

# About profound and multiple learning disabilities

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# People with profound and multiple learning disabilities.



## Why do we need to use the words profound and multiple learning disabilities to talk about a certain group of people?

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities are individuals just like everyone else.

But they often have needs that other people do not have.

If we find out what these needs are we can do more to support people with profound and multiple learning disabilities.

Other people often do not listen to what people with profound and multiple learning disabilities want and need.



## What does profound and multiple learning disabilities mean?

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities have more than 1 disability.

- Their main disability is a profound learning disability. This means they need lots of support.
- They might have these other disabilities as well.
- Physical disabilities. This is a disability to do with the body. People who use a wheelchair have a physical disability.
- Sensory disabilities. This is when people find it difficult to see or hear.
- Lots of health problems.
- Mental health problems.
- Autism.



People with profound and multiple learning disabilities need a lot of support. They also find it very difficult to communicate.

# People with profound and multiple learning disabilities.



## How do people with profound and multiple learning disabilities communicate?

People with profound and multiple learning disabilities communicate in lots of different ways. Each person communicates in the way that is best for them.

Here are some of the ways that people might communicate

- **Using their face.** People might show you how they feel by moving or changing their face.
- **Making a noise.** People might show you how they feel by making a noise. Or they might make a noise to make you notice something.
- **Using their body.** People might show you how they feel by using their body. For example a person might lean towards something that they want.
- **Changing their behaviour.** People might show you how they feel by the way they behave. For example, they might push over a table if they are angry.
- **Using speech, symbols or signs.**

Most people with profound and multiple learning disabilities find it difficult to understand what other people say.

It is important to spend time getting to know each person and the way that they communicate.

It is also important to find out what helps the person to understand things.

One way is to show someone an object to remind them of something they do often.

For example, if the person likes art you could show them a paint brush or a picture to tell them that they could do some art later if they wanted.



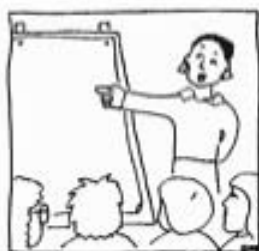
# People with profound and multiple learning disabilities.



## What else might someone with profound and multiple learning disabilities need support with?

### Physical support. This means support with using their body.

- Many people with profound and multiple learning disabilities need to use a wheelchair.
- Some people might need special equipment to help their body stay straight. Equipment is something that helps you do things more easily.
- If someone has physical disabilities they could have physiotherapy.
- Physiotherapy is where someone called a physiotherapist helps you move your body more easily.
- There are lots of other people who are paid to support people to use their body more easily. For example occupational therapists help people learn skills and get the right equipment.
- Carers of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities must have training so they can help the person they care for in the right way.



### Health support. This means support with feeling well.

- People with profound and multiple learning disabilities often need lots of support with their health.
- Many people have Epilepsy.
- Some people need lots of support when they swallow food. This is important as everyone needs food to stay healthy.
- Some people might get food through a tube.
- Some people may need a carer to use equipment to take liquid out of their throat so that they don't choke.



# People with profound and multiple learning disabilities.



- Someone with profound and multiple learning disabilities might find it difficult to tell you if they are in pain. They may need support to know that they are in pain and to make the pain better.

## **Support with behaviour. This means understanding why people act the way they do.**



- Some people might behave in a way that other people find difficult.
- This might be because they are not getting enough help and support.
- It is important to understand what people's behaviour means.
- They might behave in a certain way because they are not feeling well or because they do not like the place that they are in.
- It is possible that people with profound and multiple learning disabilities might have more mental health problems than other people.
- People with mental health problems need the right help and support.



## **Personal support.**



- Most people will need support with personal care. For example, with washing or going to the toilet.
- People with profound and multiple learning disabilities will also need help with things like eating and doing things that they enjoy everyday.
- People should have support to help them tell other people what they want and need.

# People with profound and multiple learning disabilities.



## **Learning support. This is support to help people learn new things.**

- People with profound and multiple learning disabilities will carry on learning things all their lives, just like anyone else. People will learn things slowly and will learn things a bit at a time.
- It helps someone learn how to do things if someone else shows them how to do the same thing lots of times.
- Some of the things people learn are things that other people might learn when they are young. For example, learning how to press a button to make something happen.



## **Equal rights**

Often people with profound and multiple learning disabilities are not treated the same way as other people.

- Other people do not understand that they have the same rights as everyone else.
- Other people need to understand that people with profound and multiple learning disabilities can make their own choices and do things that they enjoy just like everyone else.

