



## Extended Research Article

# Understanding the effectiveness and underlying mechanisms of lifestyle modification interventions in adults with learning disabilities: a mixed-methods systematic review

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## Plain language summary

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# Plain language summary

## Our question

Adults with learning disabilities are more likely to have an unhealthy lifestyle. This includes alcohol misuse, smoking, not much physical activity and an unhealthy diet. An unhealthy lifestyle can cause serious health problems. We wanted to understand what and why lifestyle change programmes for adults with learning disabilities work, how they work and why they work sometimes but not others.

## What we did

We searched for studies about lifestyle change programmes on alcohol consumption, smoking, low physical activity only, sedentary behaviour, and poor diet in adults with learning disabilities. We split our review into two. The first review focused on studies on lifestyle change programmes. The second review focused on some studies from the first review and also studies that interviewed people with learning disabilities and their caregivers.

We also asked what people with learning disabilities and other researchers thought were important.

## What we found

Our first review found 80 studies with 4805 adults. Studies showed mixed results related to what existing lifestyle change programmes work in adults with learning disabilities. Our second review found 79 studies. It explained the results of the first review and identified key characteristics of lifestyle programmes that are likely to improve the lives of adults with learning disabilities. Both reviews found that changing the lifestyles of adults with learning disabilities is very complex. We identified various personal, health, social and environmental aspects that are important to adults with learning disabilities.

## Conclusions

Current lifestyle change programmes need to consider the needs, wants and lives of people with learning disabilities. The best way to do this is by involving people with lived experiences when making the programmes.

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## This article

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