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## 'My Hospital' Films Educate Learning-Disabled Patients



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Newcastle Hospitals have teamed with a community arts organisation to produce a series of films to educate learning-disabled people about what to expect as they prepare for hospital appointments which include radiology tests. Each film in the 'My Hospital' series features people with learning disabilities, along with their caregivers and hospital radiologists, as they arrive at hospital for an x-ray, a CT scan or an MRI scan. The official launch of the program was scheduled to coincide with Learning Disability Week between 16 and 22 June 2014.

### 'Gold Standard' Communication

Dr. Dominic Slowie, National Clinical Director for Learning Disabilities, has hailed the films as the new national 'Gold Standard' for how patients should receive information related to their healthcare. Those with learning disabilities may be especially nervous about undergoing unfamiliar radiological tests, and the short films have the potential to calm their fears and reassure patients by showing them what can be expected prior to their appointments. Best of all, the videos can be viewed wherever and whenever it is convenient thanks to their availability on the Newcastle Hospitals YouTube channel.

The films are a prime example of making healthcare services more equally accessible to learning disabled people by offering reasonable accommodations, according to Sir Leonard Fenwick, Chief Executive of Newcastle Hospitals. He has long been involved in promoting "Healthcare for All" to address the challenges faced by people with disabilities who need to access healthcare services. Not only are the films easy to view, but a special QR code links them to patient appointment letters for users with smartphones.

### Local Film Production

Them Wifies is a community arts organisation based in Newcastle, focused on using the arts to support a healthy, happy and positive community. It also addresses health inequalities, and hopes that the 'My Hospital' films will raise awareness of how a learning disability can impact the way a patient navigates the healthcare system. Learning-disabled patients are not the only people who will find the films helpful: the straightforward provision of information could benefit children, the elderly and those whose native language is not English.

Some of the films' actors are learning disabled, and brought their own experiences to the set. They, along with their caregivers and Freeman Hospital's radiology team, participated in the filming. There are approximately 1,100 patients with learning disabilities currently served by Newcastle Hospitals.

### 'Hospital Passports'

Newcastle Hospitals' efforts to support equal and effective access to healthcare for learning disabled people do not stop at filmmaking. As they are admitted to hospital, patients with learning disabilities carry a 'passport' which includes relevant data about their specific health needs. The information is compiled into a booklet prior to admission so that it can be accessed by hospital staff. The 'Hospital Passport', along with the new 'My Hospital' videos, ensure that all parties involved in the healthcare of learning disabled patients, including the patients themselves, are as informed as possible ahead of hospital visits.

[Source: Newcastle Hospitals](#)

Photo Credit: Google Images / Wikimedia

Published on : Mon, 23 Jun 2014