



DYING for a poo

Preventing avoidable death in people with learning disabilities

Constipation – know the signs

A guide for support staff and families



Recent information shows that people with learning disabilities are dying from poorly managed constipation

Ask yourself the following questions

- 1 Has there been a change in the person's poo routine?
- 2 Does the poo look different?
(blood, change in consistency)
- 3 Is the person behaving differently?
- 4 Is the person refusing to eat and drink their favourite things?
- 5 Is the person moving around less?
- 6 Has there been a change in medication?

Many people aren't able to communicate what's wrong so it's up to us to **observe, monitor and advocate**

- 1 Monitor food and drink intake and use the Bristol stool chart (above)
- 2 Know what's normal for the person so you know when something's wrong
- 3 Speak to the GP giving clear information and evidence for your concerns
- 4 If treatment does not work go back to the GP
- 5 Have a clear constipation management care plan, regularly reviewed
- 6 Advocate for reasonable adjustments – you can request a home visit
- 7 If no progress is made, contact the local community learning disabilities team for support
- 8 When you know the constipation signs, have a plan of action and make sure everyone knows it

If you live in Camden, you can contact the CLDS nursing team for advice and support on **020 7974 3737**