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# ***A Guide to Advanced Training in Learning Disability Psychiatry At Severn Postgraduate Medical Education***

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Updated October 2014

Welcome to the Learning Disability (LD) training scheme in the Severn School of Psychiatry. This document outlines the training scheme and opportunities specific to the Severn programme. It has been written by current trainees and it is intended to be helpful for new trainees or potential applicants. It is not definitive and all areas and opportunities cannot be guaranteed and are subject to change. This is particularly true at this current time when nationally many services are being reviewed and reconfigured.

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## Introduction to LD Psychiatry

LD Psychiatry is a specialty working with individuals with a learning disability who have additional needs such as: mental illness; epilepsy; dementias; and behaviour that may put themselves or others at risk.

It covers a broad range of problems, essentially all of adult and old age psychiatric problems, forensic issues, and developmental disabilities such as autism spectrum conditions and ADHD. Most services work with adults but it requires close working with and liaison with associated agencies. Amongst others this includes: social care; child and adolescent psychiatry; Paediatrics; parents; carers and care providers; as well as the criminal justice system.

The majority of clinical work is on an outpatient basis, usually with a combination of clinical bases and community visits. There are some inpatient beds in Gloucester and a small number of patients who need inpatient assessment or treatment are placed in out of area placements or in mainstream (adults of working age or older adult) mental health beds.

LD Psychiatrists are the main repository of mental health knowledge and experience within specialised multidisciplinary LD teams. Often the LD psychologist is the only other professional with mental health training. This requires significant competencies in team-working, working consultatively and providing leadership in complex cases as well as to the teams in general. Some specific aspects of the work of the LD psychiatrist include:

- Ability to meaningfully elicit patient views and opinions from individuals with communication impairments.
- Specialist knowledge and skills in diagnosis in individuals who communicate in less easily recognised ways.
- Ability to collate and distill relevant details for collateral sources of information and carer informants.
- Developing formulations and management plans in complex cases, and communicating these in such a way that they can be implemented and followed by patients and often their carers.
- Working within the legal frameworks of the Mental Capacity Act and the Mental Health Act.
- Close working with families and carers with sensitivity to their views and opinions.
- Epilepsy investigation, diagnosis and management.
- Wide considerations of long term management plans with a holistic approach to overall wellbeing as well as acute mental health problems.
- Systemic approach to assessing problems and developing plans.
- Ability to formulate risk management plans, including forensic risks.
- Being an advocate for patients as individuals and groups.

## Overview of the Severn School of Psychiatry LD Training Schemes

This is a scheme with the potential to have 7 advanced trainees at a time, including an academic LD post. It is an active scheme with lots of opportunities. There is the potential for the training scheme to cover a wide geographical footprint, though currently advanced training jobs are based in Bristol, Bath (with Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust/AWP) and Gloucester (2gether NHS Foundation Trust). There is the possibility that this may expand into North Somerset (AWP) and Somerset (Somerset Partnership NHS Trust/SomPar), in the future. In several LD teams the Psychiatry ST is embedded with the consultant within a social enterprise or community interest company (Bristol Community Health/BCH, Sirona).

Currently the training is typically 3 separate year-long posts, usually in one geographical area and allocated by training need. If planned in advance Severn Postgraduate Medical Education and the TPD may support Out Of Programme Experiences (OOPEs), including fellowships with Bristol University or local Trusts.

Dual training has been possible on an individual basis with LD/Forensic Psychiatry and LD/General Adult Psychiatry. This is not always possible, can be complicated to arrange and must be done well in advance in liaison with the Severn School of Psychiatry and the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

There is the possibility to do a year's placement in Child Psychiatry for people with learning disability or Forensic Psychiatry for people with learning disability within the LD training. Again this should be planned in advance and cannot be guaranteed every year as there may be competing interest from other advanced trainees.

During your LD training you will be expected to gain the range of experiences and competencies described in the RCPsych Psychiatry of Learning Disability curriculum. This will be achieved during clinical posts, and also in clinical special interest sessions that will be with other teams or services and may be in different trusts or organisations depending on the experience or competencies sought. There is also ample opportunity to gain research, teaching and management experience. There are close links with the University of Bristol who have an LD academic clinical fellow currently in post. Please see the main Advanced Training in Psychiatry Guide for Severn Postgraduate Medical Education for details of research, teaching and management opportunities.

### **Overview of current Community Teams**

There are 3 Community LD Teams in Bristol - Bristol South based in Withywood, and Central and North teams based in Stapleton. The Psychiatrists are employed by AWP and other MDT members are employed by BCH (Bristol Community Health). They are specialist teams working with mild - profound LD, autism and epilepsy. A nurse led forensic community learning disability team is based in the Bristol South team but works with cases across Bristol and North Somerset. There is no current inpatient unit for people with LD within the Avon area, although this may change in the future. Patients with LD who need admission to a psychiatric unit currently go to general adult or older adult wards locally, or if a specialist LD bed is needed the patient has to be admitted out of area.

There are 4 Community Teams in Gloucestershire covering 3 locality areas. They are based in Stroud (South Locality), Cheltenham (North Locality), Gloucester and Cinderford. They are specialist teams working with mild to profound LD, autism and epilepsy. There is also an inpatient service currently based in 2 units, one in Stonehouse and one in Stroud. The inpatient units are currently in the process of being merged. All consultants, trainees and teams are employed by Together NHS Foundation Trust.

The Community team in Bath works in a tiered service with the psychiatrists working in a specialist "Complex Health Needs Service/ CHNS" provided by Sirona with Psychiatrists employed by AWP. Epilepsy management is mainstreamed or seen in the specialist service in Bristol so the caseload is mainly mild - profound LD and autism.

There are 2 teams in South Gloucestershire based in Thornbury and Kingswood and run by Sirona. They are specialist teams working with mild - profound LD, autism and epilepsy.

## Educational Opportunities

All full time LD advanced trainees have 2 clinical special interest sessions and 2 non-clinical special interest sessions per week.

Local clinical special interest opportunities include:

- Child and Adolescent Psychiatry with people with LD
- The Adult ADHD Service in Bristol.
- The Bristol Autism Spectrum Service / BASS (for adults without LD).
- Forensic Psychiatry for people with LD at the Medium Secure unit in Bristol which has 8 beds for people with LD, ASD and Acquired Brain Injury for require secure inpatient services (Fromeside, Blackberry Hill Hospital).
- The Court Assessment and Liaison Service in Avon.
- Complex epilepsy and neuropsychiatry service based at the Burden Centre, Frenchay Hospital.
- Inpatient unit for people with LD in Gloucestershire
- General Adult Psychiatry Crisis/Intensive teams.
- Opportunities for Genetics sessions are currently being developed.
- Psychotherapy with people with LD is possible but needs proactive organization by individual trainees to meet their individual needs and interests.

## Research Opportunities

There are varied research opportunities for LD trainees. AWP has an active research programme which often includes projects for people with LD or where they can be included. The academic unit at the University of Bristol also provides opportunities for trainee involvement in research, as has the Norah Fry Research Centre based in Bristol with close links to the University. Dr Dheeraj Rai is the current senior clinical lecturer in LD and Psychiatry at the university. Dr Mark Scheepers in 2gether Trust currently provides research supervision to the Gloucestershire Trainees on a regular basis and there is also a group research supervision for all advanced LD trainees every 3-4 months by Dr Scheepers.

## Academic Programme

There is a well-attended monthly **LD academic meeting** in Bristol for all LD psychiatry consultants, advanced and core trainees across the Severn School of Psychiatry. This usually consists of 3 presentations - a clinical case, journal article review and appraisal and a topic review by the core and advanced trainees.

There is also a monthly multidisciplinary academic meeting '**Avon Learning Disability Education and Research Network / ALDERN**' held in Bristol with speakers presenting a wide variety of relevant topics.

There is a well-established fortnightly peer facilitated **LD Trainee support Group** for advanced and core trainees and specialty doctors in LD within the Severn School of Psychiatry. It is held at Blackberry Hill Hospital in Bristol, and all trainees are encouraged to prioritise this unless there are exceptional clinical circumstances.

Advanced trainees in LD Psychiatry also hold **ST4-6 Business meetings** 6-8 times per year to discuss training issues.

In Bristol, there is a monthly **LD Audit Group meeting** which covers audit and other clinical governance issues. There is also a 3 monthly **Medical Advisory Group meeting** in Bristol which provides trainees with experiences of management meetings. Similar opportunities exist within Together Trust.

### Example Trainee Timetable

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Supervision	Clinical Special interest	Trainee Support Group (twice a month)	Or: Clinical work/admin (on days which do not have the academic programme sessions)	Clinic / Home visits	Non-Clinical Special interest (Teaching, research and management)
Admin		Audit Group meeting (monthly)		Admin / Clinic	
Clinic		Academic Programme (twice a month)			

### On-call

Currently all trainees participate in the LD consultant on-call rota in their relevant geographical area. When on-call they are 1<sup>st</sup> on-call and there will also be a consultant on-call. On-calls are on a 1:10 basis and are non-resident. The areas covered on-call are large geographical areas, for example the Avonwide rota covers: Bristol; South Gloucestershire; North Somerset; Bath and North East Somerset.

### Support and Supervision

All posts are approved by the training programme director (TPD) and Severn School of Psychiatry with considerable trainee input. For approval, a post must have appropriate levels of supervision and support. The programme has repeatedly returned as a positive outlier on GMC surveys and remains one of the best performing nationally. Clinical and educational supervision are provided by the individual advanced trainee's consultant, with 6 monthly review meetings with the TPD.

### How to arrange a visit

We are happy to be contacted for further information and can arrange face to face visits or visits to team bases for prospective advanced trainees. If you are interested in LD training in this region we encourage you to contact the TPD Dr Heena Hargovan, via her secretary Rebecca Clarke ([Rebecca.Clarke@glos.nhs.uk](mailto:Rebecca.Clarke@glos.nhs.uk)).

## **Useful Links**

[LD Faculty Pages](#)

[Severn Deanery Website](#)

[2gether website](#)

[AWP Website](#)

[Sirona Website](#)

[BCH website](#)

[2013 GMC Survey of Trainees](#)

Original guide written by Dr Jo Kingston and Dr Ross Spackman in March 2014, updated by Dr Hannah Toogood in October 2014.