

Quality Innovation Newsletter

Issue 63 August 2026

Welcome to our Innovation Newsletter, with information about opportunities available, training and information we hope you will find useful. All our events are listed on the Provider Hub website.

www.essexproviderhub.org/provider-hub-news-and-events/

The Provider Quality Innovation Team have been bringing you training opportunities and support since 2014, visit our pages on the Essex Provider Hub

<https://www.essexproviderhub.org/quality/quality-innovation-team/>

Dementia : Intimacy, Sexuality & Relationships for Residential Care Homes

The Aim of this one day in person course, is to explore how we feel when dealing with issues of intimacy and sexuality in dementia care. You will consider stereotypes about older people and sexuality and develop strategies for improving care in this difficult area.

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Review your current attitudes, skills and knowledge about dementia.
- Define what is meant by intimacy and sexuality for older people and those with dementia.
- Explore and evaluate your attitudes to intimacy, sex and sexuality.

- Explain how dementia may affect behaviour in terms of intimacy, sexuality and inhibition.
- Choose person-centred care approaches for dealing with these situations.
- Identify the personal/organisational challenges we face when working with these issues (including safeguarding and the Mental Capacity Act).
- Use person-centred care strategies for dealing with these situations.

Dates:

10th Sept, 9.30am to 4.30pm, Colchester Football Stadium – Fully booked waiting list only

15th Sept, 9.30am to 4.30pm, Hamptons Chelmsford – Fully booked waiting list only

17th Sept, 9.30am to 4.30pm, Latton Bush Centre, Harlow

This training is open to Residential Care Homes in the Essex County Council Local Authority Area.

OT Weekly Advice Clinic - Virtual

Our Senior Occupational Therapist, Caroline Robinson is running a virtual weekly advice clinic, an opportunity to ask any OT questions in relation to any person you are supporting.

Every Wednesday, 10.30am to 11.30am.

To receive the link email

quality.innovation@essex.gov.uk

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OT Bite Size Sessions return for the Autumn!

Join our **FREE** bite-sized virtual sessions led by our Provider Quality Senior Occupational Therapist. Delivered via Microsoft Teams. Although the topics remain similar, new information has been added, and all care providers are welcome—including past attendees.

Safer Handling: considering good practice principles to ensure safe and dignified transfers

- 22nd Sept 2026, 10:00 – 12:00
- 5th Nov 2026, 13:00 – 15:00
- 15th Dec 2026, 13:00 – 15:00
- 16th Feb 2027, 10:00 – 12:00

Risk assessment for bed safety & manual handling: covering risk-adverse to risk-aware practices

- 30th Sept 2026, 13:00 – 15:00
- 13th Nov 2026, 10:00 – 12:00
- 14th Jan 2027, 10:00 – 12:00
- 26th Feb 2027, 10:00 – 12:00

Postural care – in all aspects of life: covering how to spot the signs of deterioration, support better posture, reduce deterioration, and contractures

- 9th Oct 2026, 10:00 – 12:00
- 18th Nov 2026, 13:00 – 15:00
- 20th Jan 2027, 13:00 – 15:00
- 3rd March 2027, 13:00 – 15:00

Falls Prevention & Retrieval: considering best & current practice, supporting equipment and other considerations

- 15th Oct 2026, 13:00 – 15:00
- 24th Nov 2026, 13:00 – 15:00
- 28th Jan 2027, 10:00 – 12:00
- 11th March 2027, 10:00 – 12:00

Dementia care: using a sensory and trauma-informed approach: considering how these approaches can help to understand the person better

- 23rd Oct 2026, 10:00 – 12:00
- 4th Dec 2026, 10:00 – 12:00
- 3rd Feb 2027, 13:00 – 15:00
- 19th March 2027, 13:00 – 15:00

Safer Handling for plus sized people & those with Dementia: considering equipment and techniques to better support people's needs

- 27th Oct 2026, 10:00 – 12:00
- 10th Dec 2026, 10:00 – 12:00
- 10th Feb 2027, 13:00 – 15:00
- 23rd March 2027, 10:00 – 12:00

Please note: the safer handling sessions do not replace your care providers mandatory manual handling training requirement.

To book email quality.innovation@essex.gov.uk

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My Home Life Leadership Programme



My Home Life, in partnership with Essex County Council, has been running Professional support and development programmes in Essex for 16 years, with cohorts for Homecare providers, Residential, Nursing and Learning Disability services and most recently, Registered Nurses and team leads. We are delighted to announce two new cohorts for 2026 starting in the Autumn. Dates to be announced.

Please note we can only accept one person from a Residential care home or Domiciliary Care Agency on a cohort at any one time.

My Home Life is an international initiative with 17 years' experience supporting quality of life and promoting positive practice in care home and care settings.

The programme is evidence-based and practice-informed. You will be introduced to a range of tools and relationship-centred principles and supported to develop your professional skills and leadership. There is a focus on growing existing strengths, whilst trying out new ideas.

If you would like to be considered for the next cohort, please email

Quality.innovation@essex.gov.uk

Nursing CPD Conference

The Nursing CPD conference is open to all registered nurses, from Nursing Homes and or agency nurses who work in Nursing Homes in the Essex County Council Local Authority Area.

The sessions will include participatory elements which can be used as evidence for validation and the NMC and RNC will have stands with information and a chance to ask questions during the lunch break.

The day will include:

Spotlight on Pressure Ulcers, Wound Care/dressing and Continence

Choice of two workshops from the below

- Cannulation
- Insulin
- MCA/DOLS

Dates

- 3rd November 2026, 9am to 4pm, Colchester Football Stadium
- 10th November 2026, 9am to 4pm, Hamptons, Chelmsford

To book please email

quality.innovation@essex.gov.uk

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PROSPER Champions Study Days

The Prosper team held their Champion study days across the county during June & July which were attended by 83 care staff from 32 different care homes.

Topics covered included Perspectives – seeing things differently, Sensory & Trauma Informed approaches, Nutrition and Hydration & Alzheimer's Society – Lift the Lid on Sexual Behaviours.

The events were informative and interactive with delegates feedback saying

"A varied day with interesting content"

"All the topics which we covered during todays session will help and provide more support to our residents and ourselves"

If you're not part of Prosper and would like to find out more, please see the provider hub <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/quality/quality-innovation-team/prosper/prosper/> or email the Prosper Team at Prosper@essex.gov.uk

*The Prosper Project is open to all older people's residential care and nursing homes that are within the Essex County Council local Authority Area.

Prosper Community of Practice

Save the date 20th October, Hamptons Chelmsford.

Further details to be released.

Ageing Well & Frailty delivered by Princess Alexandra Hospital

West Essex Care Homes only

This bespoke dynamic study day, delivered by Princess Alexandra Hospital Frailty team, is dedicated to care home staff to help improve care of people living with frailty and will cover:

- Understanding Frailty
- Sepsis in Frailty
- Delirium and Frailty
- Polypharmacy
- Advance Care Planning
- End of Life Management

28th September 2026, 9.30 – 3.30pm – The Harlow Hotel, Harlow

To book email quality.innovation@essex.gov.uk

Parkinson's Awareness

The half day training course for Residential Care Home Staff will increase your knowledge and confidence in supporting people with Parkinson's.

- Identify Parkinson's symptoms and the challenges they can present
- Explore how Parkinson's is managed
- Recognise the importance of time critical medication
- Understand the changing needs of people living with Parkinson's

5th August 2026, 1.30pm to 4.30pm Colchester
(please note the morning session is fully booked)

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AWD Training Opportunities & Updates

Please see details of our upcoming offers for learning disability registered services from August to November 2026.

Capable Environments – Communication Domain

The course content will cover the Communication domain of Capable Environments including:

- Communication plans, including content and resources
- Implementing communication systems
- Communication and behaviours that challenge (how communication can influence behaviours of concern, going over ABC's etc)
- Communication accessibility
- Developing a communication profile for an individual the participant supports

[Click here for booking form](#)

Autism Presentation in Women , Girls & People AFAB

Delivered by Resources for Autism. Examine how autism may present differently in women, girls, and people assigned female at birth. Explore theories around gender bias, common misdiagnoses, and

increase awareness of often misunderstood experiences to enhance your practice.

[Click here for booking form](#)

Mental Health First Aid

Delivered by Essex County Council Quality Innovation Team. This 2-day course will enable participants;

- A deeper understanding of mental health and the factors that can affect people's wellbeing
- Practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues
- The confidence to step in and support someone in the workplace by guiding them to appropriate support
- Three years access to the MHFAider Support App® with 24/7 digital support
- Access to exclusive resources, ongoing learning opportunities, and the benefit of joining England's largest community of trained MHFAiders®

September date: [Events – Mental Health First Aid \(2-day course\) | Provider Hub](#)

November dates: [Events – Mental Health First Aid \(2-day course\) | Provider Hub](#)

[Events – Mental Health First Aid \(2-day course\) | Provider Hub](#)

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Makaton for Frontline Workers: General Wellbeing Workshop

A robust session promising to unlock your communication potential. Designed to meet diverse communication needs and enhance your organisation's accessibility.

- Proficient in everyday Makaton signs and symbols.
- Competent in specialist signs and symbols designed to improve communication and reduce anxiety during appointments.
- Promote inclusion and awareness.

September date [Click here for booking form](#)

October date [Click here for booking form](#)

Ableism Awareness: How to be more inclusive

Delivered by Enhance the UK, this half-day session will enable participants to;

- Define disability and ableism
- Identify how ableism can manifest
- Explore different types of ableism
- Recognise biases and microaggressions
- Understand the role of language in challenging ableism
- Communicate appropriately about access requirements
- Use strategies to promote anti-ableism in social care settings

[Click here for booking form](#)

Dysphagia Awareness

Delivered in collaboration with Essex Learning Disability Partnership. This awareness session will enable participants to;

- To understand the structures & processes involved in the normal swallow
- To be aware of the signs & symptoms of Dysphagia
- To understand commonly made recommendations & why they're made
- To know the different individuals' roles in managing Dysphagia
- To know who to refer to & the roles of the MDT
- To be aware of how to thicken drinks and modify food

[Click here for booking form](#)

Sepsis Awareness

Data from [LeDeR](#) reviews has shown us there are some common themes involved in the often-avoidable deaths of people with a learning disability and Sepsis is one of the themes.

We are offering the opportunity for providers to attend a fully funded virtual session on Sepsis awareness Delivered by Essex County Council Quality Innovation Team. This awareness session will increase knowledge and raise awareness in the recognition and management of Sepsis.

[Click here for booking form](#)

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Quality Essentials

Delivered by ECC Provider Quality Innovation Team. This training has been developed by drawing together key learning and priorities from Ageing Well, LeDeR outcomes, safeguarding themes, and recent CQC inspection findings across Essex.

By combining insights from these areas, the session aims to strengthen understanding, improve practice, and support high-quality care delivery for adults with learning disabilities and/or autism.

It is a compact session that brings together a large amount of information in a short space of time, designed to highlight the most important points and spark reflection and improvement across services.

Please see booking form for topics covered in the session. [Click here for booking form](#)

Understanding & supporting Autistic People using the SPELL Framework

Delivered by The National Autistic Society This course builds your knowledge of Autism and how to support Autistic adults using the SPELL framework.

SPELL is a flexible framework that supports our understanding of Autistic experience and how to explore supportive approaches.

Learning Outcomes

- Define and explain the differences experienced by Autistic people
- Describe the principles of the SPELL framework
- Apply the principles of the SPELL framework to practice

[Click here for booking form.](#)

Using & Adapting Visual Resources

Delivered by Resources for Autism. This session presents a range of visual resources to increase access to communication and support understanding. Consider the visual hierarchy, interests, and take away ideas for new resources and ways to adapt existing ones to individual needs.

[Click here for booking form](#)

Understanding & Managing Pathological Demand Avoidance

Gain a thorough understanding of Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) in this two-hour intensive training delivered by NEDDE Training. This course provides valuable insights and practical strategies for professionals and individuals looking to enhance their knowledge.

- **Comprehensive Insights:** Explore the characteristics, manifestations, and underlying causes of PDA.

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- **Accurate Diagnosis:** Learn effective assessment techniques for PDA, enabling early identification and intervention.
- **Intervention Strategies:** Discover evidence-based approaches and therapies for managing and supporting individuals affected by PDA.

Q&A Opportunities: Engage in dedicated question and answer sessions to clarify doubts and gain deeper insights.

[Click here for booking form](#)

Postural Care: a few reminders

- Postural changes can be predictable but do not need to be inevitable.
- Prevention is far better than cure.
- Postural care must be 24/7 - supporting posture in sleeping as well as seating not one or the other.
- Good postural care can help to prevent, aspiration pneumonia, problems with digestion, pressure ulcers, falls, problems with communication, spinal changes, contractures, pelvic changes, and poor wellbeing.
- If equipment has been provided by a therapist, it is good practice to take a picture of the person in their equipment once it has been set up for them. This can be placed in the person's care plan and act as a reference for all staff.

- If you notice a person's posture is deteriorating and you have tried unsuccessful ways to prevent it worsening, make a referral for a therapy assessment.

Postural support for people with a diagnosis of a learning disability can be found here [ELDP - ELDP](#)

The Reasonable Adjustment Digital Flag

The reasonable adjustment digital flag is a national record which indicates that reasonable adjustments are required for an individual and optionally includes details of their significant impairments, key adjustments that should be considered, and underlying conditions.

NHS England has built the reasonable adjustment digital flag in its National Care Records Service (previously known as the [NHS Spine](#)) to enable health and care professionals to record, share and view details of reasonable adjustments across the NHS, wherever the person is treated.

The [Equality Act \(2010\)](#) places a legal duty on all health and care services to make changes to their approach or provision to ensure that services are as accessible to people with disabilities as they are for everyone else. This duty aims to address the recognition that people with a disability may appear to have equal access to care and services, but

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without specific adjustments being made, that access may not be equitable.

Find out more here [Reasonable Adjustment Flag - NHS England Digital](#)

Did You Know?

Annual Health Checks Should Lead to a Health Action Plan.

An Annual Health Check is an important opportunity to identify health needs and improve outcomes for adults with a learning disability. However, the real benefit comes from having a Health Action Plan in place afterwards.

A Health Action Plan sets out:

- Any health issues identified during the check
- Actions that need to be taken
- Who is responsible for completing them
- Any support the person may need to stay healthy

The GP practice is responsible for creating or updating the Health Action Plan following the Annual Health Check. Providers then play a key role in supporting the person to follow the plan, attend appointments, and achieve their health goals.

When reviewing care records, providers should be able to evidence not only that an Annual Health Check has taken place, but also that a current

Health Action Plan is available and being acted upon.

Remember: An Annual Health Check should not be a tick-box exercise. The Health Action Plan is what turns identified health needs into meaningful action and improved health outcomes.

Good Food Good Foods

Good Food, Good Moves is a pilot initiative focused on improving nutrition, weight, mealtime engagement and overall health outcomes for people living with a learning disability. The pilot currently supports individuals living in residential care settings across Essex. The team is uniquely made up of a learning disability dietitian, a health and wellbeing mentor specialising in education and teaching around cooking, and a Sport for Confidence occupational therapist. For more information, please contact Sport for Confidence [Good Food, Good Moves](#)

Essex Care Association PBS Community of Practice

Are you in a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) role and looking to connect with fellow professionals? Join our vibrant Community of Practice Network for an engaging session focused on support, learning, and growth! This is a fantastic opportunity to learn from each other, share experiences, and strengthen our collective impact within the field of Positive Behaviour Support.

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This is not PBS training. In order to attend, you must be actively involved in PBS in your day-to-day role, have a PBS qualification, or be working towards a PBS qualification. This network is not suitable for support staff. You should currently support an Essex-based resident commissioned via the ECC Complex Care Framework.

Please visit the Essex Care Association site for updates on the next meeting date. [Events | Essex Care Association](#)

“ Building Mental Health Awareness across the Care Sector”



Stacey Milton from the Quality Innovation Team recently partnered with Richard Gatewood from Mind to deliver **Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) England training** to a cohort of 15 delegates from a range of adult social care providers.

Participants represented a variety of organisations, including **Warren Homecare, Eleven Sisters, Magic Helping Hands, Prime Care Domiciliary, Banquo Ltd, Care Just4U, Bamburgh House, Maison Care, and Maple Manor Care Home.**

The training provided learners with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to recognise when someone may be experiencing a mental health issue, offer initial support, and signpost individuals to appropriate professional help.



We would like to congratulate all participants on becoming Mental Health First Aiders. We hope our new MHFAiders go on to have rewarding careers using their newly acquired knowledge and skills to support the wellbeing of colleagues, people who draw on care and support services, and those around them. Their commitment to promoting positive mental health will help create healthier, more supportive care environments across the sector. Well done to everyone involved! 🙌