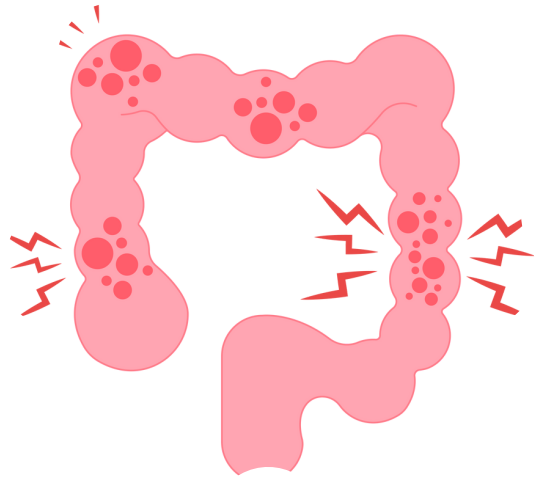
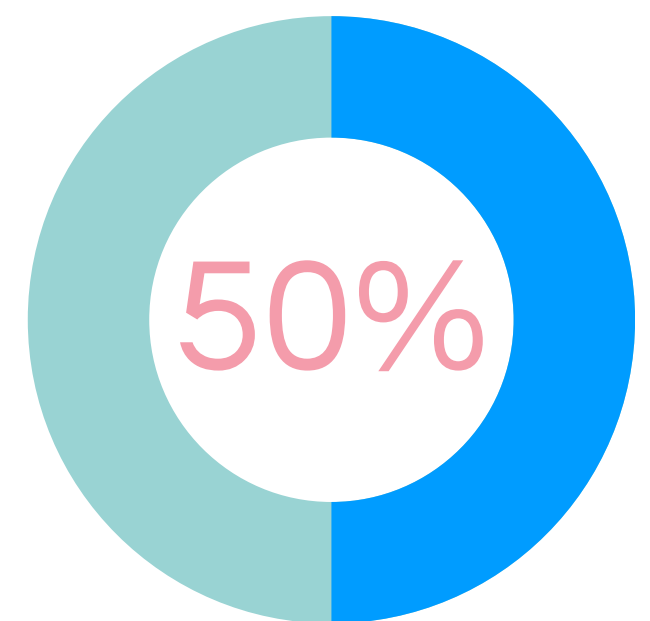


# LEDER REPORT: CONSTIPATION RELATED DEATHS



We looked at 97 focused reviews for the 2021 LeDeR data. Almost half of the people who died had problems with constipation. Constipation is a significant issue for people with a learning disability.

Over 50% of the sample were prescribed medications that could cause constipation. Medications were scored as to how risky they were to cause constipation, with the riskiest scoring 4 and those which had the lowest risk scoring 1. The average total risk score for people in the sample was 8, meaning people were taking combinations of at least 2 medications that were rated as being associated with a risk of causing constipation.



Laxative prescriptions were very common, with 40% of people in the sample being prescribed at least one laxative. However, very few people in our sample were shown to be fully aware of what actually constitutes normal bowel function, or had received appropriate education on normal bowel habits.

Constipation did not appear on any part of any death certificates as a cause of death but 13% of people identified in our data as having constipation did die of causes of death such as bowel perforation and obstruction which are associated with constipation.

bowel obstruction  
fecal impaction  
bowel perforation  
constipation  
bowel cancer  
bowel ulcer

# ACTIONS FOR CLINICIANS AND CARERS



1

Accessible advice and education about constipation should be offered to people with a learning disability and their caregivers, particularly to those identified at risk.

2

Holistic, person-centred medication reviews which adhere to guidance (such as STOMP and STAMP) should be completed at least annually by practitioners experienced in learning disability. Regular medication reviews should be completed to mitigate the effects of medications that cause constipation.

3

Bowel monitoring is essential for those at high risk of developing constipation to ensure it is identified and treated as early as possible, ideally before laxatives are needed. Improvements in the promotion and use of non-laxative techniques should be explored.

## THE MEDICHEC APP

As part of our work, and in partnership with the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust, an app enabling clinicians and patients to determine the risk of their medications, and the combinations of medications, for causing constipation will soon be available in the [Autumn of 2023](#). The app is free to use online, with a one-off payment for the Android and Apple app versions. This will build upon the current ability of the app to identify medications that might have a negative effect on cognitive function in older people.



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