

# Supporting people with a learning disability and autistic people to get the COVID-19 vaccination

## Top tips for volunteers

**As a volunteer, you may be the first person somebody arriving for their vaccination will meet, so be mindful that the environment and the personal protective equipment you are wearing may cause the person stress and anxiety.**

Smile, even if you have a face mask on, as this will still come through to the person.

Use plain English, avoid use of jargon, speak slowly and clearly, be calm as well as patient.

**Please don't assume that someone is unable to communicate. Check with the person and/or their carer.**

**Remember to ask what would help the person and be as flexible, understanding and as accommodating as possible.**



### **Remember!**

Talk to the person in a kind and friendly way. Be patient and help them to feel in control.

## **Top tips:**

- ✓ **The person may need someone to accompany them so they know where to go**
- ✓ **Where possible let the person know approximately how long they may have to wait**
- ✓ **The person may prefer to wait in their car and be called in or texted, only when the team are ready to give them their vaccination**
- ✓ **The person may prefer having their vaccination in their car, if possible**
- ✓ **Provide a less brightly lit space where possible**
- ✓ **If you are asked a question and you don't know the answer, please don't be afraid to admit this and say you will find out from someone who does**

## Further resources

NHS reasonable adjustment guide for staff supporting people with a learning disability, autism or both

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/improving-health/reasonable-adjustments/>

[NHS England and NHS improvement advice on using the right words](#)

[Autism fact sheets](#) (short resource developed for NHS volunteer responders)

[Learning disability fact sheets](#) (short resource developed for NHS volunteer responders)

PHE vaccination leaflet easy-read <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-easy-read-resources>.

[Guidance on Mental Capacity Act](#)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-looking-after-people-who-lack-mental-capacity/the-mental-capacity-act-2005-mca-and-deprivation-of-liberty-safeguards-dols-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic-additional-guidancea#best-interest-decisions>

MENCAP Treat me Well Campaign (<https://www.mencap.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-mencap/treat-me-well>).

MENCAP Equality Act easy read PDF

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-02/Equality%20Act%20-%20Easy%20Read.pdf>.

NICE clinical guide for frontline staff to support the management of patients with a learning disability, autism or both during the coronavirus pandemic

<https://www.nice.org.uk/Media/Default/About/COVID-19/Specialty-guides/learning-disability-autism-during-pandemic.pdf>.

