

What is mental health and learning disability nursing?

Mental health nursing and learning disability nursing are specialised fields that provide care and support to individuals with mental health issues and learning disabilities. They play a crucial role in delivering patient care in the NHS.

It involves a wide variety of roles working in different health and social care settings, and nurses can be trained as nursing associates, registered nurses and advanced practitioners. These roles include psychiatric and outpatient wards, specialist units within hospitals and community services.

They provide holistic, person-centred care to patients experiencing a range of difficulties, emotional distress, mental illness or a learning disability. They help patients understand their situation and overcome their mental health problems, and build effective relationships with people who use mental health services to help them live independent and fulfilling lives.

More information about specific mental health and learning disability nursing careers can be found on the [Health Careers](#) website or the NHS Careers [mental health](#) and [learning disability](#) nursing web pages.

"I believe that being a mental health nurse is extraordinary and a privilege. I still remember the names and faces of service users who have made themselves vulnerable with me. Sharing intimate stories from their lives to me; a stranger who has met them in their home and on the wards, when they are at their most vulnerable."

Jane Padmore, Executive Director of Quality and Safety (Chief Nurse) at Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust.

In an episode of the [Health on the Line](#) podcast, Jane also shares the joy and fulfilment of working for people with a learning disability. She also explores how reimagining the workforce, making better use of the voluntary sector and deepening understanding of the learning disability, autism and neurodiversity can go a long way.

Resources

NHS England have produced a [series of case studies](#) that share the real-life experiences of people who are working towards becoming or working as mental health nurses in the NHS.

NHS England have also published [a number of case studies](#) on the experiences of learning disability nurses in the NHS. [This video](#) from the North East and Cumbria learning disability network explores careers in learning disability nursing.