

A booklet about Annual Health Checks for parents and carers of an adult with Down's syndrome.



Down's  
Syndrome  
Scotland

helping people realise their potential

# Let's Talk about Annual Health Checks



For more information or to obtain any of our other publications please visit [www.dsscotland.org.uk](http://www.dsscotland.org.uk)

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# Background

Annual Health checks have been introduced for everyone living in Scotland who is over the age of 16 and has a learning disability, including Down's syndrome.

There are a range of health conditions specifically associated with having Down's syndrome which can affect the long-term health and wellbeing of individuals. Annual Health Checks can ensure that the health of individuals is being monitored enabling any issues to be detected early and timely treatment provided and therefore improving health outcomes for individuals with Down's syndrome.

This booklet has been created for parents and caregivers to provide information about Annual Health Checks for individuals with a learning disability in Scotland (aged 16+) and to highlight health issues that should be included in the Annual Health Check specifically for individuals with Down's syndrome.

The Annual health check is a standardised check that will be carried out by a registered medical practitioner using the Scottish Annual Health Check for Adults with Learning Disabilities criteria. The Annual Health Check has specific guidelines that must be followed including specific checks in relation to Down's syndrome.

You can find this list and more details on the guidelines in our booklet on the Annual Health Checks for Professionals which you can view [here](#).



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## The benefits of Annual Health Checks

- Additional support to get the right healthcare.
- Increased chance of detecting unmet, unrecognised and potentially treatable health conditions
- Early intervention can be taken to address these health needs.

The NHS Scotland can make reasonable adjustments to their services to ensure that individuals with disabilities face fewer barriers to having their Annual Health Check. Reasonable adjustments may include longer appointments, information in easy read and support around consenting to treatment. It will be dependent on each Health Board and where you live as to who will carry out the Annual Health Checks for individuals with learning disabilities and where they may take place.

If an individual with Down's syndrome aged 16+ is known by their Health Board to have a Learning Disability they must be offered an Annual Health Check which will be carried out by a registered nurse or registered medical practitioner who may, if they consider it appropriate also seek assistance from any other health professional involved in the patient's care.

Individuals do not need to be getting support from a local authority Health and Social care service to be eligible for an Annual Health Check.

You can contact your local health board to check that the individual with Down's syndrome is known to them and will be invited for an Annual Health Check. [Click here](#) to find your local health board



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# Before the Annual Health Check

Prior to their Annual Health Check appointment adults with Down's syndrome aged 16 years and over may receive a pre-check questionnaire through the post which should be completed (with support if needed) and taken to their appointment.

This pre-check questionnaire can be helpful for communicating relevant information about the individual with the health professional at the appointment, as can a health passport if there is one.

The health professional will arrange for the individual to have a routine blood test either a week or so before the Annual Health Check or it may be carried out at the appointment depending on the individual.

Using visuals pictures and images and talking through the pre-check questionnaire can help to prepare an individual for their Annual Health Check. We have specifically created an easy read booklet to support with this titled "Lets Talk about the Annual Health Check" which you can find [here](#).

It can be helpful to make a list of questions you would like to ask at the Annual Health Check and to share any specific communication and support needs with the health professional prior to the appointment.

If the individual who has Down's syndrome (age 16 years or over) has capacity and gives their consent, a parent or supporter can attend the Annual Health Check as well. If you have welfare guardianship you should take the certificate with you.

You should allow up to an hour for an Annual Health Check appointment.

We have prepared guidance for health practitioners that covers all aspects of the Annual Health Check and information about what should be included as part of a comprehensive and thorough Annual Health Check. This includes screening tests that everyone should have throughout their life as well as a list of checks that everyone with a learning disability should have and a list of checks specific to individuals with Down's syndrome. You can read this booklet [here](#).

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## After the Annual Health Check

The health practitioner should inform the individual about the outcome of their Annual Health Check. They should ask if the individual has any questions and, if needed, they may refer them to specialist services for further investigation or intervention.

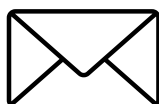
The health practitioner will use what they found at the Annual Health Check to make a Health Action Plan. This should set out the key actions that need to be taken that have been agreed with the individual and (where applicable) their parent or supporter.

A template of a Health Action Plan has been included with this booklet, this can be a helpful document for an individual to complete themselves if possible (with support) so that they are able to gain some ownership of it and demonstrate clear understanding of what has been discussed.

Our Family Support Team are here to support you should you require any further information or support please contact us.



**0300 030 2121**



**[familysupportservice@dsscotland.org.uk](mailto:familysupportservice@dsscotland.org.uk)**

# Your Health Check Action Plan

<b>Name</b>			
<b>Doctor</b>			
<b>Nurse</b>			
<b>Health practitioner</b>			
<b>Date</b>			
<b>Any medication changes</b>			
<b>My health need</b>	<b>What needs to be done?</b>	<b>Who will help?</b>	<b>When will this need to be reviewed?</b>

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# This book is designed to help you support an adult with Down's syndrome understand about their annual health check.

Down's Syndrome Scotland provides support to individuals with Down's syndrome and their families, carers and professionals who work with them.



If you would like to access further support please call us on 0300 030 2121.

For further information visit:

[www.dsscotland.org.uk](http://www.dsscotland.org.uk)



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