

Reasonable Adjustments Digital Flag

Why this is important for people
with a learning disability

Presented by:

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About me



I work as a Learning Disability and Autism Advisor Lived by experience for the NHS England's

National Learning Disability and Autism programme.

I'm visually impaired and I have a learning disability. I have a long-term condition called Lowe's Syndrome.

I'm here today to talk to you about the benefits of the Reasonable Digital Flag for people with a learning disability




Good experiences

When I am visiting one of my regular surgeons and an operation is needed he asks me to explain to him what we have just talked about to make sure I understand the operation process

- My regular Doctors and consultants don't understand Lowe's Syndrome however they understand me and my needs, this is the important part.

This is really reassuring for me and makes me feel relaxed and less worried.



When visiting my kidney consultant and we have agreed for an operation to go ahead, I have signed an electronic consent form. She talks me through the form and also likes my mum to sign it too. This is the first time this has happened with any consultant. She also asks if I needed any reasonable adjustments including seeing the anaesthetist before the day of the operation and if I would like to see the learning disability nurse.

This makes me feel people have listened and are understanding me. I was less nervous for the operation with these prior appointments put into place.




Re-explaining will hopefully stop

Each time I visit somewhere other than my regular consultants or somewhere not in my area, I have to re explain my health condition, my visual impairment, that I have a learning disability, what I struggle with and my needs before explaining what the problem is. This is very difficult especially when I visit Accident and Emergency as I need to explain all this to the receptionist, the nurse and then anyone else.

Having the Reasonable Digital Flag would help with the triage process.

It makes me feel frustrated having to explain my life and health condition to health professionals.



One part of having Lowe's Syndrome is I have difficulty straightening my arms. This means sometimes I need a pillow to support my arm when having blood tests to stop my arm from hurting. I have been told at the Doctors and the Hospital they are unable to provide a pillow. This has been since covid-19.

Some nurses say "It will only take a minute" and then forcing my arm straight.

This makes me feel like they are not going out of their way to help. Feels like sometimes they haven't listened to me – this is upsetting and is annoying.

The question I have been asked a lot is

'Have I any past history of operations or health issues. – Sometimes I don't know how to reply to this question.

Having the Reasonable Digital Flag will stop the re-explaining and this will also stop any inequalities from happening.



Other thoughts

This should not replace documents such as the hospital passports or care passports, however in my experiences health professionals still ask certain questions. I feel the Reasonable Adjustment Digital Flag is needed as they will see it as official.

Sometimes when they rush through the documents I feel I might as well not have this document.

Final thoughts and things to think about



Having information about the person on all systems is extremely important – Staff can then spend time with the person asking what the problem is and also get to know the person. This helps stop people from feel less anxious and makes people feel like they are being listened to.

Everyone with a learning disability deserves the correct care including reasonable adjustments.