

Autism Partnership Meeting

29/03/22 at 10:30-12:30pm

Attendees:

Valerie Fitch	Chair / Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Laura Ferguson	Herefordshire Council
John Gorman	Herefordshire Council
Paul Choppen	Herefordshire Council
James Baker	Hereford Make /Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Richard Keble	ICS
Abby	Parent/Carer
Gill Gorle	ACSYLE
Alexia Health	Herefordshire Council
Anna Wainwright	HVOSS & All Sorts
Leah Blake	Herefordshire Carers Links
Kelly Watts	Talk Community
Les Knight	Herefordshire Council
Julie Walker	Herefordshire Council
Bernadette Louise	Autism Champion for Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Apologies:

Debbie Hobbs	Herefordshire and Worcestershire NAS / Parent Carer Voice
Rob Gorle	ACSYLE
Rebecca Ashton	Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Brigid McGrath	Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Helen George	Herefordshire Council

Introductions
Apologies
Conflict of Interest Declaration

Valerie asked members if they had a conflict of interest to declare which no one did.

Minutes from Previous

Action 1 - Autism Terminology - Valerie had a meeting with Taskforce group. See below for more details.

Action 2 - Disclosure of Interests – Paul has added Disclosure of Interests as a regular agenda item for future meetings.

Action 3 - Autism Champion - Valerie invited Bernadette to this meeting who was in attendance.

Action 4 - CCG's performance and evaluation data on the Diagnostic Pathway - Jenny Dalloway sent Valerie and Laura the CCG's performance and evaluation data on the Family Psychologists current Diagnostic Pathway although it was not as clear as it should be. Both Laura and Valerie will raise the issue at tomorrow's ICS meeting.

Action 5 - Late Diagnosis Support Service for 14-18 year olds - Paul forwarded the information Neil White sent through with regards to the proposals for a support service for 14-18 year olds who have had a late diagnosis.

Action 6 - Project Aspie - Paul forwarded the information on Project Aspie to Rachael Skinner that James had sent him.

Meeting and Matters Arising

No Matters Arising.

GP Autism Training Videos 1 and 2 and Discussion

Paul shared two of the 4 Autism Training videos for the education and training of staff at GP surgeries with the Board members.

The first video "Through the Autistic Lens" looked at the issues people with autism face when getting appointments at GP Surgeries. The second video "Making a Difference" detailed how things can be improved.

After members had finished watching the videos Laura asked if anyone had any comments.

James Baker had an issue with the text on the second video "Making a Difference" regarding wanting equitable term of access rather than equal opportunity of access.

Action 1 - Richard said he'd look into getting the text changed.

John suggested sharing the work Mary had done on Reasonable Adjustments including the infographics with GP surgeries.

Richard stated the videos need to be signed off before they are ready for public consumption or shared openly. They should still be able to be shared with the current GP Practices at this time.

All members thought the videos were very good and people thought the videos would be useful for staff in other points of access to services such as Blue School House (Job Centre).

Autism Champion for Herefordshire and Worcestershire

Bernadette went through her presentation. Please see attached. Explaining that the Autism Champion role came through the new ICS Developing services for Autistic People work streams. She explained that she is employed by the CCG as an expert by experience to provide independent expertise and advice around autism and constructive challenge.

Bernadette gave members an overview of her role, herself, how her role works within the whole of the system, an update from the regional meeting and how she is linking more closely with Herefordshire because being Worcestershire based only before, and the Boards expectations of her.

Draft Joint Autism Strategy

Laura reiterated that the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Councils are working towards a joint autism all age strategy with county based parts. She mentioned taking it through the governance process and looking into adopting a strategy from a corporate perspective so the strategy crosses through all council departments.

Laura and Alexia to have a conversation about how they include children's services and the transition process to adulthood in the joint strategy.

Action 2 - Valerie said she would resend over the Taskforce feedback on the National Autism Strategy's priorities including their view that priority 5: Building the right support in the community, was the most important as it penetrated through the other priorities.

Valerie also asked Kelly to contact her through Paul if she would like autism awareness training for Blueschool House staff or her Talk Community colleges.

A conversation ensued about the non-formally diagnosed still needing support.

Action 3 - Laura proposed inviting board members to workshop on discuss important issues that need to be accounted for in the Joint Autism Strategy. Laura will confirm details on the workshop in due course.

ICS updates

Richard and Laura discussed the following:

Sensory Friendly Environments in GP Practices - 14/80 of the GP Practices have expressed an interest including Cantaloupe and Wargrave in Hereford and an expression of interest from Alton Street in Ross.

There is also agreement for Herefordshire County Hospital to make some environmental reasonable adjustments around their Accident and Emergency department by the end of June. In addition some of the content from the Autism Training videos for GP surgeries may also be used.

Autism Support Service - The commissioning for the Autism Support service including the diagnostic service is still on track for the new service to be running from the 1st of July.

Tackling health inequalities - is a programme of work around the mortality reviews from the LeDeR programme that now includes people with autism as well as people with learning disabilities. Data has been fed in since January and the soft information coming through so far is that the main cause of deaths have been due to suicide.

Five Eyes Review - Current national review between January and March into in-patient services within the past 12 months and the care of people with autism and learning disabilities. Involves a January to March clinicians doing a review with the individuals looking at their story of how they ended up in care and taking it back to health and social care professionals to see if anything could have been done differently to stop them, such as advocacy and help with eating disorders.

Once all this information has been fed back it will help inform the Joint Autism Strategy.

LeDeR Strategy - is coming to the ICS Board for sign off tomorrow including an action plan on what Herefordshire and Worcestershire is going to improve on.

Autism Terminology - feedback from Stakeholder Group

Valerie discussed her findings on the language that autistic and non-autistic people think is acceptable to use when referring to a person with autism. Valerie was happy to send round a report of her findings by the next meeting. She has so far had 10 responses and found the preferred terminology differed with age and the point on the autistic spectrum that the person was.

The most disliked phrases were Autism Spectrum Disorder and Autism Spectrum Disability. The most liked phrases included Person with Autism, Asperger's, Neurodiverse, Neurodivergent and Neurodivergence. However although Neurodivergence, Neurodiverse and Neurodivergent were more liked and all three explain where autism fits in with the law and expectations, people felt they are not specific to autism and covered other disabilities. People on the whole were not too bothered by Asperger's as it is a historic term.

Action 4 - Valerie will discuss her findings with Bernadette and Richard and decide on the next steps. She will also forward the report so Paul can distribute.

NAS update

Songs of Praise was shown at Hereford Cathedral around autism awareness week on the 3rd April. Herefordshire Cathedral have done autism training with the NAS.

Police reports

The police have employed a specialist officer who will be referring with Valerie on any autism cases. He has sent Valerie three crimes involving three men mostly due to people getting drunk and being obnoxious to people with autism. None of which Valerie has been asked to review.

Laura mentioned it was worth Valerie liaising with Ewen Archibald who chairs the Prevent Agenda meetings. Laura mentioned there had been a theme recently around people with autism being more vulnerable and being targeted.

Action 5 - Valerie asked Laura to pass on Ewen Archibald's email address so she can contact him to invite him to the meetings she has with the Police.

A.O.B.

Brightfire – if anyone wants to know more please email Valerie at valerie.fitch@btinternet.com or [Autism Mental Health And Wellbeing | Brightfire CIC | England](#)

Autism Education Programme - funded by City of Birmingham education scheme, slowly getting more schools involved in the programme.

Secondary Age Autism Hub - Project to develop secondary age autism hub for people who are unable to access a main stream school place. A paper is going to cabinet to access capital funding and an existing school will be sort to manage it with Debbie Hobbs and Cllr Hey involved in the co-production of the project.

SEND green paper - has now been published and the implication will be explored in due course. The paper is currently out for a 13 week consultation. Please go on the below website and participate.

[SEND Review: Right support, right place, right time - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

Next Meeting and subject-any agenda items please email Valerie

The next Autism Partnership Meeting is on the 7th June from 10:30am -12:30pm via Zoom. Joining details will be sent out in due course.

Name	Actions	
Richard	Action 1	Richard said he'd look into getting the text changed in the second GP Autism Training Video from equal opportunity of access to equitable term of access.
Valerie	Action 2	To send the Taskforce feedback on the Joint Autism Strategy Priority discussions for forwarding.
	Action 4	Valerie will discuss her findings on the Autism Terminology with Bernadette and Richard and decide on the next steps; and send these to Paul for circulation.
Laura	Action 3	Laura to invite board members to a workshop on the important issues for inclusion in the Joint Autism Strategy. Laura will confirm details on the workshop in due course.
	Action 5	Laura to pass on Ewen Archibald's contact details who is leading on the Prevent agenda to Valerie so she can contact him to invite him to the meetings she has with the Police.