

The experiences of people
with learning disabilities
during COVID-19

Who we are?

LONDON
SCHOOL of
HYGIENE
& TROPICAL
MEDICINE



10 researchers from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and the University of Glasgow



University
of Glasgow

We specialise in disability research

What did we do?



We talked to 71 disabled people

Some people we talked to were parents of disabled children



We talked to 28 organisations that worked with disabled people

What did we do?



2x

We talked to people twice

Early in the pandemic and again later



We asked them how COVID-19 impacted their lives

What did we find?



COVID-19 has badly affected people with learning disabilities



Government actions to stop COVID-19 spreading have badly affected people with learning disabilities

Accessible information



Information was not provided in accessible way
There was limited Easy Read information

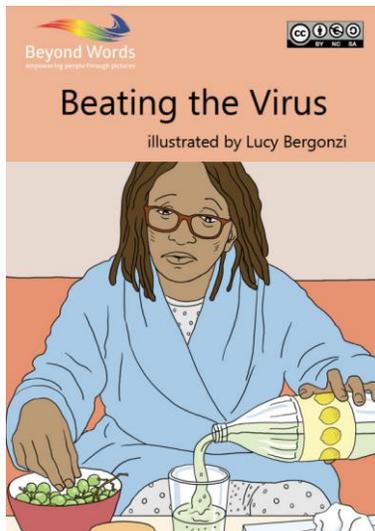


Briefings from the government did not do enough to help people with learning disabilities know what they had to do

Accessible information



Disabled people's organisations and other groups played a big role in helping people get the right information



For example, Books Beyond Words

Daily activities



Daily activities had to stop and this disrupted people's routines



People felt lonely

Daily activities



Charities and community groups worked hard to provide support



Organisations provided Zoom activities, such as online cooking classes and book clubs

Daily activities



But not everyone had access to a computer and not everyone was comfortable using Zoom

Social care



For many, social care and support was removed or reduced



Lots of people relied on family carers

Social care



It was difficult to get help for problems



It was difficult for people and their families

Vaccination



People with learning disabilities were pleased to be put on the priority list



But it required a lot of advocacy to get the right to priority vaccination

Conclusion



People with learning disabilities and their families felt abandoned and forgotten by the government



Charities, disabled people's organisations and community groups worked hard to stop problems being even worse

What next?



Disabled need priority support going forward



Government must listen to disabled people about they need during the pandemic and in the future