

Letter to the Health Secretary

From LOUD — Experts by Experience Group, Canterbury Christ Church University



Who We Are

We are LOUD. We are a group of people with learning disabilities.

We work with Canterbury Christ Church University to help improve education and research relating to learning disabilities and autism for our health and care professional student groups.



The Problem

Learning disability nurses are disappearing.

No universities in the South East of England are training new learning disability nurses.

This is dangerous. Learning disability nurses save lives.



The Facts

People with learning disabilities die much earlier than other people:

- Women with a learning disability die 23 years earlier on average.
- Men with a learning disability die 20 years earlier on average.
- About half of these deaths could have been avoided.

Learning disability nurses help prevent these early deaths.



Real Stories From Our Members

One member said: Without a learning disability nurse, people with learning disabilities fall between the gaps. Nobody knows if a problem is related to their learning disability or not.

One member was in hospital and asked for a learning disability nurse. She was refused. She could not even make a complaint because there was no accessible way to do this.

One member was told to go to a library to use a computer to access health services — even though they cannot use computers. This is not good enough.



What We Are Asking For

We are asking the Health Secretary to:

- Find out how many learning disability nurses are missing in the South East.
- Make a plan to train more learning disability nurses.
- Make sure every hospital and GP surgery has access to a learning disability nurse.

A social prescriber is NOT the same as a learning disability nurse. We need proper specialists.

Action: We would like to meet with you to talk about this. Our members are experts by experience. They deserve to be heard.

Yours sincerely,

Daniel Marsden & Vanessa Cowley

Co- Chairs, LOUD

Experts by Experience Group, Canterbury Christ Church University