

Psychiatry of intellectual disability (PID)

Psychiatrists working in intellectual disability assess and treat people with intellectual or learning disabilities.

This can include the assessment and management of neurodevelopmental disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity, autism spectrum disorder and epilepsy.



Life as an intellectual disability psychiatrist

People with intellectual disability (sometimes called learning disability) are more likely to have mental health problems so you'll provide patient-centric care to improve their quality of life.

Your patients will usually be adults aged over 18 years as younger patients tend to be seen by a child and adolescent psychiatrist.

You'll be required to adopt a [holistic](#) ^[1] approach as patients with intellectual disability often have physical conditions such as cerebral palsy or epilepsy.

Patients often present non-specifically. For example, they demonstrate withdrawal or a change in behaviour. You'll need to investigate and establish the cause in your diagnosis.

Common mental health conditions you'll treat include:

- anxiety
- bipolar disorder
- depression
- obsessive compulsive disorder
- schizophrenia

You'll work as part of a multidisciplinary team and be expected to collaborate with colleagues and a patient's family and carers.

Psychiatry is an interesting academic discipline, whether you are interested in the biological basis of mental health problems (e.g. dementia in people with Down's syndrome, behavioural phenotypes of genetic disorders), or the development of innovative service models or forensic

aspects of intellectual disability.

How much can I earn?

You'll first earn a salary when you start your [foundation training](#) ^[2] after medical school. Find out details of current salary ranges for foundation and specialty training, [SAS doctors](#) ^[3] and consultants on the '[Pay for doctors](#)' ^[4] page.

How about the benefits?

- make a difference
- flexible and part-time working
- high income early in your career
- work anywhere in the world
- excellent pension scheme
- good holiday entitlement
- NHS discounts in shops and restaurants

Must-have skills

- excellent communication skills to manage a wide range of relationships with colleagues, and patients and their families
- emotional resilience, a calm temperament and the ability to work well under pressure
- teamwork and the capacity to lead multidisciplinary teams
- problem-solving and diagnostic skills
- outstanding organisational ability and effective decision-making skills
- first-class time and resource management for the benefit of patients

In addition, intellectual disability psychiatrists need to demonstrate:

- empathy and compassion and the ability to treat others with understanding and respect
- respect for people with intellectual disabilities and the contribution they make to society
- patience
- excellent listening skills
- willingness to build relationships with their patients

Entry requirements

Your first step is medical school. Typically, you'll need excellent GCSEs and three A or A* passes at A level including chemistry for a five-year undergraduate degree in medicine. Many medical schools also ask for biology and others may require maths or physics.

If you already have a degree, you could study for a four-year postgraduate degree in medicine.

You'll need to pass an interview and admissions test. You'll be asked to show how you demonstrate the NHS values such as compassion and respect.

Some medical schools look to recruit a mix of students from different backgrounds and geographical areas, so your educational and economic background and family circumstances could be considered as part of your application.

What are my chances of starting a career in psychiatry of intellectual disability?

In 2021, there were 254 consultants in psychiatry of intellectual disability working in the NHS in England. In 2020, there were 30 applications for 52 training places.

How to become an intellectual disability psychiatrist

After medical school, you'll join the paid two-year [foundation programme](#) ^[5] where you'll work in six placements in different settings.

After your foundation programme, you can apply for paid [specialty training](#) ^[6] to become an intellectual disability psychiatrist, which will take a minimum of six years.

You may be able to train part time, for example for health reasons or if you have family or caring responsibilities.

Where a career as an intellectual disability psychiatrist can take you

You could:

- specialise or conduct research
- teach medical students or postgraduate students in training
- get involved in research at universities, the NHS or private sector

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- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disabilities - Lincoln**

Lincoln, LN1 1FS

Salary:

Negotiable

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disabilities - Lincoln job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[7]

- **Consultant in Psychiatry for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities**

Pembroke Dock, SA72 6DY

Salary:

£106000.00 to £154760.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hywel Dda University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Psychiatry for Adults with Intellectual Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[8]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disability-Little Plumstead**

Norfolk, NR13 5EW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disability-Little Plumstead job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[9]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disabilities-Forensic & Autism**

Marston Green, B37 7HL

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust
[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Intellectual Disabilities-Forensic & Autism job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[10]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist, Intellectual Disability - Pennine Lancashire**

Darwen, BB3 1AY

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist, Intellectual Disability - Pennine Lancashire job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[11]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist Intellectual Disability Inpatient Services**

Hull, HU6 8QG

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist Intellectual Disability Inpatient Services job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[12]

- **Locum Consultant Psychiatrist Intellectual Disability-Little Plumstead**

Norfolk, NR13 5EW

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Locum

Employer:

Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locum Consultant Psychiatrist Intellectual Disability-Little Plumstead job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[13]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Psychiatry of Learning Disability**

Leeds, LS12 3QE

Salary:

£114894.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Psychiatry of Learning Disability job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[14]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Learning Disability Psychiatry**

Carlisle, CA1 3SX

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and wear (CNTW) NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Learning Disability Psychiatry job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[15]

- **Consultant Learning Disability Psychiatrist**

Swansea, SA6 6AH

Salary:

£106000.00 to £154760.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Swansea Bay University Health Board

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Learning Disability Psychiatrist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[16]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Learning Disability**

Banbury, OX16 5AU

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Oxford Health NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Learning Disability job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[17]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in Learning Disability**

Ashington, NE63 0EY

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and wear (CNTW) NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in Learning Disability job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[18]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist (Community Forensic Learning Disabilities)**

Warrington, WA2 8WA

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist \(Community Forensic Learning Disabilities\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[19]

- **COMMUNITY CAMHS LEARNING DISABILITY CONSULTANT PSYCHIATRIST**

Canterbury, CT2 8JY

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

NELFT North East London Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for COMMUNITY CAMHS LEARNING DISABILITY CONSULTANT PSYCHIATRIST job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[20]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist - Learning Disability (LD) Service**

Northampton, NN1 5DG

Salary:

£125000.00 to £160000.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

St Andrew's Healthcare

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist - Learning Disability \(LD\)](#)

[Service job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[21]

- **Consultant Psychiatrist in CAMHS Learning Disability Team, Oxfordshire**

Oxford, OX3 7JH

Salary:

£105504.00 to £139882.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Oxford Health NHS Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant Psychiatrist in CAMHS Learning Disability Team, Oxfordshire job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[22]

- **Physiotherapist- Learning Disabilities**

Sheffield, S35 8QS

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Physiotherapist- Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[23]

- **Occupational Therapist - Community Learning Disabilities**

Brent, NW9 9QY

Salary:

£34521.00 to £41956.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Occupational Therapist - Community Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[24]

- **Dietitian in Community Learning Disabilities**

Sheffield, S35 8QS

Salary:

£35392.00 to £42618.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Dietitian in Community Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[25]

- **Community Learning Disability Care Coordinator**

Hollingworth, SK14 8HR

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Pennine Care NHS FT

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Community Learning Disability Care Coordinator job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[26]

- **Specialty Doctor in Learning Disability**

Southampton, SO40 2RZ

Salary:

£59175.00 to £95400.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialty Doctor in Learning Disability job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[27]

- **Art Therapist - Community Learning Disabilities**

Sandown, PO36 9EA

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Art Therapist - Community Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[28]

- **Clinical Team Leader - Learning Disabilities**

Preston, PR3 2JH

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Lancashire & South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Team Leader - Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[29]

- **Consultant in Learning Disabilities - IOW**

Sandown, PO36 9EA

Salary:

£99532.00 to £131964.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Consultant in Learning Disabilities - IOW job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[30]

- **Senior Specialist Occupational Therapist - Learning Disabilities**

Grimsby, DN32 7DH

Salary:

£43906.00 to £50112.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Care Plus Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Senior Specialist Occupational Therapist - Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[31]

- **Specialist Speech & Language Therapist - Learning Disabilities**

Pool, TR15 3QE

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Speech & Language Therapist - Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[32]

- **Learning Disabilities Support Workers (Days Only)**

Huddersfield, HD1 4HR

Salary:

£26208.00 to £27248.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cygnnet Health Care

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Learning Disabilities Support Workers \(Days Only\) job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[33]

- **Locality Clinical Manager- Adult Learning Disability**

Whitstable, Ashford, TN25 4AZ

Salary:

£53755.00 to £60504.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Locality Clinical Manager- Adult Learning Disability job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[34]

- **Clinical Psychologist - CAMHS Learning Disability Team**

Poole, Camborne, TR15 3QE

Salary:

£46148.00 to £52809.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Clinical Psychologist - CAMHS Learning Disability Team job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[35]

- **Band 6 Specialist Learning Disability Physiotherapist**

Swindon, SN25 4AN

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

HCRG Care Group

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Band 6 Specialist Learning Disability Physiotherapist job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[36]

- **Specialist Speech & Language Therapist - Learning Disabilities**

Bodmin, PL31 2QN

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Speech & Language Therapist - Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[37]

- **Lecturer Nursing (Learning Disability) 0.7 FTE**

London, E14 9GE

Salary:

£33564.00 to £39867.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

University of Sunderland in London

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Lecturer Nursing \(Learning Disability\) 0.7 FTE job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[38]

- **Service Manager Learning Disabilities, Transitions & Safeguarding**

Morden, SM4 5DX

Salary:

£65476.00 to £70152.00

Type:

Fixed-Term

Employer:

London Borough Of Merton

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Service Manager Learning Disabilities, Transitions & Safeguarding job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[39]

- **Specialist Speech & Language Therapist - Learning Disabilities**

Bodmin, PL31 2QE

Salary:

£37338.00 to £44962.00

Type:

Permanent

Employer:

Cornwall Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

[Apply now on NHS Jobs for Specialist Speech & Language Therapist - Learning Disabilities job \(opens in a new window\)](#) ^[40]

• Further information

The [Royal College of Psychiatrists](#) [41] has further information about being a psychiatrist of intellectual disability, particularly as your career progresses. Take a look.

Other roles that may interest you

- [General practitioner](#) [42]
- [Old age psychiatry](#) [43]
- [Liaison psychiatry](#) [44]
- [Knowledge and library services](#) [45]

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Links

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