

# Living and dying with dignity



This leaflet tells you about what is important about caring for someone with a learning disability when they have a life-limiting illness.

**Easy read**

# Living and dying with dignity



Dying is a hard thing to think about and to talk about.

Some of us will die because of an illness or disease like cancer. An illness like this is called a **life-limiting illness**.



It is important that we are all given the care and support we need as we come to the end of our life.

We all have the right to be treated with dignity.

Dignity is about

- being treated with care and respect
- having your treatment explained to you in a way you can understand
- being treated and cared for in the same way as everyone else.





Dignity is about being seen as a whole person with feelings and needs.

In this leaflet you can read about 12 things that help people with a learning disability to live and die with dignity if they have a life-limiting illness.



The professionals like doctors and nurses need to understand that people with a learning disability often have extra needs.



Your carers should talk with you about death and dying before you start to get really ill.

This will help you ask questions and understand more about what is happening to you.



Having things explained and being listened to is a really important part of being cared for at the end of your life.



Your carers should help you look for changes in your body. They should find out how you are feeling.

They should help you go to groups that will support you

- to stay as well as you can
- with your emotions (feelings).



Your carers should take notice of your health and wellbeing.

They should get help and advice from doctors and other people looking after you.



The people who look after you should also talk to your friends and family.

This will help them see you as a whole person.

It will help them take care of you in the way that is right for you.



The people who are caring for you should take time to explain about any tests or treatment.

They should do this in a way that works best for you.



People who you know and trust the most should be the ones to tell you difficult things.

They should tell you as much as you can cope with.

They should go at your pace.



The people who are in your life like family, friends and carers should get support after you have died.



You must be treated as an adult.

You must be treated with dignity and respect all through your illness and at the end of your life.



You will probably have lots of different people caring for you towards the end of your life.

These people must all work well together in a way that is best for you.



All the people who are caring for you at the end of your life must do the very best they can for you.





If you have any questions about this leaflet,  
please call **01159 827 022**

You can get this leaflet from our website at  
**[www.mencap.org.uk/endoflifecare](http://www.mencap.org.uk/endoflifecare)**



**Mencap**  
**123 Golden Lane**  
**London**  
**EC1Y 0RT**  
**Tel: 020 7454 0454**  
**[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)**