

Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism – Tier 2 – Face to Face

Building on the Tier 1 e-learning, this training helps you give safe, compassionate, and person-led care and support to people with learning disabilities and autistic people. You will learn how to recognise and challenge unconscious bias and avoid making assumptions about a person's behaviour or symptoms, so that health needs are not missed or misunderstood.

The course shares key lessons from the Learning from Lives and Deaths Reviews (LeDeR) to improve care and outcomes. You will explore the STOMP campaign to reduce overuse of medication and learn how to make reasonable adjustments that meet each person's needs. The session also covers the Mental Capacity Act 2005, appropriate Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) decisions, and how to communicate well with individuals and families. By the end, you will feel confident providing care that treats everyone with dignity, respect, and understanding.

[Learn more >](#)

Learning Outcomes

AM Session: Learning Disability Awareness:

- Recognise and manage unconscious bias to ensure compassionate and accurate care.
- Learn from the Learning from Lives and Deaths Reviews (LeDeR), including co-morbidities and how they affect outcomes.
- Understand the STOMP campaign to reduce overmedication and promote safer treatment.
- Identify and apply reasonable adjustments to meet each person's needs.
- Use the Mental Capacity Act 2005 appropriately to support informed decision-making.
- Understand when and how to apply DNACPR (Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) decisions safely.
- Improve communication skills with individuals and their families.
- Recognise the role of hospital passports and annual health checks in supporting good care.
- Reflect on your practice to identify ways to improve and provide person-centred care.

PM Session: Autism Awareness:

- Understand why autism is often described as an “invisible” condition and how this affects care and support.
- Reflect on your own values and beliefs and how they influence interactions with autistic people.
- Recognise potential triggers for anxiety and ways to reduce stress and distress.
- Identify reasonable adjustments and practical ways to adapt your practice for autistic individuals.
- Explore relevant legislation and resources to support inclusive, enabling services.
- Apply lessons learned from Oliver McGowan to improve your daily practice.
- Engage in self-reflection to consider what you can do differently to provide respectful, personalised care.

Course Content

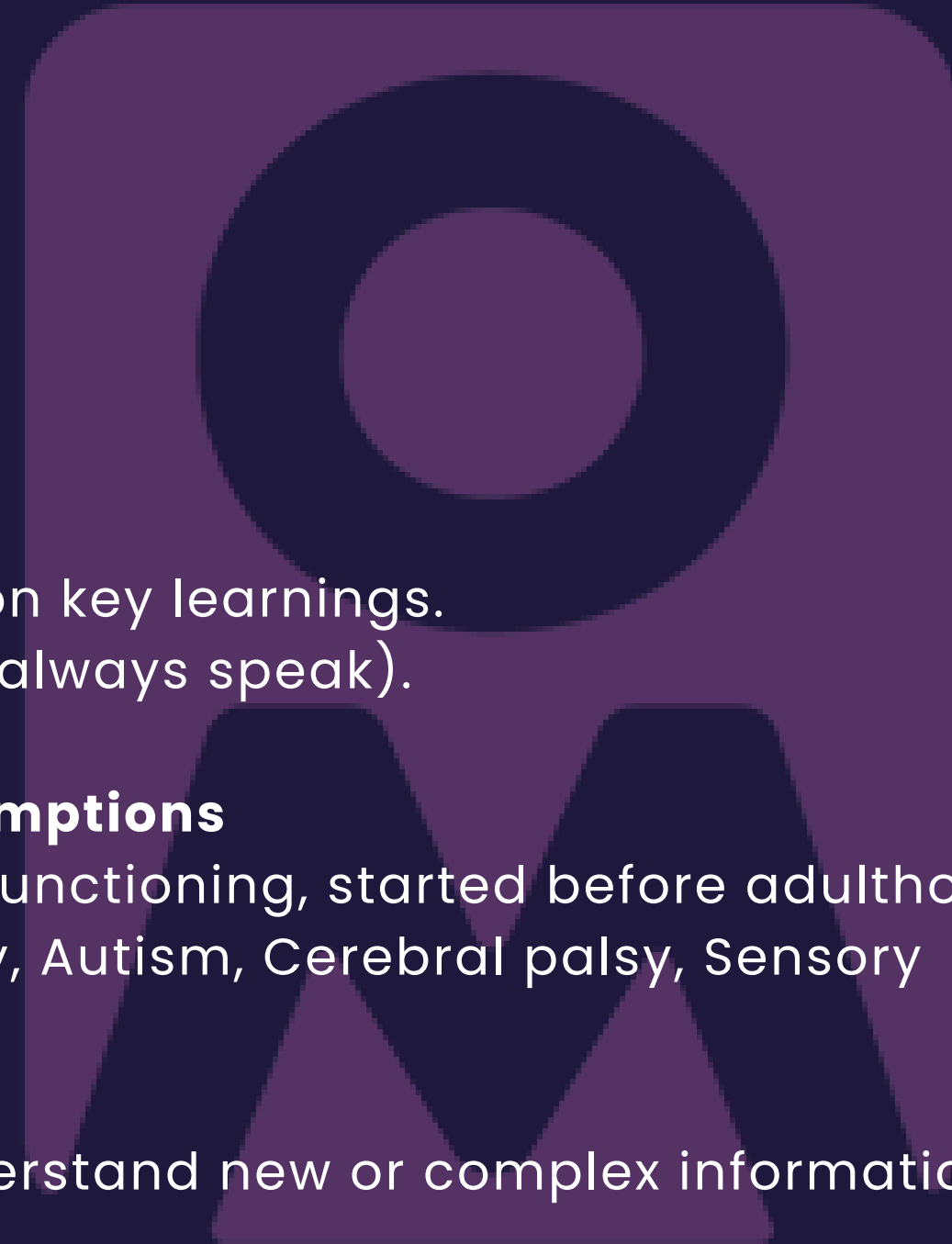
AM Session: Learning Disability Awareness:

Module 1: Setting the Scene and Foundational Skills

- Thinking about Oliver's Story: Review and group reflection on key learnings.
- What is Makaton? Definition and principle (sign key words, always speak).
- Activity: "Hello my name is..." (using Makaton signs).

Module 2: Defining Learning Disability and Challenging Assumptions

- Diagnostic Criteria: Impaired intelligence, impaired social functioning, started before adulthood.
- Co-occurring Conditions (Mental health problems, Epilepsy, Autism, Cerebral palsy, Sensory impairments).
- What learning disability means to me.
- Impaired intelligence ("significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills").
- Group Exercise: "What is intelligence?"
- Multiple Intelligence Theory (Howard Gardner): Introduction to the nine types (Logical, Linguistic, Kinesthetic, Interpersonal, etc.).
- Challenging myths on marriage, non-verbal understanding, communication barriers, thriving in the workplace/relationships, and the "always happy" stereotype.
- Dedicated time for our Expert with Lived Experience's perspective



Course Content

Module 3: Systemic Barriers and Critical Failures (LeDeR)

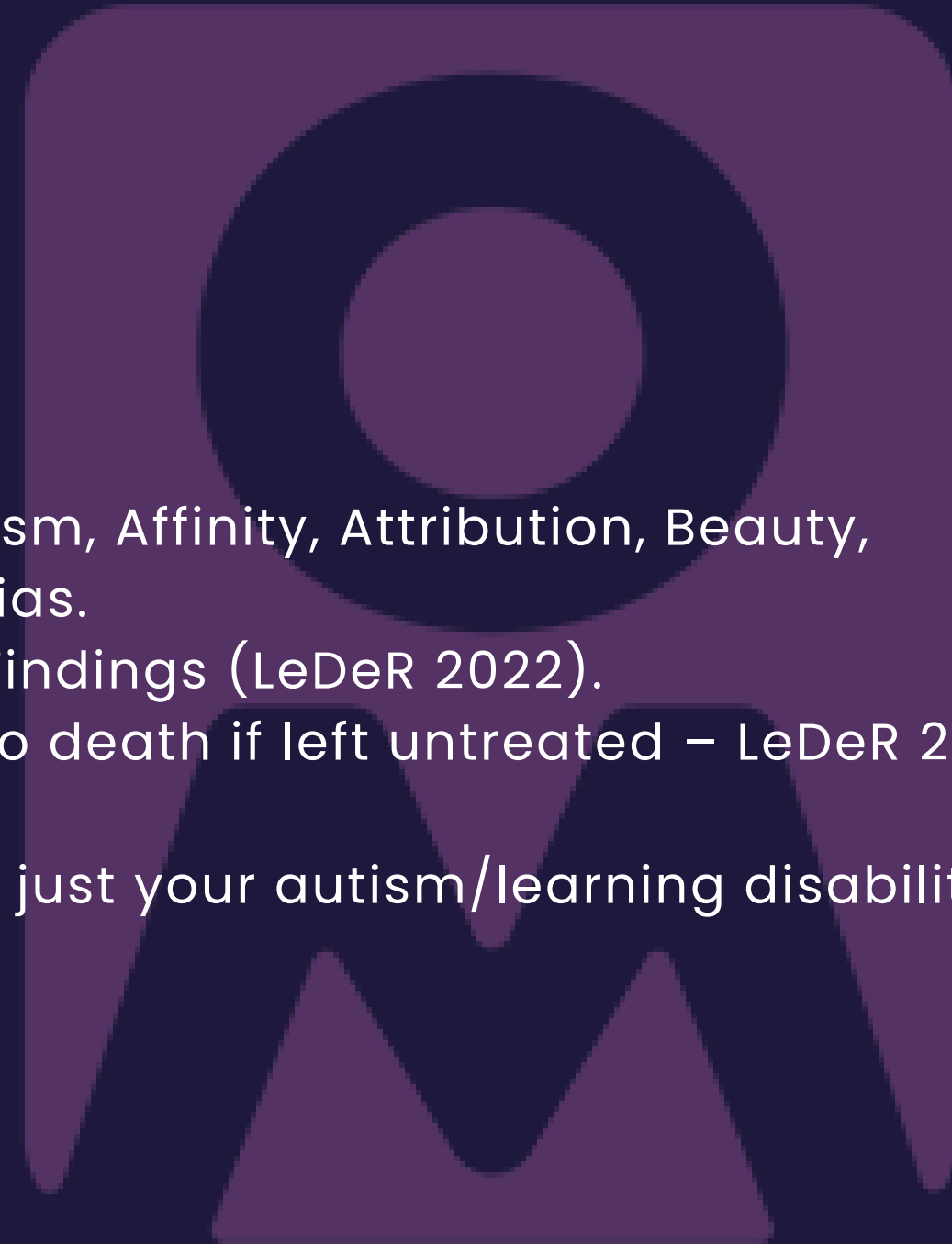
- Exploring Specific and Unconscious Biases: Ablesim/Disablism, Affinity, Attribution, Beauty, Conformity, Gender, Halo/Horns, Contrast, Ageism, Name bias.
- Introduction to the LeDeR program, detailed review of Key Findings (LeDeR 2022).
- Critical Health Issues; for example constipation (can lead to death if left untreated – LeDeR 2022 finding).
- Definition and examples of diagnostic overshadowing (“It’s just your autism/learning disability”).

Module 4: Legal Frameworks and Practical Solutions

- Human Rights Act
- Mental Capacity Act
- DNACPR (Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation)
- Communication
- Advance Care Planning
- The Health or Hospital Passport: Staff should use the person’s passport.
- Books Beyond Words (resource mention).

Module 5: Review and Conclusion

- Meet the Mencap Myth Busters (recap).
- Summary of all topics covered.



Course Content

PM Session: Autism Awareness:

Module 6: Introduction and Foundations (Setting the Context)

- Understand why autism is described as an invisible condition.
- Reflect on personal values and beliefs.
- Enhance understanding of autism and good practice, supported by current legislation.
- Oliver's story from his family's perspective (the why of the training).
- Understanding the duty on organisations to make reasonable adjustments (anticipatory and needs-led) under The Equality Act 2010.

Module 7: Defining Autism and Neurodiversity

- Introduce the concept of neurodiversity and other neurodivergences (e.g., ADHD, Dyslexia, etc.).
- What is Autism: Neurological difference, invisible, lifelong, clinically defined as a disability, spectrum condition.
- Identity-first language is generally accepted ("autistic person").
- The Autism Spectrum – the spiky profile (Dr. Luke Beardon).
- The "double empathy" concept that neurotypical and autistic people struggle to empathise with each other.
- How other identities (gender, race, sexuality, etc.) interact with and shape an autistic person's experience, leading to potential varied forms of discrimination.
- Common co-occurring conditions (Learning disability, mental health issues, physical health conditions).
- Mortality rates, prevalence, employment, and suicide rates.
- Understanding the impact of masking/camouflaging on mental health.
- Focusing on aptitudes like problem-solving, pattern recognition, and intense, creative work.

Course Content

Module 8: Areas of Difference and Good Practice (The Core Adjustments)

This section is driven by the “Autism + Environment = Outcome” model and focused on specific domains for adaptation.

Communication and Interaction:

- Differences in communication and interaction style.
- Communication – good practice (film).
- Clear/direct communication, visual support (Makaton, photos, etc.), processing time.

Certainty, Routine, and Predictability:

- Importance of Order and Routine: Group discussion
- Provide structure and predictability, offer written instructions, prepare for transitions and changes, include people’s interests.
- Understanding and respecting stimming as a way to reduce anxiety and facilitate learning.

Sensory Processing Differences:

- Group Work: Identifying the 8 sensory processing systems (Sight, Taste, Smell, Touch, Sound, Balance/Vestibular, Body Awareness/Proprioception, Internal Body Awareness/Interoception).
- Recognising sensory needs – good practice (film).
- Behaviours resulting from sensory differences (e.g., aversion to touch, high anxiety around procedures, proximity, alexithymia).
- Understanding and acceptance (e.g., stimming), minimising background noise, preparation (sensory maps), helpful equipment (headphones), considering yourself as part of the environment.



Course Content

Module 9: Stress, Anxiety, and Mental Health

- Recognising signs (e.g., increase in repetitive behaviour, meltdown/shutdown, non-speaking, sudden leaving) and how to support (e.g., communication, environment, predictability, slowing down, reassurance, time, and space).
- Recognising the long term impact – higher rates of depression, suicide, and other mental health conditions.
- Attending a care review meeting (film).

Module 10: Final Thoughts and Action Planning

- The Autism Act (2009) and National Strategy (2021): Overview of legislation and aims (helping understanding, school, jobs, equitable services, justice system).
- What changes can you make? (Considering adjustments in relation to processes, place, and people).
- Summary of core principles (Empathy, communication adjustments, sensory awareness, consistency, individualised approach).
- Next Steps: Local resources and further information and evaluation of what you've learned today.

The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism

Tier 1

For people who require general awareness of the support autistic people or people with a learning disability may need.



90 minutes

elearning with handbook

and



60 minutes

Online interactive session

or

Tier 2

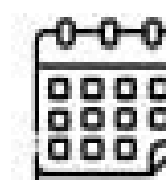
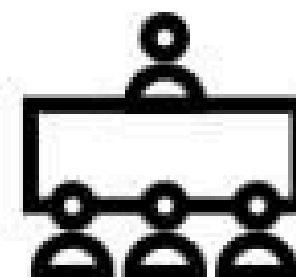
For people who may need to provide care and support for autistic people or people with a learning disability.



90 minutes

elearning with handbook

and



1 day

Face to face training