

The next issue!

Our theme for the Winter issue is *Health Matters*

It is some time since we had an edition of *PMLD Link* exploring the broad issues of health, yet this area is fundamental: health status directly impacts on every aspect of quality of life for everyone. By the very nature and complexity of profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) we know with certainty, health status will always play a very significant part in the lives of these individuals.

Our 2009 issue of *PMLD Link*, included articles describing health-related issues at both ends of the continuum – from best interest decisions around invasive procedures through to some very practical, day to day issues, for example on the basics of managing epilepsy; ensuring people were adequately hydrated; their nutritional needs met [either through an appropriately textured, well-planned diet or via enteral feeding]; advice on maintaining good oral health was given its rightful importance. This issue also offered a challenge to the concept of what '*good health care*' looks like for people with PMLD. Would that look the same today, in 2016? Have we achieved that?

In our 2013 issue we had a broader focus on Well-being, yet almost the entire Winter edition of *PMLD Link*, shared innovation and challenge to issues of healthcare – again full spectrum, from DNR decisions and more on invasive procedures, promoting positive mental health and well-being, developments in postural care practices, through to the importance of good primary healthcare and getting it right in GP surgeries. Are we there yet?

Sadly there is still much ground to be established before we have adequately addressed the difference in health status of people with PMLD from the rest of the population. To overcome these inequities, the challenge remains for fundamental and reasonable adjustments around access to responsive and good quality services to meet the needs of people with PMLD - in order to address premature and preventable deaths. In 2016, people with PMLD should not be dying as a consequence of complications from constipation, distorted body shape or nutrition.

We hope you will share articles and experiences on healthcare - whether in response to meeting needs through daily routines or, more specialist services. We welcome contributions that challenge and champion the need for appropriate and responsive healthcare for every individual with PMLD.

For our Health Matters issue of *PMLD Link* we are very fortunate to have Sue Turner join us as a Guest Editor. Sue is Learning Disability Lead for National Development Team for Inclusion. As part of her role she also works for the Public Health England Learning Disability Observatory (NDTi are one of the partner-organisations making up the observatory).

She has been a regular contributor to *PMLD Link*. Her most recent article (Spring 2016 issue of *PMLD Link*) shared her research on the inequalities of personalisation for those with the most complex needs.

Annie Fergusson, Beverley Dawkins and Sue Turner, Guest Editors

Please send all contributions by **24 October** to

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