

Model for estimating the prevalence of Learning Disabilities

The Public Health Intelligence Unit developed the learning disabilities prevalence model to support Doncaster PCT's development of the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF). The model estimates prevalence for people above the age of eighteen who have learning disabilities.

In the United Kingdom approximately 2% of the population has mild learning disabilities, and 0.3 – 0.4 % have severe learning disabilities¹.

Emerson and Hatton² provide two sets of age-sex group rates. One is the 'Admin prevalence', defined as "...an estimate of people known to specialist services who have a severe learning disability"², and the other is the 'True prevalence', defined as "People with severe learning disabilities who would be known to services, and people with less severe learning disabilities who probably would not be known to services."².

The 'True prevalence' rates were used, and adjusted so that the rates for people below the age of eighteen are zero (for the given age band of 15 to 19 the rates were multiplied by two fifths)

		Prevalence per 100 by age and sex								
		0-4	5-9	10-15	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44
Men		0	0	0	1.29	3.09	2.84	2.87	2.82	2.86
Women		0	0	0	0.84	2.11	1.98	1.97	1.95	1.95
		45-49	50-54	55-59	60-64	65-69	70-74	75-79	80+	
Men		2.66	2.51	2.44	2.34	2.17	2.08	1.89	1.86	
Women		1.84	1.74	1.74	1.62	1.46	1.42	1.25	1.23	

No further adjustments were made.

1. GMS Contract 2006 2007.

2. Emerson E, & Hatton C (2004) Institute for Health Research, Lancaster University. Estimating the Current Need/Demand for Supports for People with Learning Disabilities in England.

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/ihr/research/learning/download/estimatingcurrentneed.pdf>

3. <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/xsdataset.asp?More=Y&vlnk=2428&All=Y&B2.x=51&B2.y=11>