

Health and Wellbeing Board

15th November 2013



2010 Adult Autism Strategy “Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives” Evaluating Progress – the second national self assessment exercise

Report of Nick Whitton - Head of Commissioning, Children and Adults Services, Durham County Council

Purpose of the Report

1. To update on progress in relation to the Autism Strategy implementation and completion of the self assessment framework.
2. To give approval for the development of a local action plan for submission to the Health and Wellbeing Board in January 2014.

Background

3. Early in August 2013, Local Authorities were notified by Norman Lamb, Minister of State for Care and Support, that a second self assessment exercise is to be undertaken.
4. The purpose of the exercise is to:
 - Assist Local Authorities and partners in assessing progress in implementing the 2010 Adult Autism Strategy.
 - See how much progress has been made since the baseline survey of February 2012.
 - Provide evidence of examples of good progress and of remaining challenges.
5. The return date for completion of the self-assessment was Monday 30 September, however this was subsequently extended. Durham County Council's return was submitted to Public Health England via the 'Improving Health and Lives' website.

Current Situation

6. Work has been carried out with partners to complete the on-line return.
7. A 'Validation Event' with 25 stakeholders including service users and carers took place on 27 September 2013, where further evidence to populate the return was gathered. The event also assessed what

red/amber/green rating should be applied in relation to some areas of the return.

8. The on-line evaluation template consists of 37 questions, covering specific area as follows:
 - Planning
 - Training
 - Diagnosis
 - Care and Support
 - Housing and Accommodation
 - Employment
 - Criminal Justice System

Appendix 2 contains the completed 'Autism Self Evaluation'.

9. There is also an optional area for inclusion of up to 5 self advocacy stories to illustrate or support any of the questions answers/traffic light ratings. Several case studies have been submitted as evidence.
10. Norman Lamb acknowledged the short timescales for this exercise, as well as the overlap with the on-going Learning Disability self-assessment framework (SAF). Consequently, the expectation is that Directors "are aware of the content of the return when it is submitted and that it is discussed by the local Health and Wellbeing Board by the end of January 2014".
11. This two-stage process, by implication, is to allow Local Authorities further time to develop a local action plan in response to the evaluation findings.
12. As can be seen from the submitted return, the self assessment return is very positive/shows a green traffic light rating in relation to the following areas;
 - Planning
 - Training
 - Diagnosis
 - Care and Support
 - Housing and Accommodation

This reflects progress made since the passing of the Autism Act 2009.

13. In relation to the areas of Employment and Criminal Justice the return was less positive/red or amber. This reflects the lack of progress locally and regionally in these areas. However, training has been provided by a local autism provider for Magistrates Courts, Probation and Custody Sergeants. Engagemen with Criminal Justice Service partners will be consolidated through the Health and Wellbeing Board and will be a feature of the next autism action plan for County Durham.

14. Areas to be addressed following the Self Evaluation will include the following:
- The needs of older people with autism (as was also highlighted by a recent National Autism Society policy document, “Getting On? Growing older with Autism”) So far these have not been considered in County Durham.
 - Strengthening the focus on employment pathways for people with autism, to achieve higher levels of employment rather than work experience or volunteering.
 - Engaging with partners in the Criminal Justice system to ensure that people with autism are dealt with effectively and fairly.
15. The local action plan will also look to consolidate progress made in relation to data and needs mapping, carer and service user engagement and the development of post diagnosis support services.
16. Alongside that, mainstream agencies need to continue to make ‘reasonable adjustments’ where possible, in order to improve service access for people with autism.

Recommendations

17. The Health and Wellbeing Board are recommended to accept this report for information and receive a detailed report and action plan in January 2014.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance Self-assessment may identify gaps in provision. Work to be undertaken with NHS to secure longer term funding for services.

Staffing Relevant staff are participating in a validation event.

Risk Assessment will identify risks e.g. through not meeting need etc. which will be included in the local action plan.

Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty Assessment focuses on needs of people with autism at risk of disadvantage discrimination.

Accommodation N/A

Crime and Disorder Assessment and action plan will identify needs of people with autism in the criminal justice system.

Human Rights Assessment and action plan will identify any issues related to Human Rights Act.

Consultation Carers and service users will participate in validation event and the local action plan.

Procurement Assessment will include details of post diagnosis support service which will be procured in 2013.

Disability Issues Identified in assessment and addressed through action plan.

Legal Implications Assessment will focus on compliance with Autism Act.