

Autism Partnership Meeting

13/12/22 at Noon – 2.00 p.m.

Venue: Fownhope Room, Plough Lane Offices & Zoom

Attendees

Name	Role
Valerie Fitch	Chair / Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Carolyn Whippman	Senior Commissioner, Herefordshire Council
Paul Choppen	Partnership Board Assistant, Herefordshire Council
Laura Ferguson	Vice Chair
Sean Ladd	National Star College, Parent Carer, Expert by Experience
Alexia Heath	Senior Advisor Post 16 Learning and Skills, Herefordshire Council
Anna Swift	Children's and Young People's Autism Lead, ICB
Caroline Kirby	Transforming Care Lead, ICB
Zoe Backhouse	Specialist Autism Advisor, Autism West Midlands, Herefordshire and Worcestershire
John Gorman	Commissioning Officer, Herefordshire Council
Anna Wainwright	Allsorts Group
NAS	Debbie Hobbs
Judie and Bryn	Parent Carers
Katie Eastaugh	Cart Shed
James Baker	Hereford Make / Person on the Autistic Spectrum
Brigid McGrath	Brightfire CIC, Expert by Experience

Apologies

Name	Role
Abi North	TASP
Hilary Hall	Corporate Director, Community Wellbeing
Julie Kerin	Temporary Social Work Apprentice, Community Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council
Rebecca Antrim	Psychotherapist working with Autistic females, Expert by Experience
Richard Keble	ICB
Helen George	Accommodation Support Officer, Community Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council
Chris Dunlop	Herefordshire CarerLink
Silvia Nicholls	Hereford Disability United
Rachel McMorrow	The Family Psychologists

Introductions

Valerie welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves. Some attendees attended by Zoom and they could not see who was in the room.

Conflict of Interest

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

Minutes and Actions from Previous Meeting – Valerie Fitch

Attendee	Action	Detail	
Sylvia Nicholls, Carolyn Whippman	1	Sylvia said she would raise the issue of the specialist autism training with the Mental Health Partnership meeting. Carolyn said she would rise it with her commissioning colleagues who are working on mental health side.	Carolyn raised the issue with John Burgess and he is aware of the specialist autism training needed and will implement this into his work.
Carolyn Whippman	2	To seek clarification from Jenny Dalloway on whether 16-18 year olds will be diagnosed by CAMHS or Family Psychologists.	CAMHS have clarified that individuals can seek an autism diagnosis from age 10 and would transition young people up to 17 ½, any referral for an autism diagnosis during this time would be seen through to the end. While individuals can seek a diagnosis through CAMHS they do not offer any formal support service.
Paul Choppen	3	Add Hilary Hall to the Autism Partnership Board Mailing list.	Yes she has been added.
	4	To share a survey on the social impact of having a market stall in Manchester for artists to enable them to have an audience to sell their work.	This has been shared.
	6	To send out Late Diagnosis in Women and Girls article in the Autistic Society's newsletter Your Autism	This has been shared.
	7	To send out the details of the South West Population Public Health Academy webinar on Learning Disability and Autism Programme on 25th October	This was forwarded to board members,
Nick Gregory, Paul Choppen	5	Nick will send referral forms to Paul to send out to members.	Nick forwarded the referral forms to Paul who shared with board members.
James Baker	8	To send Will Lindesay's contact details to Paul in reference to discussing what should replace the No Wrong Door Service	This was shared with Paul.

Police reports – Valerie Fitch

Valerie went through the police reports involving autistic individuals from within the last two months.

We are hoping that Neil Layton will be able to attend future meetings. In the meantime, he forwarded the two issues that had occurred within the past few months.

One young woman was having difficulties with her neighbours, feeling like she is being watched. She is now in contact with the safer neighbourhood team who will try and help her find more activities outside the house to help ease her anxiety.

One lady who has moved out of Hereford city centre and feels one of her neighbours is being aggressive to her and doesn't like her. Again the safer neighbourhood team has got involved and there have been no issues since. The police now feel this issue has been resolved.

Valerie is still continuing to train new recruits on autism awareness.

Valerie also made the point that the police cannot ask people if they are autistic as this question could be taken badly but are able to ask if a person has any specific vulnerabilities.

A debate ensued about whether the police should be made aware that an individual is autistic because the individual may be vulnerable and to enable them to be offered more specific support, or whether this could be disempowering to the individual and that the choice to share their diagnosis should be at their own discretion because of potential discrimination that then may arise.

Autism West Midlands have produced an alert card for autistic individuals and their carers or parents to show people so they are aware of the diagnosis and the NAS also has something similar.

<https://autismwestmidlands.org.uk/home/alert-cards/>

Key Worker Project - Caroline Kirby

Caroline explained that the Key Worker Project is an addition to services that the Complex Needs team have across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The team is made up of four Key Workers and a Senior Key Worker all of which will be in post by the formal launch of the project on the 23rd January. The Senior Key Worker will work alongside Lisa Gwynne the Complex Needs Children and Young Persons Reviewing Officer. The aim is to support individuals up to the age of 25 who are at risk of admission to a specialist learning disability or mental health facilities.

The project is linked to Transforming Care and admission avoidance agendas. A Key Worker will be allocated to an individual who has been identified as being at risk of admission via the dynamic support register. The Key Worker will be a navigation link between services within health and social care. They will make sure the individual gets the most appropriate support through their time of crisis, lowering the risk of admission to locked and secure specialist placements. The team will also support individuals being discharged from these specialist placements.

From January the team will be going out to speak with colleagues in social care teams, teams in education, autism bases linked to schools and health teams including: CAMHS, mental health and learning disability services. The pilot is funded for 12 months with additional funding likely for an additional 12 months. It is hoped that the good feedback from pilots being delivered elsewhere in the country will mean that long term funding can eventually be secured.

ICB (Integrated Care Board) The Way Forward - Hilary Hall

Valerie went through Hilary's presentation as she had been called into another meeting. Hilary is the Cooperate Director of Community Wellbeing within Herefordshire Council. Please see attached.

Action 1 - Paul will invite Hilary to a future meeting to explain the context of the presentation.

Within the presentation it is believed that the “I statements on slide 3 refer to the individual and the “We statements refer to the Council i.e.

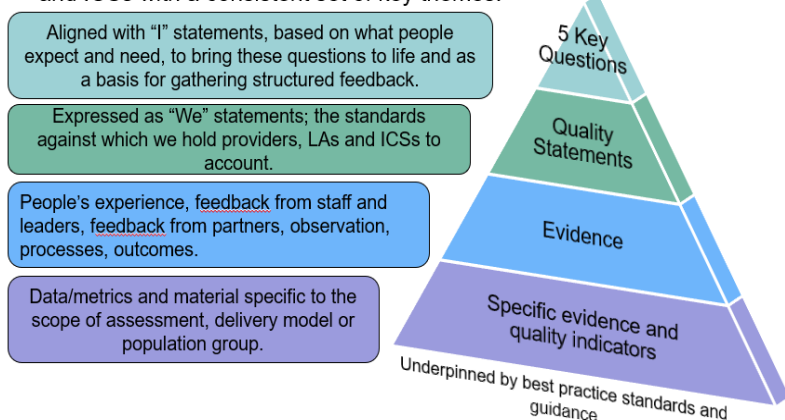


Figure 1 Local Authority Inspection

Action 2 - Valerie will ask Hilary for a front sheet to help explain this presentation and how it relates to people with autism and their needs. To clarify I and We statements and the context of slides 3, 4, and 5 that will be included in the minutes. If people have any further questions on the presentation, please e-Mail Valerie who will seek clarification from Hilary.

Laura assumed that slide 4 referred to the plans for the CQC (Care Quality Commission) to inspect Councils and slide 4 being the areas of which the Council expect to be inspected on by the CQC. That slide 5 refers to the cap on the amount individuals will need to spend on their assessed care needs going forward. From October 2023 the government will introduce a £86,000 cap. This means the maximum amount anyone will have to pay for personal care to meet their eligible care and support needs from October 2023 onwards will be £86,000.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/build-back-better-our-plan-for-health-and-social-care/adult-social-care-charging-reform-further-details#:~:text=From%20October%202023%20the%20cap,onwards%20will%20be%20%C2%A386%2C000.>

Brigid asked that people with specialist knowledge of autism should be involved in doing the social care assessments of individuals with autism.

Autism and Parental Blame - Laura Ferguson ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services)

Laura went through her presentation. Lara was working with ADASS on a project about finding and evidencing parental blame particularly at the point of diagnosis.

Lara explained that within one of the local health trusts dealing with the demand for autism diagnoses a gatekeeping process had been put in place. After a family member had requested a diagnosis through their GP the parents were automatically sent on a parenting course. It was deemed that the issue was with their parenting style and that they couldn't cope and manage the children, rather than potentially because of the presence of diagnosis. Families ended up in merry go round doing these parenting courses rather than getting a diagnosis and complaints were raised as they felt their parenting skills were being challenged. NHS England has commissioned ADASS to do some research into the issues in society that are causing this.

ADASS aims to provide an evidence based approach into understanding why this is happening and what we need to do as a result. ADASS aims to get feedback from people who have been accused of parental blame and experts by experience.

To do this ADASS has since set up an advisory group with expressions of interest across both the east and west midlands from people who connect with their local community. They have also got a cohort of further of people who can test concepts out. A Literature Review is underway which will form the bases of ADASS's online survey which will go out across the local authorities and members will receive a prompt through the partnership board towards the beginning of the year. They also aim to gather a small number of people's stories on the matter before finally making some recommendations on what system changes are needed.

Anna Swift said she would be happy to laissee with Laura on the issue and Mary Simpson said Healthwatch would flag the survey.

ICS updates:

Sensory Environments

Valerie mentioned that they are still in the process of reviewing the sensory environments at GP surgeries with eight surgeries having been reviewed so far in Herefordshire. She has also gone through the Sensory Awareness videos with 60 staff from GP surgeries, excluding doctors who will hopefully attend another meeting in due course.

Annual Health Checks

Carolyn mentioned that in November 34% of annual health checks had been undertaken as of the 31st of October with 90% of those had a completed health action plan.

14 primary care networks have signed up to the annual health checks support offer with two PCNs having already completed 50% of annual health checks before 31st of December 2022.

There are some discussions going on with the national team about how to implement the pilot for annual health checks for autistic people. Target to complete a 100 by the end of March 2023 has been set.

Annual health checks are also being promoted via SEND and transition networks. Information on the annual health checks is also being uploaded to the ICB website. There is more promotion needed to promote annual health check for 13-17 year olds.

There is also a focus for PCNs to concentrate on the underserved communities between now and the next meeting.

Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training (OMMT) - Carolyn Whippman

Carolyn explained that the OMMT is for staff working in CQC registered services, the focus will be initially on health staff. The training will be in 3 tiers:

Tier 1 – Is for staff working in any sector who will occasionally work with people with autism or a learning disability but who may not provide direct care. It consists of a 90 minute e-learning session followed by a 60 minute interactive online session delivered by an individual with a learning disability, an individual with autism and the trainer.

Tier 2 – Is for Health and Social Care staff and others who are responsible for providing care and support. It consists of a 90 minute online e-learning session followed by a one day face to face training session with an individual with autism, an individual with a learning disability and a trainer.

Tier 3 - This is for staff who work on a day to day basis with individuals with a learning disability or autism. Details are still to be confirmed for this tier.

The code of practice for the training is to be published by the middle of January 2023.

Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICS have successfully bid to provide the training with funding awarded till March 2023. Further funding has been awarded but details are unknown.

The ICS is setting up a programme board to meet imminently to decide on the roll out of the training. Leads have been identified for Herefordshire Council although it hasn't been established how many people need to be training and what type of setting they will come from. The training doesn't yet cover OFSTED locations and clarification on this has been asked for.

Autism Strategy Update - Carolyn Whippman

Carolyn re-iterated that leads for the seven priority areas had been identified and with Carolyn herself helping to plug some gaps in relation to priority 3: Supporting more autistic people into employment and improving the experience that autistic people have in the workplace.

Carolyn has had discussions with the ICS about who can lead on these areas including with David Morgan (Inclusion and Diversity Project Manager, ICB) who is liaising with his colleagues in HR to see if they can input into priority area 3 going forward. They will liaise with Laura Westwood in Worcestershire while a replacement for Carolyn is found.

Priority 7: Keeping Safe - This area has been scoped out and leads identified including for task and finish groups. Carolyn had been leading on and has been handed over to Carolyn's line management headed up by Richard Watson (Senior Commissioning Manager All Age Disability, Community Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council).

Feedback from Partner Organizations

Herefordshire and Worcestershire NAS Update – Debbie Hobbs

The Campaign for Women and Girls Diagnosis "Now I Know " has picked up pace across the National coverage but if there is someone in Herefordshire that would like to take part then please do get in touch. debbie.hobbs@nas-volunteers.org.uk

The National Autistic Society has a new Strategy coming out in March 2023 and the huge response from the Moonshot campaign has been greeted with welcome arms from the government who are working closely in making sure that the policymakers and policy's work well for Autistic Individuals.

We have provided workshops on Understanding Autism to Wye Valley Trust, which in turn has been taken up by Hospital trusts out of county so we have shared the knowledge with over 2000 individuals. The Autism Awareness workshops have also given to the Hereford Holiday Activities Fund(HAF) providers so that more young people with Autism can enjoy taking part in these sessions. We will be in attendance on Saturday 17th at the HAF Activities Taster Day in providing a safe place for those that become overwhelmed to stay with us and enjoy a more slower pace activity. This will give the branch a chance to highlight the amount of support that is out there for

schools and other groups from the branch. As we are all volunteers have a real passion for change as we are there because we want to be and not paid to do a job.

While we haven't been doing support groups at present because of lack of venues and availability we have been extremely busy helping with individual cases needing our input. But on that note working with Herefordshire Council we will be able to restart the children and teens group in January .

We are just starting a drop in service from January for Young Adults in conjunction with the youth service at Hereford & Worcester CAMHs. These will be predominantly for those transitioning from children's services to Adult Services. If you have a young person that you feel would be interested in attending then please do drop us a line.

We will give an update in January on the OMMT as the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Branch have been awarded the tender for the West Midlands.

We have received a number of calls and emails from members in the local area about some training that has been given, where a comment has been made "that everyone is Autistic" and found this has had a negative effect in gaining the correct benefits because their diagnosis of ASD has been down played, so the correct volume of support is not given and this is not helpful.

So on a personal note as a person with ASD please stop as it's undermining who I am as a person as you don't know what I have been through everyday just trying to fit in and get through the day.

Valerie mentioned she had already received a comment during the autism awareness training with the police that one of the cadets had also commented that "we are all on the spectrum" wrongly, and she soon corrected them.

Action 2 - Brigid highlighted that when giving training she had a list of unhelpful phrases she asks people not to say to autistic people. Brigid will send over to Paul to share with board members.

A.O.B

James Baker Hereford Make CIC

Hereford Make have had a young person come through needing PIP assessments and James wanted to know who to direct them to for support. Carolyn pointed James to Onside Advocacy being the best contact.

James is trying to interact with Reaching Communities England as part of the new Lottery Community Fund. One of James reasonable adjustments has been taken away and he doesn't know how to approach this with them.

Action 4 - Laura suggested James liaises with Harriet Yellin from the Diversity Team who will be able to help. Laura will send her contact information to James.

Autistic Parents

Judy and Bryn have been living in Herefordshire for 20 years and have a 43 year old autistic daughter. Since moving to Herefordshire they have struggled get the right care and support for her.

After their daughter failed to hold down a couple of jobs Bryn and Judy have provided the means for their daughter so she can cook and sell products using ingredients from their garden. However their

daughter is unable to make a profit from this and Bryn and Judie worry about what will happen to their daughter once they are unable to support her.

Action 5 - Laura said she will contact them to assist them.

Autism Bus Experience

Over 112 people went through the bus with volunteers providing support. The Autism Bus Experience will return to Hereford in March.

Next Meeting

14th February 12pm - 2pm in the Fownhope Room at Plough Lane Offices and by zoom. Details will be sent out in due course.

Valerie also wanted to personally thank Carolyn for her help as Senior Commissioning Officer and wished her well in her new role as Senior Quality and Review Officer, Children's Services.

Attendee	Action	Detail
Paul	1	To invite Hilary to a future meeting to explain the context of her presentation.
Valerie	2	Would ask Hilary for one sheet of explanatory information to cover her presentation.
Brigid/Paul	3	Brigid to send a list of unhelpful phrases she asks people not to say to autistic people for Paul to send to Board Members.
Laura	4	To Send Harriet Yelin's contact details to James.
Laura	5	To get in touch with Judy and Bryn to assist them.