



# Faculty of Health & Social Care

## **Social History of Learning Disability Conference**

**3<sup>rd</sup> and 4th July 2012**

**The Open University, Milton Keynes**

### **Health and Learning Disability: Past, present and future**

#### CALL FOR PAPERS

A number of recent reports have highlighted the health inequalities facing people with learning disabilities. Although health is something that affects everyone's lives, for people with learning disabilities it is particularly significant. This might be because people have specific health needs in relation to their condition, or because they have experienced barriers in accessing good healthcare services. Although historically, many people with learning disabilities lived in institutions that were renamed 'hospitals' with the coming of the NHS, their health needs were often overlooked. Medical intervention, where it occurred, was in the use of medication to control behaviour. At the same time, many of these environments did not take account of people's social and educational needs.

In this conference we want to find out more about the experiences of people with learning disabilities in relation to their health. The aim of this conference is to explore the following questions:

- What were people's experiences of health and healthcare settings in the past and what are they like today?
- What are the barriers to good health that people with learning disabilities have faced, and how can these be addressed?
- Where do health and learning disability meet in policy and practice?

We acknowledge that whilst health is everywhere, it takes various forms and has different meanings for people in different contexts. At our conference we are looking for papers that explore:

- the views and experiences of people with learning disabilities regarding health and healthcare, past and present
- the impact of changing policies and service provision on people's health
- the views and experiences of family members and others who support people with learning disabilities (including clinicians and other practitioners), on the issue of health and healthcare
- changing constructions of 'learning disability' in relation to definitions of health, illness and disease
- broad and wide-ranging approaches to health. For example, papers might explore sexual and reproductive health, mental health, long-term conditions, acute healthcare, and well being,

to name but a few. We would like to keep this as open as possible.

We are interested in an historical approach, and so would encourage papers that discuss health issues for people with learning disabilities at different points in time or focus on one specific historical period. This may include papers that reflect upon health and healthcare in the very recent past and in the present. We are also interested in international papers about health and learning disability, as well as presentations from the UK.

We welcome papers that present personal stories, as well as papers that discuss specific research projects.

Please be aware that our conferences are inclusive events, and papers will need to be accessible to people with learning disabilities (please see attached guidelines).

**Please send a short (up to one page) summary of your proposed paper by Monday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2012 to Katherine Perry at the following address:**

**[k.d.perry@open.ac.uk](mailto:k.d.perry@open.ac.uk)**

OR

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