

Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

Autism Strategy

2014 to 2019



Signed for and on behalf of:	Signature	Organisation Logo
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Leicestershire County Council Adult Social Care Services		
Rutland County Council Adult Social Care Services		
Leicester City CCG		
West Leicestershire CCG		
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Leicestershire Police		

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The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Autism Strategy Group with Users, Carers and Professionals

Leicester Partnership Trust Autism Pathway planning groups.

The Monday Club, Translate and other users groups.

The Autism Carers Group.

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# Introduction

The Leicester, Leicester and Rutland (LLR) Autism Strategy group have undertaken a refresh of the 2010 Asperger Strategy. The scope has been broadened to cover Autism as a whole in line with the National Strategy 2010, and links with the update of the National Strategy published in April 2014 - **Think Autism Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives, the strategy for adults with Autism in England: an update.**<sup>1</sup>

There are other key legislative and practice changes which have implications for all people with Autism and run through the whole strategy:

1. The Care Act 2014<sup>2</sup>
  - This draws together all previous social care legislation. It confirms the equal right to an assessment for users and carers, and the right to advocacy if a person has a substantial difficulty.
2. 'Better Care Together Strategy'<sup>3</sup> (*LLR Five Year Strategy, 2014-2019.*)  
Appendix 1
3. Autism Self-assessment Framework NHS England (Autism SAF)
  - Every year local authorities in England along with health colleagues have to assess what they are doing to support people with autism and their carers, and score how well they are doing. This is the Autism Self-Assessment (SAF) for NHS England. Its findings form part of the Delivery Action plan and help form the commissioning intentions.
4. The Children and Families Act 2014<sup>4</sup>
  - This legislation will change the transition process for young people from September 2014, with what is called the Local Offer. Implementation will vary across local authorities, but the principles are the same.
5. Statutory guidance for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy 2015<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Think Autism Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives, the strategy for adults with Autism in England: an update

<sup>2</sup> The Care Act 2014

<sup>3</sup> Better Care Together Strategy – Appendix 1

<sup>4</sup> The Children and Families Act 2014

<sup>5</sup> Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the Autism Strategy 2015

The **Fifteen Priority Challenges for Action** identified by people with Autism, carers, professionals and others who work with people with Autism for the National update have been taken as the framework for the revision of the original strategy.

## **Think Autism Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives - 2014**

### **15 Priority Challenges for Action**

#### **An equal part of my local community**

1. I want to be accepted as who I am within my local community. I want people and organisations in my community to have opportunities to raise their awareness and acceptance of Autism.
2. I want my views and aspirations to be taken into account when decisions are made in my local area. I want to know whether my local area is doing as well as others.
3. I want to know how to connect with other people. I want to be able to find local Autism peer groups, family groups and low level support.
4. I want the everyday services that I come into contact with to know how to make reasonable adjustments to include me and accept me as I am. I want the staff who work in them to be aware and accepting of Autism.
5. I want to be safe in my community and free from the risk of discrimination, hate crime and abuse.
6. I want to be seen as me and for my gender, sexual orientation and race to be taken into account.

#### **The right support at the right time during my lifetime**

7. I want a timely diagnosis from a trained professional. I want relevant information and support throughout the diagnostic process.
8. I want Autism to be included in local strategic needs assessments so that person centred local health, care and support services, based on good information about local needs, is available for people with Autism.
9. I want staff in health and social care services to understand that I have Autism and how this affects me.
10. I want to know that my family can get help and support when they need it.
11. I want services and commissioners to understand how my Autism affects me differently through my life. I want to be supported through big life changes such as transition from school, getting older or when a person close to me dies.
12. I want people to recognise my Autism and adapt the support they give me if I

have additional needs such as a mental health problem, a learning disability or if I sometimes communicate through behaviours which others may find challenging.

13. If I break the law, I want the criminal justice system to think about Autism and to know how to work well with other services.

### Developing my skills and independence and working to the best of my ability

14. I want the same opportunities as everyone else to enhance my skills, to be empowered by services and to be as independent as possible.

15. I want support to get a job and support from my employer to help me keep it.

The clear vision from these challenges is:

“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. They can depend on mainstream public services to treat them fairly as individuals, helping them make the most of their talents.”

Each section has linked priorities, but most priorities are relevant across the strategy.

## Background

In Leicestershire as a whole 7,508 adults aged 18 and above are estimated to have Autism. <sup>6</sup>This represents 1.1% of the population.

The Autism Strategy and Delivery Action Plan<sup>7</sup> detail a multi-agency response to shaping the development of services and support for adults with Autism in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland; it is a working document subject to regular review.

It strives to ensure that all people with Autism have:

- a clear and effective diagnostic and support pathway leading if needed to the offer of a community care assessment and a carers assessment;
- access to community opportunities and universal services as any other citizen, & ensuring that universal services know how to make reasonable adjustments for people with Autism;
- good information about Autism and the support that is available to people;
- access to personalised support if needed;

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<sup>6</sup> Prevalence data – Appendix 2

<sup>7</sup> Autism Strategy Delivery Action Plan 2014 – Appendix 3

- an effective response from providers of services and support; this includes raising awareness about Autism and training for front-line services in how best to support people who have the condition.

Each Local Authority in partnership with the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups is responsible for delivering the Strategy. The Autism Strategy Delivery Action Plan identifies key partnerships and programmes of work that are common to all and includes suggested time frames. Each area will embed the strategy within their planning for Mental Health and Learning Disability services adding or amending it to reflect local structures and programmes of work. The Autism Strategy Delivery Action Plan work streams are reviewed at the bi-monthly LLR Autism Strategy Group.

Over-arching the LLR strategy group is **Better Care Together** (BCT)– A partnership of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Health & Social Care – A five year strategic plan which has separate work streams for both Learning Disabilities and Mental Health. Its premise is:

*'We need integrated quality care – most people already get good quality care, but we know there are areas where we can improve. People want to be fully engaged in making positive choices about their own health and lifestyles, and to participate in the shaping and development of health and care services. People expect access to transparent and accessible data and advice about health and services, and to be able to choose which health services they can use and how to access them.'*

It is clear from ongoing engagement<sup>8</sup> with over 50 users<sup>9</sup> and carers, that people want to see a real difference in the range, availability, quality and choice of support services across the whole geographical area. It is recognised that a wide range of services and opportunities should be for all individuals with Autism, with or without an intellectual impairment, who require support.

The measure of success of this strategy will be that if at the end of four years:

- All individuals will have the opportunity for diagnostic assessment and the offer of a health & social care assessment for support
- All individuals eligible will have a personal health & social care personal budget

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<sup>8</sup> Carers engagement – Appendix 4

<sup>9</sup> Users engagement – Appendices 5 & 6

- More people live in their own homes / individualised accommodation
- More people have access to employment, education and social support
- More people are able to live in their locality

# Personalisation

Personalisation means starting with the person as an individual with strengths, preferences and aspirations. They with their circle of support drive the process of identifying their needs and aspirations and making choices about how and when they are supported to live their lives. Personalisation is about giving people much more choice and control over their lives in all social care settings including those integrated with health. It is far wider than simply giving personal budgets to people eligible for council funding. It means ensuring that people have services such as transport, leisure and education, housing, health and opportunities for employment regardless of age or disability. *SCIE booklet 'Leadership for personalisation and social inclusion in mental health'*

In line with national drivers and local priorities, overall the Adult Social Care vision is one of personalisation, choice and control.

## **Priority challenges for action**

1. I want to be accepted as who I am within my local community.
2. I want my views and aspirations to be taken into account.
3. I want to know how to connect with other people.
5. I want to be safe in my community.
6. I want to be seen as me.

## **Where are we now?**

Across LLR there are approximately 260 people with Autism who have services funded by their local authority. Of these more than half have a personal budget and purchase their support package individually, with the support and guidance of a Brokerage service if required, to ensure any potential for exploitation due to vulnerability is safeguarded. This has gradually increased over the last year, and evidence from users demonstrates it gives an ideal opportunity to get an individually tailored service.

There are very limited opportunities to purchase health services, however the NHS Mandate commits to a further roll out of personal health budgets to people who could benefit from April 2015. There currently are no support services, post diagnosis, if you do not have an intellectual impairment.

## **Commissioning Intention**

The main thrust of the personalisation agenda is to give individuals that are eligible for a service, a greater level of choice and control over their lives.

The three Councils and the Clinical Commissioning Groups will work with providers to offer a range of clearly priced support options available to all eligible people with Autism to choose using their allocated personal health and social care budget. These will include personal support needs, employment, education, social activities, transport, respite and short breaks.

The Council and Clinical Commissioning teams will work jointly to ensure that the market is responsive to individual's needs. This will be assisted through the **Better Care Together** work streams.

### **What will we do:**

1. Commission a multi-disciplinary post diagnostic support service for those people without an intellectual disability
2. Work with the provider market to develop a range of support options (informed by user feedback) available to eligible individuals with Autism to choose using their personal budget.
3. Expand & enhance preventative and early intervention support for people with Autism or suspected Autism.
4. Continue to enhance the Autism specific work being undertaken across all professions which will then increase and cascade knowledge of Autism in the wider community.

### **What this means to me:**

- I will have an assessment and person centred support plan and will be supported with a personal budget if eligible
- There will be a range of accessible support options available to me to choose from including personal support needs, employment, leisure, day activities, transport, and flexible short breaks

# Accommodation

## Introduction

There are a range of accommodation opportunities across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, however the challenge is working with social & private housing providers to ensure properties are in areas where a person can feel safe and have access to the level of support they require. This support may be via a supported living package, a domiciliary care package, residential care or informal family and community support. Leicestershire has a particular challenge as housing responsibilities sit with the six Borough and District Councils.

There are a growing number of supported living providers, who have experience and expertise in working with people with Autism. There is a need to ensure that appropriate accommodation options are available to those currently in out of area placements. The providers of early intervention and preventative services need to increase their knowledge and understanding of Autism.

## Priority challenges for action

5. I want to be safe in my community.

14. I want the same opportunities as everyone else.

## Where are we now?

The numbers of people with their own homes or tenancies has increased. There has been a development of a new service in Leicester with a particular focus on the environmental aspects which can cause difficulties for people with Autism. In Leicester there are over 40 people with Autism who have a supported living package within a tenancy.

## Commissioning Intention

### We will

1. Support people to live in mainstream housing & provide information about housing and support options to people with Autism and their carers
2. Support people living at home with their families where this is their choice to enable them to plan for their future housing needs
3. Ensure more people are owning their own home or living in rented accommodation with tenancies
4. Ensure housing departments know about the housing needs of people with Autism and include this in their local plans

**What this means to me**

- I will have a choice from a range of housing options to live where I choose and with whom I live and support to access these
- I will be involved in the running of my home, and choose who supports me.
- I will not be fitted into a service where there is a vacancy if this does not suit me.

# Health

## Introduction

Good health begins with promoting well-being and preventing ill-health, healthy active lifestyles have to be the starting point for all.

Access to the full range of healthcare services including dentistry, breast and bowel screening, sexual health, maternity, health visiting, primary care, hospital care, mental health care and end-of-life care is essential in ensuring that people with Autism can take greater control of their health and well-being throughout their lives, from childhood to older age.

People want to be fully engaged in making positive choices about their own health and lifestyles, and to participate in the shaping and development of health and care services. Better Care Together should help to pull these work strands together.

An area where 'reasonable adjustments' can be made is with processes, for example the scheduling of appointments at less busy times, allocating extra time to adults with autism and being flexible about communication methods, for example, less reliance on telephone based services. The training of frontline staff, eg medical receptionists and support staff is crucial. Without reasonable adjustments many services can be inaccessible for adults with autism, resulting in health inequalities.

## Priority challenges for action

7. I want a timely diagnosis from a trained professional.
8. I want Autism to be included in local strategic needs assessments so that person centred local health, care and support services are available.
9. I want staff in health and social care services to understand that I have autism.
12. I want people to recognise my autism and adapt the support they give me.
13. I want the criminal justice system to think about autism.

## Where are we now?

The Autism Diagnostic and Support Pathway is completed for the whole of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland, and covers Children, Preparing for Adulthood (Transition) and Adults and all local partners in health and local authority have signed it off. It is acknowledged that it is always work in progress, and will evolve over time via regular reviews.

Users and Carers along with professionals have advocated for a post diagnostic support service within health for those without a learning disability. The Clinical Commissioning Groups acknowledge the need and have indicated their support.

The criminal justice system has few links with local health and social care professionals and services and is poor at recognising Autism, and providing the appropriate support.

### **Commissioning Intention**

#### **We will**

1. Ensure timely diagnostic assessments for all people with appropriate information and support
2. Commission a multi-disciplinary post diagnostic support service for those people without an intellectual disability
3. Ensure training is provided for all staff across primary care to recognise, adapt and respond appropriately to need.
4. Work with the criminal justice system, police, prison and probation services, to improve knowledge and access to assessment and support.

#### **What this means to me**

- I will be able to stay healthy
- I will get good healthcare when I need it
- I will be able to access good assessment, diagnosis and treatment
- The criminal justice system will recognize my needs

# Employment, Education & Day opportunities

## Introduction

A person's access to and experience of education and training has a direct impact on their skills and ability to live independently, to enter into and remain in employment and to lead a socially inclusive life. Some colleges and universities have worked hard to understand autism and provide appropriate services. Further Education (FE) and training is also very important in enabling adults with autism to improve their life skills so they can be as independent as possible.

If a person is eligible for adult care and support, personalised approaches should be used to help them identify their support needs, give them greater choice and control and increase their independence. They may also be eligible to other funding streams e.g. NHS Continuing Health Care or Independent Living Fund.

Most people with autism want to work and have skills and talents that would be useful in the workplace. With support, people with autism can both get and keep a job. Adults with autism are currently significantly under-represented in the labour market, which has a detrimental impact on their financial circumstances and social inclusion, as well as being a waste of skills and abilities. Isolation can then impact on mental health.

## Priority challenges for action

5. I want to be safe in my community.
14. I want the same opportunities as everyone else to enhance my skills.
15. I want support to get a job and support from my employer to help me keep it.

## Where are we now?

### Employability

The Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) has established Work Choice and Access to Work, both of which help disabled people, including people with autism, find employment and stay in work. DWP also employs Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs) who are specialists who work with claimants facing complex employment situations because of their disability or health condition. This includes people with autism. All new DEAs receive training in awareness of autism.

Opportunities for supported employment services are different in the three local authorities. In Leicester Employment Plus is an in-house employment support service. The employment team are working with five service users with Autism, one of whom did not want to continue looking for work and is on hold. One person was diagnosed with Asperger's and was not able to continue with a university course. They have since been on specialist training with a local company. This training is based on Graphic design of websites and has offered one to one training. This has motivated the person to look for work in this area, with Employment Plus supporting Job centre appointments and looking for other voluntary/paid work.

In Rutland an Inclusion Support Service supports people with Asperger's Syndrome, High Functioning Autism and mental health issues. It's focus is to develop new services where gaps are identified, in respect of social inclusion, mentoring, education, job coaching and employment. (Appendix 8)

### **Employment, education and social activities**

Personal budgets have enabled people with Autism to gain support from a range of different providers who can provide an individualised support package focussing on the specific support needs of that person, for example coping with the social situations in a place of work or college, or using public transport to get there. There are some good voluntary sector support providers across the area.

Connexions in the City provide support and can refer to specialist education provision if there are no mainstream resources which can meet assessed needs.

In Rutland there is an 'A' Friendship Group. It is a social group where members can make new friends.

Rutland Adult Learning also offers a wide range of courses including helping people to move forward with plans for learning, work or volunteering. (Appendix 8)

### **Commissioning Intention**

#### **We will**

1. Ensure all actions under personalisation include people accessing employment, education and social activities.

#### **What this means to me**

- I will have an assessment and person centred support plan and will be supported to have a fulfilled life which includes opportunities to work, study, and enjoy leisure and social activities.

# PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

## Introduction

All good transitions are dependent on good assessment and self-directed planning, regardless of the transition. For young people the earlier the planning the better. It is important as soon as it is known that a child has Autism that planning for the future starts, this includes good information about the future opportunities. As people with Autism age it is important that they maintain skills as long as possible with good support. It is also important that when required people with Autism access older people services as the rest of the population.

## Changes in the law

**The Care Act 2014** becomes law in 2015; young people a legal right to request an Adult Social Care assessment before they turn 18 years. This is to help them plan for the Adult Care and support services they may need.

The current arrangements under Section 5/6 of the Disabled Person Act will cease.

**The Children and Families Act 2014** This legislation will change the transition process for young people from September 2014, with what is called the **Local Offer**. Implementation will vary across local authorities, but the principles are the same.

## Key recommendations

- Education, Health and Care Plans will replace Statements of Special Educational Needs from September 2014 & Learning Disability Assessments.
- From 1<sup>st</sup> September 2014, the provisions in the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice for 0 to 25 years will be in force

## The Local Offer

Local authorities must produce a local offer, setting out in one place, information about provision they expect to be available for Children and Young People in their area who have SEN, including those who do not have Education, Health and Care Plans. The local offer must include provision in the local authority's area and also outside the local area that the local authority expects is likely be used by Children and Young People with SEN for whom they are responsible. From a Health perspective, it will include the wide range of Health Services and support available for the 0 – 25 age range.

## **Priority challenges for action**

8. I want autism to be included in local strategic needs assessments.

11. I want services and commissioners to understand how my autism affects me.

### **Where are we now?**

A Joint Specific needs Assessment<sup>10</sup> was completed in Leicester by Dr Jane Bethea in 2013 with its focus on the transition of young people with Autism. Its aim was to:

- Detail the health needs and characteristics of children and young people living in Leicester City with ASD
- Describe the services, processes and partnerships in place locally in relation to transition for these young people
- Identify areas of good practice and also gaps in provision and processes
- Identify ways in which provision and processes could be improved

The Leicester Preparing for Adulthood (formally Transitions) Partnership Board has representation from a wide range of key stakeholders including education, housing, health and social care and looks specifically at issues related to transition for all young people with a disability. This provides an excellent forum for sharing areas of good practice, identifying local challenges and developing a good understanding of the needs of young disabled people as they move into adulthood.

The principles & recommendations from this Joint Specific Needs Assessment are relevant for Leicestershire and Rutland, as well as Leicester.

1. Using the learning gained through key local initiatives to inform future developments.
2. Improving data quality and availability
3. Improving information sharing between organisations
4. Determining the impact of a key worker approach
5. Developing our understanding of the needs of children with ASD who do not have a statement of special educational need.
6. Developing our understanding of the impact of recent changes to the Connexions service.
7. Consideration is given to the potential benefits that might be achieved through the introduction of an integrated 14-25 service
8. Timing of Community Care Assessments and support plans

In Rutland the Inclusion Team brings together Early Years, SEN, Disabled Children, Transition, Adult Learning Disability and Mental Health to enable a cohesive service to support young people from 0-25 and beyond. This whole life disability service promotes preparing for adulthood by working together and developing networks with the employment co coordinator, Inclusion workers, Youth Options and Education.<sup>11</sup> A Youth group has been developed to support young people with characteristics or a

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<sup>10</sup> JSpNA Transition – appendix 7

<sup>11</sup> Rutland services

diagnosis of Autism between the ages of 13-19. This helps with preparing for adulthood by providing social opportunities, which may have been difficult to access otherwise. This prevents isolation and hopes to promote skills and confidence moving through to adulthood.

### **Commissioning Intention**

Adult commissioning teams in both health and social care will influence how services are planned and delivered for young people with learning disabilities and/or a mental health need, by working with children, schools and families to identify individuals earlier, jointly understand and assess needs, and facilitate service developments that support personalisation. There will be some geographical differences between the local authorities, but Better Care Together will provide the overarching strategy.

### **We will**

1. Ensure the changes with the Education, Health and Social Care Plan are inclusive of Autism needs
2. Refresh the Preparing for Adulthood (Transition) pathway for young people as the new processes evolve
3. Ensure the review of Child Mental Health services links with the Autism Pathway
4. Ensure that information is available in a range of accessible options
5. Explore how to support Young people with Autism to become more independent with travel
6. Make more connections with Youth Services to support mainstream opportunities

### **What this means to me**

- I will be able find information on options available to me as I plan for my future.
- I will be able to access support available to meet my needs.
- I will be able to access appropriate care pathways.

# Carers including short breaks

## Introduction

Across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland we recognize the important role that Carers, Partners and families play in supporting people with Autism to have, and live fulfilling and rewarding lives, and that people would have difficulty managing their life without the emotional and hands on support. This strategy endeavours to listen to the voice of carers and involve them in the planning.

The Care Act 2014 creates a new duty for local authorities to meet carers' eligible needs for support. This has traditionally been provided by short breaks or respite, and is seen as support provided for a period of more than 24 hours in order to provide carers with a break from caring. However a Short Break is more than this, it is about evenings, overnight stays and day support for people who look after others. It provides the opportunity for family/carers to have a break and it is also a chance for the individual to do something different with a choice of options. There are a range of short break services across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

## Priority challenges for action

10. I want to know that my family can get help.

### Where are we now?

#### Short Breaks

There are a range of short break services across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland:

- Flexible support in the home and in the community
- Bed based break within a residential setting, with health support if an assessed need.
- Bed based break with a family – Shared Lives
- Flexible day time break with a family – Shared Lives
- Personal budget used to provide a whole range of activities of choice

#### ASD Carers Group

A Carers group was set up to contribute to the 2013/14 Autism Self-Assessment Framework (ASD SAF) and consider the City submission. This group has people attending from across the county and their views are collected and collated following each meeting (Appendix 4.)

Carers identified the following as key issues for themselves and as areas of need for the person they support:

- Difficulties in getting diagnosis
- Difficulties with Employment / training
- Issues with other services e.g. criminal justice system
- Family issues – lack of support for partners and siblings

- Communication issues – lack of understanding of communication needs
- Reasonable adjustments – services do not understand the implications of Autism

There are other key times within life when issues arise and needs change as people mature and age:

- Leaving home for the first time
- Leaving your home locality for education or work
- Marriage or relationship breakdown
- Birth of a child
- Retirement
- Death of a partner or parent

The significance of these must not be underestimated on all involved, but can be very positive if supported appropriately. The Autism Strategy is not just about young adults with autism. It is critical that local services and communities think autism in relation to older people too. A key challenge for many older adults with autism is that they will have had significant support from their families, but as families age, this becomes less possible.

### **Commissioning Intention**

To provide the support for carers in a range of different ways

To analyse the use of all short breaks provision across health and social care

To commission from providers a range of short break options, available to all people to choose using their personal budget (health & social care).

### **We will**

1. Continue to meet with and listen to carers on a bi-monthly basis.
2. Involve carers in the development of the Autism strategy & Autism Pathway.
3. Encourage the market development of a range of short break services.
4. Ensure health needs are met appropriately wherever an individual wants to have their short break.
5. Ensure the needs of older people with Autism are identified.
6. Adult commissioning teams in both health and social care will ensure people with Autism over the age of 65, and those with dementia are supported to access, through existing pathways (e.g. Dementia pathway), a range of services that best meet their assessed needs.

### **What this means to me**

- My carers who support me have their own support needs met
- I will if eligible be able to have a short break in an environment of my choice undertaking activities I enjoy
- My carers will be able to have a break from caring.

# Making it happen

## Priority challenges for action

4. I want the everyday services .... to know how to make reasonable adjustments.
13. I want the criminal justice system to think about autism ...

## **Reasonable adjustments**

Adults with autism should be able to benefit fully from mainstream public Services, to live independently and healthily, including access to appropriate housing to meet individual needs. Without reasonable adjustments many services can be inaccessible for adults with autism.

Reasonable adjustments can include:

- premises – taking account of hypersensitivities and providing quiet or lower-light areas;
- processes – scheduling appointments at less busy times, allocating extra time to adults with autism and being flexible about communication methods, for example, less reliance on telephone based services;
- communications – avoiding ambiguous questions, not pressurising adults with autism in conversation and being aware of sensitivity to touch; ensuring essential documents and forms are available in accessible formats, in particular, easy read versions and formats that take account of sensory issues in their choice of colours;
- planning and preparation – offering opportunities for adults with autism to visit settings in advance to familiarise themselves with what to expect, for example visiting a court prior to giving evidence or an optician's prior to an eye test. The criminal justice system needs to get better at identifying people with Autism.

## **Leadership**

This strategy will be led by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Autism Board<sup>12</sup>, whose role it is to oversee the interagency planning and commissioning of comprehensive, integrated and inclusive services that provide a genuine choice of service options to people in their local community. Each Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group has its own overall governance and accountability arrangements. Each authority has identified lead officers and works jointly with health partners to complete the NHS England Autism Self- Assessment Framework.

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<sup>12</sup> LLR Autism Strategy Terms of Reference

## **Quality**

Better Care Together will have oversight of joint working and quality outcomes, linking across Learning Disability and Mental Health planning. Quality Standards provide a standard approach to quality assurance and contract monitoring across commissioned services. The role of Quality Checkers will be further developed to assist monitoring and auditing services. This will also link with Transforming Care (Winterbourne View) Action Plans.

The Autism Strategy Delivery Action Plan is linked to NICE guidance<sup>13</sup>.

Measures of progress will be taken from the feedback from the Autism Self-Assessment Framework (SAF) for 2012/13 and the data supplied for the 2013/14 Autism SAF submission.

## **Right to Advocacy**

The Care Act puts a duty on local authorities to provide independent advocacy where a person has substantial difficulty in navigating the care system and has nobody around to support them. The provision of advocacy is for all adults as part of their own assessment and care planning and care reviews, as well as those in their role as carers. The aim is to provide assistance to those who have substantial difficulty. This will include some people with autism.

## **Information & communication**

Information sharing agreement - This has been agreed across key partners and is crucial to ensure accurate data exchange and to enable cross referencing and analysis of case evidence.

Existing sources of information held by the three Councils, and partners, specifically relating to Autism are to be all linked to one Internet Platform hosted in Leicester Partnership Trust (LPT) to ensure the accuracy and integrity of documents and information:

We will make better use of the Leicestershire Autism Information Hub website and ensure easy access to information and links across the different agencies via the Leicestershire Partnership Trust web platform.

The Rutland Information Strategy commits to:-

The provision of the right information, at the right time, in the right place and in the right format is fundamental to people's health and wellbeing and quality of life and the starting point to exercising choice and control.

“Good quality information and advice to be available to all – enabling people to make informed choices, plan for their future, reduce the need for care and support and help maintain their health and wellbeing”

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<sup>13</sup> NICE Guidance - Autism

## **Partnerships**

The LLR Autism Board is well supported across all sectors and the Better Care Together work streams will enable progress across health and social care. It is also clear that in planning local services, local authorities should ensure that they are including the specific needs of older people with autism.

The strategy will be presented for endorsement to the relevant Health and Wellbeing Boards in each locality along with other governance structures within the Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups.

## **References**

1. Think Autism Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives, the strategy for adults with Autism in England: an update
2. The Care Act 2014
3. Better care Together - A five year strategic plan which has separate work streams for both Learning Disabilities and Mental Health. - Appendix 1
4. The Children and Families Act 2014
5. Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the Autism Strategy 2015
6. Prevalence data - Brugha T, Cooper SA, McManus S et al. Estimating the Prevalence of Autism Spectrum Conditions in Adults: Extending the 2007 Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey. The NHS Information Centre CaMHT, editor. 31. 31-1-2012. Leeds, The NHS Information Centre. – Appendix 2
7. Autism Strategy Delivery Action Plan 2014 – Appendix 3
8. Carers engagement – Appendix 4
9. Users engagement – Appendices 5 & 6
10. JSpNA Transition – Appendix 7
11. Rutland service information – Appendix 8
12. LLR Autism Strategy Group – Terms of reference
13. NICE Guidance - Autism