



Position Statement

A statement on the publication of learning disability mortality statistics in Scotland

Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities

February 2021



People with learning/intellectual disabilities in Scotland are three times more likely to die from COVID-19

“These statistics are sombre, but they are not surprising. English figures had already shown us that people with learning/intellectual disabilities were more likely to die of Covid-19 than the general population. Before the pandemic, we knew that people with learning/intellectual disabilities die on average 20 years earlier than the general population and that respiratory disorders are the leading cause of death. The pandemic has made a bad situation worse. This new evidence underlines the need to prioritise people with learning/intellectual disabilities for a Covid-19 vaccination and to take steps to support them in getting their vaccinations.

“Despite the outstanding efforts by the Scottish Learning Disabilities Observatory in undertaking this work, the delay in gathering this urgent data reflects the systemic and systematic failures that exist in the collection of disaggregated data for people with learning/intellectual disabilities in health data, as well as across social, economic and political life.

“If we truly to wish build back better as a society in Scotland from the pandemic, we must ensure that the lives of people with learning/intellectual disabilities are meaningfully reflected in routine data collection, and that we use this information to address the health and wider inequalities that they face.”

Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities (SCLD)

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