

Using medicine to manage behaviour problems among adults with a learning disability

# Your guide to taking medicine for behaviour problems

## Easy read

Gemma Unwin and Professor Shoumitro Deb

University of Birmingham

[www.LD-Medication.bham.ac.uk](http://www.LD-Medication.bham.ac.uk)

September 2006

Supported by



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM



Royal College of  
**Psychiatrists**

**Mencap 60**

Celebrating in 2006/2007



# What is in this guide?

About this guide	3
Who is this guide for?	4
The standards	6
What things mean	11
Places for information	12
Thanks	13



You may like to get someone to help you go through this guide.

# About this guide



This guide tells you about some standards about the healthcare you get.

The standards tell you about how you should be treated when getting healthcare.

Your health care should always be as good as the standards say it should.

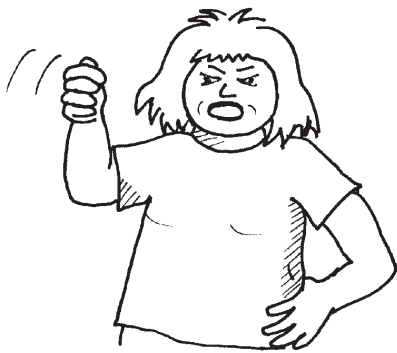


One of the standards is that you should always be given information in a way that you understand.

# Who is this guide for?

This guide is for people with a learning disability

- who are 18 years old and over
- who have a behaviour problem
- who have been prescribed medicine to help their behaviour problem.



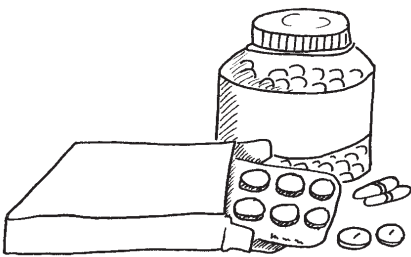
People sometimes have problems with behaviour. A behaviour problem is things like

- hitting other people
- hurting yourself
- being angry
- screaming
- breaking things
- running away.



A behaviour problem may also be called challenging behaviour.

You may be prescribed medicine if you have a behaviour problem.



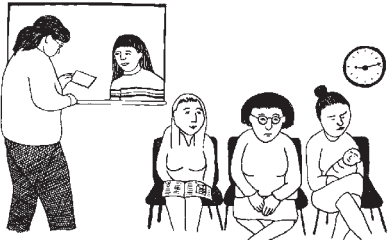
Prescribed means when a doctor suggests medicine that should help you.



Where we say doctor we mean anyone who prescribes you medicine for your behaviour problem.

# The Standards

Here are some standards of health care you can expect to get.



You should have an appointment with your doctor before they give you any medicine.



Your doctor should ask you about how you feel and about your behaviour.

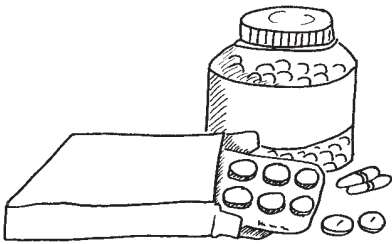
Your doctor should listen to what you have to say.



Your doctor should explain to you about different treatments you can have.

A treatment is a way of helping you.

For example, a treatment might be



- different types of medicine you can take
- talking about what makes you angry, sad, upset or scared
- talking about how you behave
- talking about why you behave that way



You should have the chance to decide if you would like to have a treatment.

You could have treatment where you talk about things and have medicine as well.

If you do take medicine to help with your behaviour, your doctor should keep looking for other ways to help you.





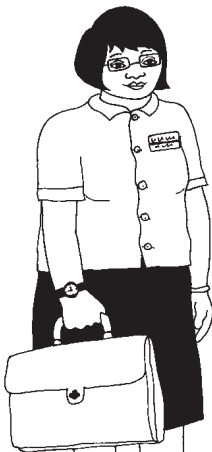
Your doctor should ask you if you agree to take your medicine.

Your doctor may ask other people what they think about your treatment.



These people may be

- a psychiatrist
- a psychologist
- a speech and language therapist
- a nurse
- an occupational therapist
- a social worker.



Your doctor should give these people all the information they need to understand your problems.



Your doctor should give you or your carer a plan called a treatment plan.

A treatment plan tells you

- what medicine has been prescribed for you
- how you should take your medicine
- when you should take your medicine.

Your doctor should talk to you and your carer about any side effects of your medicine.

Side effects are effects that medicine can have on your body that are not wanted.

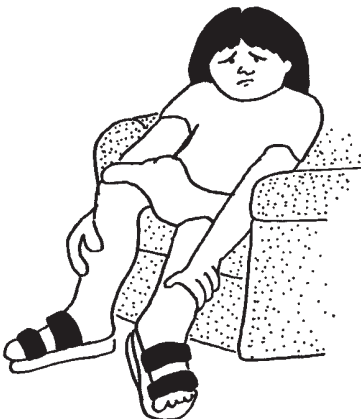


For example, some side effects may

- make you feel ill



- make you put on weight



- make you feel sleepy and sluggish

- make you feel stiff and shaky.



You should be given a leaflet to explain the side effects of your medicine.



You should normally only have to take 1 medicine at a time for your behaviour problem.

If your doctor thinks you need to take more than 1 medicine they should tell you why.



Each time you see your doctor they should give you a date for your next appointment.

The next appointment is called your review.

At your review your doctor should

- ask you how you feel about taking your medicine
- check whether the medicine is working properly
- check if you have any side effects.

Your doctor may talk to other people about your review to check that you are getting the best treatment.

Each time you go to the clinic, your doctor should check how you are getting on with your medicine.

# More information

You can get more information and support from

- **Association for Real Change (ARC)**

Website: [www.arcuk.org.uk](http://www.arcuk.org.uk)

Telephone: 020 8446 1340 (London)

- **British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD)**

Website: [www.bild.org.uk](http://www.bild.org.uk)

Telephone: 01562 723 010

- **Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities**

Website: [www.learningdisabilities.org.uk](http://www.learningdisabilities.org.uk)

Telephone: 020 7803 1111 (London)

- **Mencap**

Website: [www.askmencap.info](http://www.askmencap.info)

Telephone: 0808 808 1111 (England)

Email: [help@mencap.org.uk](mailto:help@mencap.org.uk)

# Thanks

We would like to thank the organisations that helped make this guide

- the Guideline Development Group
- Mencap
- the University of Birmingham Neuropsychiatry and Intellectual Disabilities Research Group
- the Royal College of Psychiatrists' Learning Disability Faculty and the College Research and Training Unit
- the money came from the Big Lottery Fund.

The pictures used in this guide are from the CHANGE Health Picture Bank.

CHANGE  
Units 19 / 20  
Unity Business Centre  
26 Roundhay Road  
Leeds  
LS7 1AB

You can print a copy of this guide from  
[www.LD-Medication.bham.ac.uk](http://www.LD-Medication.bham.ac.uk)

There is also a version of this guide for healthcare professionals at [www.LD-Medication.bham.ac.uk](http://www.LD-Medication.bham.ac.uk)

This guide was produced in September 2006.

Supported by



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM



Royal College of  
**Psychiatrists**

**Mencap 60**

Celebrating in 2006/2007

ISBN 0-85537-095-5



Registered charity number 222377