



Wherever the art of medicine is loved - there is also a love of humanity. (Hippocrates)



Image of Humanising Healthcare Project logo



Humanising Healthcare

ESRC Humanising Healthcare **Home** The Executive Exhibition N

Humanising Healthcare is a co-produced research project dedicated to finding and sharing healthcare practices that enhance the lives of people with learning disabilities (including people with learning disabilities who are also autistic people). This project runs from 2022 to 2025. You can also follow us on Twitter [@esrchumanhealth](https://twitter.com/esrchumanhealth)



Image of a butterfly symbolising hope





(1) To qualitatively investigate the cultures, conventions, systems, relationships and practices of a neurology service and A learning disability service through co-production, ethnography and narrative interviews.

(2) To identify the ways in which two distinct services and their practitioners deliver humanising healthcare for people with learning disabilities (including people with learning disabilities who are also autistic people).



Our Project logo - a healthcare professional with a big heart

Our research runs from the 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2025. Our team brings together university researchers, clinical researchers and advocacy-based researchers.

We would like you to [**Meet Our Team**](#)





Economic and Social Research Council

Case for Support

In these times of recovery and renewal, as we plan for a post-pandemic world, we believe that a new approach to healthcare is required. Responding to the ESRC's priority call for 'Innovation in health and social care', we will develop an approach to 'Humanising Healthcare' that identifies principles and practices of empathy, compassion, dignity, kindness and recognition through a co-produced project with researchers with learning disabilities and/or autism, medical clinicians and social scientists. You can access for full **Case for Support** by clicking on the link to the left.





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A Voice For Change

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DISABILITY EQUITABLE
RESEARCH

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iHuman

Disruptive research into
what it means to be human.



University of Sheffield

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Access the  **ESRC Humanising Healthcare** **Home** The Executive Exhibition N
Below you will find a link to our Accessible Document that explains our research

 Humanising Healthcare Launch document August 2022.pdf

You will find a more **Wordy Introduction** [here](#) and we give a **Wordy Summary** below:

To assume that healthcare is inherently humane, caring and healing ignores the fact that some people do not experience care in these ways. Recent scandals, inquiries and reports into Winterbourne View, Whorlton Hall, Mendip House, Slade House and Yew Trees Hospital have revealed the tragic consequences of dehumanising care for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism. These include ignorance, indifference and diagnostic overshadowing on the part of professionals (where underlying health conditions such as constipation or epilepsy are missed and symptoms incorrectly attributed to learning disability). Uptake of annual health checks, screening and follow up appointments are low and there is evidence of inappropriate prescriptions of psychotropic drugs. MENCAP concluded in their 2007 report *Death by Indifference* that the failure of healthcare services towards people with learning disabilities, their families and carers 'is a national disgrace. We say this is institutional discrimination'.

Prior to the pandemic, people with learning disabilities (including those that also have autism) already died 20-30 years earlier than their non-disabled counterparts. By Autumn 2020, people with learning disabilities and/or autism were six times more likely to die from Covid-19 than the rest of the population (Public Health England, 2020). Controversies associated with the Clinical Frailty Scale, healthcare rationing, Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Notices, the care home crisis and inconsistent access to vaccines have had the cumulative effect of devaluing the human worth of people with learning disabilities and/or autism. Despite many decades of attempts to promote empowering and holistic care practices - under the banner of person-centred care - people with learning disabilities risk being rendered expendable and disposable by the failings of healthcare.

Our project calls for a new approach - *Humanising Healthcare* - to identify principles and practices of empathy, dignity, compassion, kindness and recognition with a specific focus on adults with learning disabilities. We do not seek easy answers nor quick solutions though we are mindful of the urgency to radically change healthcare.



Economic and Social Research Council

The logo for our funder - the Economic and Social Research Council

Thank you!

We would like to acknowledge the funding of the Economic and Social Research Council **Economic and Social Research Council** (ES/W003406/1). Their support means that we can bring together a diverse group of researchers.