Improves interagency information sharing and communication
- Considers the needs of adults with learning disabilities and as parents
- Acknowledges and understands the impact of learning disabilities on parenting and children
- Considers the needs of children, with safety being paramount
- Improves and enables collaboration, problem solving and best possible outcomes for families
- Supports family life and positive parenting

It will inform the work of the following services:

- Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust health and social care services for adults with learning disabilities Children's Services in Torbay Council
- Schools, Health Visiting and Families Services
- Advocacy Services Torbay
- The Carers Service
- Midwifery services provided by Torbay Hospital

3. Introduction:

People with learning disabilities can be good parents, providing their children have a good start in life however they may require support to achieve this.

The protocol acknowledges the importance of the parenting role, recognising that there is a need for additional support to families where parents have learning disabilities. It provides the fundamentals for good practice across specialist areas within Adult and Children's Services.

Valuing People (DoH, 2001) details that children and adult health and social services teams need to work closely together to develop a common approach. Social services departments have a duty to safeguard the welfare of children, and in some circumstances a parent with learning disabilities will not be able to meet their child's needs. However good interagency working and effective care pathways for support are needed to ensure this is not the result of agencies not arranging for appropriate and timely support.

In general terms an IQ score of below 70 is considered indicative of a Learning Disability.

Valuing People (DoH, 2001) use the following definition:

A learning disability includes the presence of :

- A significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (impaired intelligence), with;
- A reduced ability to cope independently (impaired social functioning); which started before adulthood, with lasting effect on development.

The Children Act 1989 emphasises the rights of a child to family life and therefore requiring families be supported to maintain the care of their child/ren. Thereby assessment of parents with disabilities is required within a wider social and environmental context and not on parenting skills alone.

The guiding principle of the Care Act 2014 is the promotion and protection of the persons' wellbeing. The focus of any support would be to prevent people from developing care and support needs, or to delay people from deteriorating to the point whereby they would need ongoing care and support. The Care Act states that 'the "assessment" must always be appropriate and proportionate', and that were appropriate 'a combined assessment, where an adult's assessment is combined with ...an assessment relating to a child so that interrelated needs are properly captured and the process is as efficient as possible'.

This protocol promotes supporting parents with learning disabilities taking into account their wider support requirements and the fact they may need support in developing their understanding of children's needs, use of resources and skills.

This will be particularly pertinent if they are experiencing additional challenges such as domestic violence, substance misuse, poor housing, poverty, social isolation poor physical and mental health.

4. Legislative and Policy Context:

There is a web of law, regulation and guidance affecting practice. The key points are outlined here, but there are websites where further information for those seeking more detail and they are listed following the References. Some of the policies relate to Adult services whilst others relate to Children's Services and Care. Integration and joined up working between these two sets of policies and procedures is key to the successful support of pole with learning disabilities in their parenting role.

Human Rights Act 1998

Legislation requiring public authorities to protect and support everybody's human rights is enshrined in the Human Rights Act 1998. Many of the rights set out in the Act are broad and subject to limits and qualifications, but the key Articles are affecting parents with a learning disability are Article 8, a right to respect for private and family life, and Article 12 the right to marry and found a family.

Equality Act 2010

A new Equality Act came into force on 1 October 2010. The Equality Act brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act. Combined, they make up a new Act that provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for all.

The Act simplifies, strengthens and harmonises the current legislation to provide Britain with a new discrimination law which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society.

'A Jig-Saw of Services'

The Social series Inspectorate/Department of Health carried out an inspection of services supporting disabled parents | their parenting role and published the report in 2000. The report concluded that 'All council directorates, together with other agencies, need to adopt and promote a policy statement that confirms... the rights of disabled or ill people, within the bounds of current legislation, to be supported in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities as parents',

Good Practice Guidance on working with Parents with Learning Disabilities (Department of Health, 2007)

Sets out how children and adults' services can and should work together to improve support to parents with a learning disability. The document describes five key features of good practice in working with parents with learning disabilities.

The Care Act 2014

The Care Act instructs adult care and support to promote the principle of Wellbeing and to help people to complete the outcomes that are important to them in living their life. Eligibility for support cannot be determined without an assessment; the assessment and eligibility for adult social care support will be carried out under the Care Act Eligibility Framework. Social care funding will only

relate to needs that are eligible under the Care Act Eligibility Criteria. If the persons' needs are not eligible for social care funding information and/or advice will be provided and where required this will be in accessible formats or with communication support.

The assessment will take a strengths base approach taking into consideration people's own capabilities, any natural support and their existing networks in the community. An assessment under the Care Act should look at who else is involved in the person's life and how their support needs may impact on others close to them including their ability to 'carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child' (Department of Health: Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014).

Independence Matters (2003)

This report identifies strengths and good practice and highlights improvement that are needed to improve outcomes for disabled people. The action point is "support disabled parents in their parenting role through a range of flexible services including direct payments".

Improving the Life Changes of Disabled People 2005

This guidance emphasised the by 2025 disabled people in Britain should have full opportunities and choice to improve their quality of life and will be respected and included as equal members of society.

Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (March, 2015)

The documents bring together guidance on how all agencies must work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is based on the legislative requirements (this Children's Act, 1989 and 2004) and details the expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

These documents clearly recognise that children exist within families and that all professionals working with families must consider the needs of the child. Whenever possible all efforts must be made to support children within their own families.

The Guide provides a systematic way of analysing, understanding and recording what is happening to children and young people within their families and within the wider context of the community in which they live. It ensures a common language where staff from different agencies and disciplines can collaborate and communicate to understand the needs of children and a joint commitment to promoting better outcomes for children. This increases the likelihood of parents and children's experiencing consistency between professionals and themselves about what will be important for children's wellbeing and healthy developments.

The Children and Families Act (2014)

This Act introduced a number of changes to the law to give greater protection to vulnerable children. A 26 week time limit for care proceedings and supervision orders has been introduced to reduce unnecessary delays for children.

5. Key Principles:

Signs of safety

Torbay Children's Services has adopted the Signs of Safety model of practice for work with children in need of help and protection and looked after children.

The Signs of Safety model is a tool intended to help practitioners with risk assessment and safety planning in child protection cases.

Its purpose is to enable practitioners across different disciplines to work collaboratively and in partnership with families and children. The tools are designed to help conduct risk assessments and produce action plans for increasing safety, and to reduce risk and danger by identifying areas that need change while focusing on strengths, resources and networks that the family have.

Signs of Safety provides a framework in which:

- children's voices, wishes and feelings can be heard more clearly
- families' strengths and abilities are assessed, as well as the risk of harm that they might pose
- families are more involved in decision-making and planning at the earliest stage

In addition Torbay Children's services are committed to ensuring there are sufficient PAMS trained workers within the Assessment resource Centre.

Think Child, Think Parent, Think Whole Family

The Following are key principles in working with families where a child has additional support needs:

Think Child Approach

Think about the experience and views of the child. It is important to listen to the views of young people who live with adults with a learning disability. It is important to consider how the parents' disability impacts on their lives and whether they may be young carers. Professionals should consider the experience and welfare of children when offering support and interventions to parents. The impact on the child should be considered when decisions are made regarding a parents' support needs especially when planning any changes or reduction in intervention and support.

Think Family Approach

Think Parent and think Adult with additional support needs. Family relationships and roles are highly significant and interdependent. While the child's needs will always be paramount according to the Children's Act, support for the adult as parent or carer will in turn support the child. In line with Supporting Troubled Families, taking a whole family approach enables adult and child services to work together to offer co-ordinated support to help families overcome challenges and work towards positive outcomes for parents and their children.

Think Value Base

Think how we can identify and remove barriers that parents with additional support needs face, to enable the family to be as independent as possible. Solution focused approaches which empower parents to actively develop parenting skills to meet the needs of their child are most effective. Professionals can enable or disable successful parenting according to their approach. Think other

factors which affect the experiences of families, such as poverty, racism, domestic violence, poor housing, abuse, unmet health needs, stigma, bullying and gender.

Think Challenge Barriers and Assumptions

Think how we can we remove organisational barriers and see the family as a whole. Think how the capacity to parent can be supported by effective multi-agency working and preventative support.

Think Wider Family, Multi-Agency and Community

Think that families have a wide range of needs. No-one can do everything and often many different people are involved. Liaise with the Early Help Teams through the Common Assessment Framework process if wider support needs are identified for the children or young people involved. Think how advocacy and peer support could help. Consider the use of 'Family Group Conferences' and the 'Together for Families Programmes' to ensure additional support. See Appendix 2 for details.

Think Inclusion

Think about social inclusion and positive ways to enable families to engage in support and activities in their local communities. Provide services in ways that ensure all people have opportunities to participate fully in society, regardless of circumstances or abilities.

Think Young Carer

Think young person with caring responsibilities. Think how we can identify young people in caring roles and the holistic range of services needed to support the parent in order to reduce the impact on the young person.

6. Good Practice Principles:

All professionals should ensure that they:

- Turn up on time
- Speak directly to parents with learning disabilities, demonstrating respect
- Avoid the use of jargon
- Clearly explain what is happening
- Are honest in what could happen
- Are patient, thinking before they speak and listen (hear) what is said to them
- Make time to communicate
- Make available adapted documents where appropriate to facilitate full understanding of the process by the parent

Professionals have a responsibility to ensure good communication with all parents and to check that all information is fully understood. Parents with a disability have the same rights as all parents regarding consultation in all assessments and feedback from reports where it concerns their child. They must be kept informed about any services or interventions that are being planned, with professionals from all areas ensuring that the reasons for these are understood.

All professionals should familiarise themselves with the following documents as part of any work they undertake with parents with learning disabilities for further advice and guidance:

- Good Practice Guidance on Working with Parents with Learning Disabilities (DoH, 2007) webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/.../PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_075119 updated (2016) www.bristol.ac.uk/.../2016%20WTPN%20UPDATE%20OF%20THE%20GPG%20-%.
- Supporting Disabled Parents and Parents with Additional Support Needs (Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2006) www.scie.org.uk/publications/knowledgereviews/kr11.pdf
- Top Tips for working with Parents with Learning Disabilities (Working Together with Parents Network) Appendix 1

In particular all workers are expected to be familiar with the adaptations in process needed and the specialised ways of working that may be necessary for successfully working with and fairly assessing a parent with a Learning Disability .

7. Advocacy:

An advocate can be a voice for parents, and a go-between or interpreter support the links between families and services.

If the child of a parent with a learning disability is involved in child protection enquiries or in care proceedings the parent should be supported to access available advice and advocacy.

If independent advocacy is not available, parents should be encouraged to involve a friend, relative or member of their local community to support them through the process.

The use of advocacy must be consistent and fair. This means that if an advocate attends a child protection conference they should also attend subsequent core groups. The use of an advocate should align with and not be substitute for the responsibilities of social work and other professionals.

Workers will inform parents and older children about independent advocacy service, and if necessary, enable them to make contact with and use the service. The needs and wishes of older children living with a parent with a learning disability are also important to be considered. Research suggests that young people who have parents with a learning disability do not always feel their views are considered by services. Providing an independent advocate may therefore be important to facilitate the young persons' voice to be heard. Support from the Young Carers organisation can also be considered for some young people living with a parent with a learning disability.

The advocate's role is to represent and promote the family members' rights and point of view where they cannot easily do this for themselves and ensure that the person has a 'voice' in the process of service provision at all stages.

Parents with learning disabilities whose children receive services under child protection procedures may benefit particularly from advocacy support, particularly during Child Protection Conferences and Core Groups. It is essential that parents are helped to understand the nature of any concerns, and the expectations that are made of them in Child Protection Plans. It is equally essential that they have an opportunity to express their views during these meetings.

Whilst an independent advocate can explain processes using specialised methods and taking time as required, this does NOT replace the agencies' responsibility to present information clearly and appropriately to the needs of the parent.

Children's Welfare and safety is paramount. All professionals involved have a responsibility for the safety and well being of the children. Detailed information regarding local policies and processes and who to contact if you have concerns about a child or children can be found on Torbay's Safeguarding Children Board Website www.torbaysafeguarding.org.uk . Further contact numbers are available in Appendix II of this protocol

8. Eligibility for assessment and Accessing Services

Adult services would assess the parent with a learning disability against the Care Act Eligibility Criteria. This will also include an assessment of risk. The threshold for eligibility is based on identifying how a person's needs affect their ability to achieve relevant outcomes, and how this impacts on their wellbeing. A client's needs are only eligible where they meet all three of these conditions. In line with personalisation the assessment will also result in an indicative budget. For information on the Eligibility Criteria and the Decision Process please see www.independentage.org/factsheets/the-care-act/

9. Accessible Information and Communication:

Parents with a learning disability have the same rights as all parents to be consulted regarding all assessments concerning their child and to be kept informed about any services or interventions that are being planned. The parent's potential difficulties in understanding are not a reason to override these rights. Professionals have a responsibility to promote good communication and to check that they have been fully and properly understood. The Good Practice Guidance on Working with Parents with a Learning Disability (2007) updated (2016) and Appendix 1 provide further information and advice.

10. Confidentiality and Information Sharing:

Good information sharing is a crucial element of successful interagency working, allowing professionals to carry out their statutory obligations and make informed decisions based on accurate and up-to-date information, thus improving outcomes for clients.

Professionals should work in line with existing information sharing protocols.

11. Referral Pathways and Co-ordination of Support:

Referrals for assessment will be made to existing referral points in adults and children's services. When referrals are made to adult services involving a parent with a learning disability the referral will be shared with children's services and vice versa.

If the children and family team have concerns about the impact of a learning disability on parenting capacity, they can request support from the Community Learning Disability Nursing Service within the relevant zone health and social care team. Support could be

provided in regards to making information about pregnancy easier to understand, support with assessing capacity and support with attending medical appointments. Referral for Community Learning Disability Nursing is through the normal Adult Services Referral Process.

12. Roles and responsibilities of the Adult Health and Social Care Teams:

The Care Act says that professionals working with parents/carers with learning disabilities have a duty not only to the adults but also to any children they may have in order to ensure that their needs are identified and that any risks are addressed by the appropriate childcare team.

Adult health and social care workers can make referrals to other specialist learning disability services e.g. Intensive Assessment and Treatment Team (DPT), who may be able to assist in their work with parents to assess in some of the following areas:

1. The parents' capacity to make decisions under the Mental Capacity Act 2005.
2. Where parents may have difficulty in engaging with services due to limited intellectual capacity.
3. Signposting to advocacy, support and guidance services for the adult carers.
4. Assessing parents needs for support as adults.
5. Providing accessible information that is relevant to parents.
5. The IATT could assist with assessment, intervention and support for people with a learning disability where there are complex communication needs or complex health needs such as epilepsy or challenging behaviour.

If the Adult health and social care teams have any concerns about the safety of a child they should speak to their manager or other Lead Professionals and make a referral to the

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub as soon as the concerns are identified.

13. Pre Birth and Early Help Services Roles

When adults with learning disabilities become or wish to become parents all services should take steps to ensure they know about the support available to them, as well as understanding their responsibilities as parents.

Midwifery and other health care providers have an important role in ensuring appropriate support and information is available as their contact with expectant parents will usually be early in the pregnancy. Parents accessing and understanding the ante-natal care and choices regarding their health is important for both the mothers' and the unborn babies' health.

Any new parent needs to be provided with information and support tailored to their specific learning needs. Parents with learning disabilities will need to be offered early support to afford opportunity to learn the skills necessary to care for their baby.

At this early stage it is important that there is acknowledgement and use of the best communication system to ensure full understanding from the parents.

Parents with a learning disability should have equal access to all services within Children's Centres and Early Help services.

14. Responsibilities of Early Help and Children's Social Care Teams:

Early help can be a very important way to support parents with a learning disability and to coordinate multi-agency support through the team Around the Child Process. Early Help can support parents to access parenting programmes available. Where this works well it can be successful in preventing families reaching Safeguarding Thresholds.

Parents with learning disabilities can be frightened to ask for help and support when they need it therefore Children's services should make available information which details the support available and their responsibilities as parents.

Professionals should ensure that the learning style and communication needs of the parent are given due consideration and are used to support during any assessment and in feedback of any report.

Joint working should take place between Children's and Adults services in identifying packages of support for parents whilst considering longer term needs of both the parent and child. It is expected that thereafter there will be regular liaison between the teams as long as a parent remains open to both services .

Where an agency or individual anticipates that a prospective parent need support services to care for their baby or that a baby may be at risk of significant harm, a referral to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub should be made as soon as the concerns are recognised.

15. Self Directed Support:

All adult service users will have the option to have a personal budget (Direct Payment) in relation to purchasing support to meet assessed eligible need. The type of support that could be purchased if a person was eligible for a personal budget could be managing finances and accessing community resources.

16. Parental Engagement in Learning and Education:

Improving literacy and numeracy can have important benefits to parents and their children. Research suggests that supporting parents to engage in learning helps their children to achieve

better results. For example daily practice with reading at home is especially important for primary age children.

Professionals should consider the support a parent might need to help their children's learning in the home environment and engagement with the child's school and education. Support packages that involve schools and Early Learning Help services, wider family support, voluntary organisations, and adult social care should be considered where necessary.

Adult education and skills development opportunities should also been considered as ways of improving outcomes for parents, families and children. Parents with learning disabilities should be offered opportunities to access adult education and literacy support. South Devon College and Brixham ACE (Access to Community Education) may provide appropriate courses for parents with learning disabilities.

17. Needs of Parents Unable to Care for their Child:

There are some instances where parents with a learning disability may be unable to live or care for their child. Being separated or unable to care for their children can cause parents significant distress and sometimes affect their mental health. Research indicates that parents in this position have significant support needs and require sensitive and compassionate support from both Children's and Adult Services.

Parents may require counselling support as well as monitoring of their physical and psychological health needs. Parents should also be offered support with additional issues such as housing, domestic violence and relationships, independent living skills and/or health needs.

All services should ensure support is given to understand decision making and processes that are taking place. Appropriate referrals should be made to adult services for support when the parents are now willing to receive support from those involved in completing the assessments which determine the separation plan.

All services should ensure that all reports and documents which the parents are expected to read and understand are written in a way which is accessible, including the use of symbols/pictures as appropriate.

Independent advocacy support is especially important when parents have been separated from their child and Care Proceedings are underway.

Children's Services has the responsibility of ensuring that communication with parents with a learning disability around issues such as contact with their child is in a format which is accessible and they are able to understand.

18. Funding for Support and Care:

Where additional financial resources are required, the circumstances of the whole family must be addressed and consideration given to using Section 17 monies under the Children's Act 1989 and/or the individuals' personal budget should they be eligible under the Care Act Eligibility Criteria, or

both. The needs of the parent and children should be clearly identified in any planning/discharge meetings so that the cost of appropriate packages of support can be agreed, if appropriate.

In some circumstances, one or other services will have the financial responsibility, or there may be an agreement to apportion costs.

Services will be arranged immediately where needed and will not be delayed for assessments to be completed or funding organised.

19. Review of the Protocol:

The protocol is to be reviewed in relation to the aims and objectives in 12 months.

This will be undertaken by the multi agency co-ordination group .

Services should ensure that parents have access to agency Complaints and Feedback Policies in accessible formats.

Appendix 1

Joint Protocol - Working Together to Support Parents with a Learning Disability



**Working Together
With Parents Network**
Supporting professionals working with
parents with learning difficulties

Top tips - If you think a parent has a learning difficulty or learning disability.....

Before you start, remember...

- ☑ Having a learning difficulty/disability doesn't make someone a bad parent.
- ☑ You will need time - learning disability doesn't mean someone can't understand or learn ... but explanation may be harder and learning will take longer.
- ☑ Learning difficulties/disability may not be the key factor in assessment of parenting ability – other factors may be much more significant such as social isolation, stress or poverty.
- ☑ Early intervention improves outcomes.
- ☑ Do as you would for any family; focus on the key things that really matter for the child.
- ☑ Ask yourself – what's life like for this family?

When working with a parent...

- ☑ Clear Communication is key:
 - Listen– to the parent and take time to understand how they communicate
 - Use easy , ordinary words and avoid ambiguity and jargon
 - Write – a note of any advice or next meeting (even when the person can't read they will most likely ask someone they trust to read it for them)
 - Big – write everything in at least pt 14 type.
- ☑ Take time to build trust – remember the parent may have had bad experiences before and may be reluctant to tell of problems because s/he doesn't want to be judged and is afraid of having their children removed.
- ☑ Give information in small amounts.
- ☑ Break down complex tasks or information into simpler parts.
- ☑ Prepare them as much as possible for important meetings - case conferences, reviews or court hearings. Try to ensure they have someone of their choice to accompany and support them, preferably an independent advocate.
- ☑ Parents should be taught skills in their own home where possible. If learning has to take place away from home, it should be related specifically to their own experience, and reinforced at their home if possible. Regular reinforcement is important.

Working with others....

- ☑ Make sure you know about local services which can help you and the parent.
- ☑ Liaise with any other professionals involved in the family's life. Families can have many professionals involved with them. Share information with colleagues who may have a different perspective or other skills. Work together so that the parent receives consistent messages.
- ☑ Suggest advocacy ... independent is usually best. This will be a help to you as well as the parent since you will be able to communicate more effectively and will get a better understanding of the person's view.

The Good Practice Guidance on Working with Parents with a Learning Disability (DoH and DOE 2007) can be found at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/sps/wtpn/policyessentials/>. Parents with learning difficulties often struggle with similar issue to parents with a diagnosed learning disability. Find out more at the Working Together with Parents Network website www.wtpn.co.uk.

Appendix 2

Joint Protocol - Working Together to Support Parents with a Learning Disability

Resources and Local Service Contacts

Resources – Communication

Change:

<http://www.changepeople.co.uk/>

Photosymbols:

<http://www.photosymbols.com/>

Photosymbols are a popular set of pictures for making easy-read information for people with a learning disability. Subscription needed.

Mencap:

<http://www.mencap.org.uk/>

Lots of information for professionals and people with learning disabilities in accessible formats. Guides for learning disabled people cover topics such as healthcare, personalisation, managing money and making relationships. Make it Clear: A guide to making easy read information (2009) London: Mencap. Download free at:

<http://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2008-04/make%20it%20clear%20apr09.pdf>

Improving Health and Lives (IHaL) Learning Disability Observatory:

<http://www.improvinghealthandlives.org.uk/projects/reasonableadjustments>

EasyHealth: <http://www.easyhealth.org.uk/>.

Resources about health and health care for people with learning disabilities including leaflets, appointment cards, videos, information about useful organisations.

Easy Read Online:

<http://www.easy-read-online.co.uk/websites-for-people-withlearning-disabilities.aspx>.

This company makes websites, web pages and other digital applications that are easy for people who struggle to read and write.

Making Health Information Easier:

Easy read information to help people with learning disabilities better understand health, illness, lifestyle and treatments

<http://www.apictureofhealth.southwest.nhs.uk/>

National Resources for Families and Professionals

The London Network for Parents with Learning Disabilities.

Information and advice for parents with learning disabilities in London

<http://www.londonparents.net/index.html>

Working Together with Parents Network

Network of professionals and others involved with parents with learning disabilities and their families, which aims to support the development and sharing of positive practice in supporting parents with learning disabilities and their children, while safeguarding and promoting their welfare.

www.wtpn.co.uk

Norah Fry Research Centre University of Bristol

3 Priory Road

Bristol BS8 1TX

Tel: 0117 331 0987

Email: wtw-pn@bristol.ac.uk

www.right-support.org.uk

Family Rights Group

Helpline (free): 0808 801 0366 (Mon-Fri, 9.30a.m. -3.00p.m.)

Email: advice@frg.org.uk

www.frg.org.uk

Services in Torbay

Torbay Safeguarding Children Board Website.

Email: mailto:tscb@torbay.gov.uk

www.torbaysafeguarding.org.uk/

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub: Tel: 01803 208100

Torbay Emergency Duty Service:

The Emergency Duty Service provides social work support in Torbay for all Adult, Child, mental health services and emergency homeless applications, outside of normal office hours.

The team is comprised of experienced social workers and support staff who have a vast range of skills and knowledge to support individuals and their families experiencing crisis.

Out of hours contact number: 0300 456 4876

SMS number: 07810 54 8004

Opening hours:

Monday to Thursday

4.30pm – 9am

Friday to Monday

4pm – 9am

Bank Holidays

24 hours

Adult Health and Social Care Services (Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust)

Tel: 01803 219700

The Primary Care Learning Disability Liaison Service:

This service can provide support for parents with learning disabilities to access and understand their health care.

Tel: 01803 219700

The Acute Liaison Service for learning disabilities:

This service provides support to people with learning disabilities if they stay in hospital.

Tel: 01803 654994

Shared Lives South West

Provides supportive family based placements with people with learning disabilities including parents.

Head Office (Devon)

Shared Lives South West

Suite 3

Zealley House

Greenhill Way

Kingsteignton

Devon

TQ12 3SB Tel: 01626 360170 Fax: 01626 368252

Email: enquiries@sharedlivessw.org.uk

<http://sharedlivessw.org.uk/>

Torbay Family Information service:

The Family Information Service (FIS) Directory provides information for families and people working with them in Torbay.

Tel: 0800 328 5974.

<http://fis.torbay.gov.uk/kb5/torbay/fsd/home.page>

Vocal Advocacy:

Vocal provides Free independent advocacy.

Vocal has contracts with the Devon Advocacy Consortium and Torbay Care Trust to provide statutory advocacy as detailed in The Care Act and Issue based Advocacy for people who have a learning disability or communication difficulty in South and West Devon and Torbay.

Tel: 01803 868300

[Email: vocaladvocacy@btconnect.com](mailto:vocaladvocacy@btconnect.com)

Torbay Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service:

The Torbay Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service provides emotional and mental health assessment and treatment to children, young people, aged 0-18 years, and their families/carers. We offer support to professionals, such as school staff, GPs and school nurses who are working with children and young people within Torbay.

Torbay CAMHS

The Annexe

187 Newton Road

Torquay TQ7 2RU

Tel: 01803 655692

Email: [Torbay Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service](#)