Helicobacter Pylori
and People with Learning Disabilities
What is H. Pylori?

H. Pylori is a bacterium (a bug). It lives in the stomach. It may not cause any harm. It can live undetected in the stomach for years, and cause no symptoms. It is associated with stomach and duodenal ulcers, non-specific pain and cancer.

Symptoms

- Undiagnosed stomach pain
- Weight loss
- Poor appetite/refusing food
- Vomiting - which can be white and stringy and often related to the pain. Symptoms maybe worse before or after meals
- Behaviour changes - a possible response to pain in people with communication difficulties

Diagnosis

The GP will organise a test. There are four tests that can be done:

- Blood test
- Breath test
- Stool sample
- Biopsy
**Why is H. Pylori important?**

It is very common in people with learning disabilities, and it can recur after treatment. H. Pylori is found, mainly, where people share accommodation and day places.

It can be passed between anus, hands and mouth, therefore good hand washing and personal hygiene are vital.

**Treatment**

The treatment is called Triple Therapy - 2 different types of antibiotics for two weeks and a drug to help heal the stomach lining.

If symptoms persist after treatment, go back to the GP.
References

Helicobactor Pylori SIGN Publication No 7
www.sign.ac.uk

Health Needs Assessment Report 2004 NHS Health Scotland
www.healthscotland.com