Draft QOF indicator guidance

QOF indicator area: Learning disabilities

Output: Draft indicator guidance for QOF

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Indicator for NICE menu (indicator ID: NM73)
The contractor establishes and maintains a register of patients with learning disabilities.

Indicator to be replaced
The new indicator replaces the 2013/14 QOF indicator:

The contractor establishes and maintains a register of patients aged 18 or over with learning disabilities.

Rationale
Learning disabilities are heterogeneous conditions, but are defined by 3 core criteria: lower intellectual ability (usually defined as an Intelligence Quotient [IQ] of less than 70), significant impairment of social or adaptive functioning, and onset in childhood. An IQ below 70 should not be used on its own to determine whether someone has a learning disability.

The definition does not include people with a ‘learning difficulty’, for example, people who have specific difficulties with learning such as dyslexia.

For many people, there is little difficulty in reaching a decision about whether they have a learning disability or not. However, when there is some doubt about a diagnosis or the level of learning disability, referral to a multidisciplinary specialist learning disability team (if available) may be
necessary to assess the degree of disability and diagnose any underlying condition. In some areas, local community learning disability teams, working with clinical commissioning groups, provide expertise and data about and for people with learning disabilities. Contractors may wish to liaise with social services departments, community learning disability teams and primary healthcare facilitators (if available) to help build a primary care database (Martin and Martin 2000).

Children with learning disabilities are mainly looked after by the education system and secondary care paediatricians, and transition from child to adult services can be challenging. The age group for this indicator has been removed to include all people with learning disabilities. This is because without a complete register of people with learning disabilities, practices may not be aware of children and young people with learning disabilities and the reasonable adjustments that may be needed for the child or young person and their family, and of the help and support that may be useful to them.

It is a statutory requirement under the Equality Act 2010 and the NHS and Social Care Act 2008 that public sector agencies make 'reasonable adjustments' to their practice that will make them as accessible and effective as they would be for people without disabilities. Reasonable adjustments include removing physical barriers to accessing health services, but importantly also include making whatever alterations are necessary to policies, procedures, staff training and service delivery to ensure that they work equally well for people with learning disabilities (Public Health England 2013).

Reporting and verification
See indicator wording for requirement criteria.

References
• Public Health England (2013) Making reasonable adjustments to eye care services for people with learning disabilities

Further information
This is NICE draft indicator guidance for QOF, which is part of the NICE menu of indicators. The final QOF indicator guidance will be agreed through the negotiation process by NHS Employers and the British Medical Association General Practitioners Committee.

This document does not represent formal NICE guidance. The NICE menu of indicators for QOF is available online at
www.nice.org.uk/aboutnice/qof/indicators.jsp