

Health and Wellbeing Board

5 November 2014



Update - Implementing “Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives”- the statutory guidance for local authorities and NHS bodies regarding the implementation of the Autism Act (2010)

Report of Jane Robinson, Head of Commissioning, Children and Adults Services, Durham County Council

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides an update on progress in response to the statutory guidance Implementing “Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives” and the report to Health and Wellbeing Board on 21 January 2014.

Background

2. There have been a number of recent policy developments that aim to promote the long term vision that “all adults with autism are able to live fulfilling and rewarding lives within a society that accepts and understands them. They can get a diagnosis and access support if they need it and they can depend on mainstream public services to treat them fairly as individuals, helping them to make the most of their lives.” (DH Guidance p7).” These include:
 - The Autism Act 2009
 - Statutory Guidance to implementing the Act
 - The national strategy: Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives

The guidance covers four main areas of activity:

- Training of staff who provide services to adults with autism.
- Identification and diagnosis of autism in adults, leading to an assessment of need for relevant services.
- Planning in relation to the provision of services, especially as people with autism move through transition from being children to adulthood.
- Local planning and leadership in relation to the provision of services.

3. In response to the above Durham County Council compiled an action plan to progress the autism agenda and areas identified in the SAF as requiring development. Progress against the action plan is positive and we are aware from our work with the regional group that we compare favourably with other authorities in terms of new developments. An updated version is at Appendix 2 and details steps taken so far to meet the plan and a number of developments are highlighted below.
4. One of the most significant developments has been the commissioning of the post diagnosis service which was awarded to an organisation called MAIN. This has been jointly commissioned with the NHS through the North East Commissioning Service. People are eligible to use this service from age 16 to improve transition between childrens and adult services.
5. The service is currently providing direct support to over 30 people and has quickly established links with organisations and professionals across the County. In addition to direct support to individuals the service will also develop the autism strategy in the following ways:
 - **Provide autism training**

Training will focus on improving the skills and knowledge of a range of public and private services to improve employee understanding, knowledge and skills in supporting people with autism and improve the services available to people with autism. This will include supporting organisations in making reasonable adjustments. Examples of organisations to be targeted include GP surgeries, jobcentre plus, leisure centres, carer centres, advice agencies and other community groups.
 - **Act as an expert practitioner**

The provider has a level of knowledge and expertise that will benefit staff from other organisations and they will offer advice and guidance to improve other services. Support and advice will also be made available to families and the provider will offer specific advice and guidance on issues that are causing difficulties. This could include communication skills and techniques and how to continue to offer support in relation to specific areas when support from the provider is withdrawn.
6. One of the more challenging areas of the action plan is to increase employment opportunities for people with autism. This is one of the areas the post diagnosis service focuses on in individual support and also an outcome for a Community Chest funded project that seeks to increase people's skills and confidence in an attempt to make them "job ready." A bid has also been made to the Autism Innovation Fund and if this is successful will provide apprenticeships to individuals with autism. The result of this bid is expected later in October. Additional work will

be undertaken in 2015 to improve training and employment through European Funding managed by Economic Development.

7. A multi-agency event was organised by the police in July 2014 and focused on autism and criminal justice issues. It featured a nationally recognised speaker and plans are underway to host a regional event in 2015.
8. Autism issues in relation to the criminal justice system will be the subject of further detailed work as part of the implementation of the Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat.

Next steps

9. The next autism self-assessment (SAF) is expected to be issued for completion in November 2014. We intend to increase the level of carer and service user involvement in identifying priority areas for development in the SAF and the 2015/16 action plan for Durham. This will be supported through providers and the carer support service
10. Further statutory guidance is expected to be published towards the end of October 2014 on implementing the autism strategy and plans are underway to consult with carers and service users on this.

Recommendations

11. The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:
 - Receive this report for information

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – No additional funding was made available to implement the Autism Act. Additional projects have been funded through Community Chest and Section 256.

Staffing – Training to develop skills and knowledge of autism available from MAIN.

Risk – N/A

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty – Developments included in this report support reasonable adjustments and have a positive impact on E&D.

Accommodation – Accommodation developed on a needs basis. Respite accommodation at New Warlands farm now open.

Crime and Disorder – Work underway with police. Additional work to assess need for initiatives in prisons as part of Care Act Implementation.

Human Rights – Rights of people with autism strengthened by the Act.

Consultation – Consultation with carers and service users to be further developed through Durham Implementation Group.

Procurement - Post diagnosis service now operational.

Equality Act – Action plan has had a positive impact on DCC duties.

Legal Implications – Further statutory guidance to be consulted on.

Appendix 2: The Continuing Implementation of the 2010 Adult Autism Strategy

“Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives” in County Durham County Council

Action Plan for 2014/15

	Quality Outcome/Service Ambition	Action	Lead Person	Date for Completion	Update 1.10.14	Progress Monitoring/Outcomes Indicator
1.	Adults with autism achieve better health and social outcomes	Development of a post-diagnosis support service in County Durham	D. Shipman (CAS)	July 2014	Service operational since May 2014	Tender issued Jan 14
					30 service users currently being supported	Tender awarded Feb 14
					Training courses commenced and attracting positive response.	Service in place June 14
2.	Adults with autism access a range of mainstream and specialist accommodation options	Development of specialist packages	D. Shipman (CAS)	March 2015	Packages developed as and when required through Commissioning Advisory Group, Budget Panel and care coordination.	New packages in place
		Improved access to mainstream options in DCC Housing Solutions Service	L. Hall (Housing Solutions)	March 2015	Post diagnosis service to support with accommodation options on individual basis.	People with autism placed in mainstream housing
		Inclusion of Autism needs in The County Durham Housing Strategy	D. Siddle (RED)	March 2015	DCC Housing Strategy to be refreshed and Commissioning Service will work to include specialist autism provision within this.	Revised strategy published

	Quality Outcome/Service Ambition	Action	Lead Person	Date for Completion	Update 1.10.14	Progress Monitoring/Outcomes Indicator
3.	Adults with autism are dealt with appropriately/ effectively in the Local Criminal Justice Services	Work between partner agencies, including Prison, Probation, Police and Youth Offending to identify issues for County Durham	D. Shipman (CAS) K. Weir (Police) C. Carey (Probation) G. Eshelby (Youth Offending)	March 2014	Multi agency work underway through Safer Durham partnership.	Completed
		Develop responses to identified issues	All	September 2014	Check point diversion service; autism to be built into appropriate adult service.	Being addressed as part of Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat work and consideration of an Appropriate Adults Scheme
		Host a local/regional seminar to spotlight the issues and best practice responses	All	December 2014	Multi agency event held September 2014. Durham event planned for 2015.	To be determined
4.	Adults with autism are able to access employment opportunities	Work with the Social Inclusion/Economic Partnership to identify and develop future employment opportunities	T. L. Payne	March 2015	Innovation Fund bid submitted to create apprentice and employment opportunities.	Working group established March 14
					Support to develop employability skills available through commissioned services.	Targets achieved March 15
					Training on employing people with autism to be provided by MAIN.	

	Quality Outcome/Service Ambition	Action	Lead Person	Date for Completion	Update 1.10.14	Progress Monitoring/Outcomes Indicator
5.	Staff working with people with autism have appropriate skills, knowledge and training.	Development and Implementation of an autism-specific training programme which will incorporate the following;	H. Ostele (CAS Learning & Development)	March 2014 Onwards	Autism awareness training by post diagnosis provider underway.	Programme developed and delivered to key personnel from March 2014.
		Equality & Diversity Training				
		Communication and Sensory Issues				
		Awareness Raising				
		Specialist training for staff provided direct support and carer				
		Joint training with Criminal Justice partners	H. Ostele (CAS Learning & Developments)	March 2014 Onwards	As above. Awareness training underway. 2 sessions held in September 2014.	Programme developed and delivered from March 2014
		Advice and information for Carers				

	Quality Outcome/Service Ambition	Action	Lead Person	Date for Completion	Update 1.10.14	Progress Monitoring/Outcomes Indicator
6.	Adults with autism and Carers receive regular information about autism support services in County Durham	Regular Service updates to be provided to Carers Centres & Partnership groups	D. Shipman (CAS)	Quarterly	Service update provided through the carers Echo and DCC staff publications. Quarterly meetings with the carers support service.	
		Market Place event for Autism Service providers	S. Garrett	March 2014	Event held March 2014.	
		Marketing/Publicity/Press releases	C. Smith	On-going	Releases in Carers Echo and DCC staff updates. Press adverts taken out by MAIN	On-going
		On-going support from Co Durham Carers support	CDCS	On-going	Service takes up issues with individual carers as an ongoing part of their role.	On-going
7.	Older adults with autism received appropriate support	Work with colleagues in Older peoples Services to identify any autism specific issues	Denise Elliott	March 2014	No older people with autism identified through DCC older persons service. MAIN working with one older person.	To be determined
		Develop responses to identified issues	Denise Elliott	Sept 2014	Support available to individual identified. Training available to service providers who may work with older people.	To be determined
8.	Younger adults with autism have access to social activities and achieve greater social inclusion	Work with voluntary sector partners, KK2 and the MAIN Project, to develop socially inclusive activities across Co Durham	D. Shipman (CAS)	Sept 2014	3 projects to facilitate social inclusion all operational.	Events across Co Durham up and running by Sept 2014