

1 April 2015**Agenda Item: 6****REPORT OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, ADULT SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH
AND PUBLIC PROTECTION****AUTISM SELF ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK****Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform the Health and Wellbeing Board of the outcome of Nottinghamshire's Autism Self-assessment as reported to the Public Health Observatory in March 2015.

Information and Advice

2. Following the Adult Autism Strategy 'fulfilling and Rewarding Lives' published in 2010, and the statutory guidance for health and social care published later the same year, the Department of Health has placed a responsibility on local authorities and health to work together to deliver the main objectives of the strategy. There is an annual self-assessment which has now been running for three years. Though the assessment has focussed on the key themes of the strategy, there have been significant changes in the questions from the first year and the format has also changed each year. However, it is likely that the content will remain similar next year and this will allow us to better plan ahead to ensure Nottinghamshire have data in the way the self-assessment wants it collated.
3. The self-assessment was made up of 7 broad areas:
 - Planning
 - Training
 - Diagnosis
 - Care and support
 - Accommodation
 - Employment
 - Criminal Justice System
4. Within each area there were some questions asking us to rate red (not meeting requirements), amber (room for improvement) or green (meeting requirements), some asking for a yes/no answer and some asking for figures or narrative. Of the 23 RAG questions Nottinghamshire rated six green, 13 amber and four red. Of the 12 Yes/No questions Nottinghamshire answered six yes and six no.
5. A copy of the self-assessment is attached as Appendix 1. A summary of the findings is presented below.

6. In the planning section:

- Nottinghamshire rated green, as there is a specific Joint strategic Needs assessment chapter for people with Autism and a health needs assessment has been undertaken. Nottinghamshire also rated green for transitions because The Council have an 'automatic' transition rather than parents having to refer where young people are in receipt of children's services. However, despite the green rating this is an area where improvement, particularly for people with Autism and no associated learning disability, is required to ensure that planning starts earlier. The use of the Education, Health and care plans is assisting with this.
- Nottinghamshire rated red in the planning around reasonable adjustments because general council equality policies do not specifically mention Autism as this would come under the heading of disability. Raising the profile of Autism through general policy (and awareness training) will help the implementation of reasonable adjustments to ensure equality of access for people with Autism both within general council services and within those of the wider public services and the wider community.
- Specific questions were also asked about older people, women and people from a BME background and the JSNA needs to reflect the prevalence of these groups in order to better plan services as required. Older people was an area highlighted in last year's self-assessment and training has been made available to social care teams working with people over 65 as a result.

7. In the Training section:

- Nottinghamshire rated Amber in relation to training staff within health and social care. Over the last 2 years there has been a programme of awareness training for social care staff and over 50% of those undertaking assessments have had awareness training with additional specialist training for those in mental health, learning disability and Asperger's teams. Within health secondary healthcare workers have had an e-learning module rolled out and the Nottingham City Asperger's Team (health) has delivered training across the NHS Trust.
- Nottinghamshire have appointed a training and involvement officer who is working with a group of people with Autism to become experts by experience and therefore able to deliver a personal aspect to future training. There is a multi-agency training plan being developed across health and social care, including city colleagues which will also seek to address the wider training agenda within communities and other public service areas.
- There is a specific focus within the self-assessment on training for the criminal justice system and to housing staff and The Council will engage with these agencies, as well as with older people's services to look at how training needs can be met as part of the development of the multi-agency training plan.

8. In the diagnosis section

- Nottinghamshire rated amber because although there is a published pathway for diagnosis both for people with a learning disability and autism and for those without a learning disability (often called Asperger's) it is still unclear and the process is not sufficiently mature to enable the collection of data or the tracking of an individual through the process. There is a specific referral route for Asperger's cases which are considered very complex and this is to either the city Asperger's team or occasionally Sheffield for Bassetlaw residents. There is still work to be done to ensure that the

diagnosis pathway is robust enough to ensure timely diagnosis and automatic referral for a social care assessment following diagnosis.

- Nottinghamshire rated Red for clinical support following diagnosis. While Speech and Language therapy, psychology and occupational therapy are more readily available for people with Autism and a learning disability these services are still not widely available for people with Asperger's.

9. In the Care and support Section

- Nottinghamshire have rated green around the provision of advocacy and availability of carers assessments for people diagnosed with Autism.
- Nottinghamshire have rated Amber around the provision of information. Whilst there is an Infoscript specifically for people with Autism and the customer services centre staff have had autism awareness training, there is a large amount of work being undertaken to ensure we comply with The Care Act around the provision of information generally. We will take this opportunity to improve the information available and the access to that information with regards to Autism.

10. In the Housing section:

- Nottinghamshire rated Amber around the inclusion of Autism in housing strategies. Nottinghamshire County council has a specific learning disability and Autism housing strategy but Autism is not specifically mentioned in district strategies, coming under the heading of disability.
- This section specifically asks if there is a policy of training at least one housing officer in autism so they can be available to help people make housing applications. Again we hope to engage with District and borough council colleagues around the training plan to ensure this happens.

11. In the Employment section:

- Nottinghamshire rated green about employment support due to the work of the iworks team in helping people with Autism into work and engaging with local employers around reasonable adjustments to make this possible.
- Nottinghamshire rated Amber in relation to transitions as although employment aspirations are part of the social care assessment and therefore are often included in transitions plans, the EHC has no specific section relating to it and therefore the area may not be routinely explored.

12. In the Criminal Justice System section:

- Nottinghamshire rated Amber regarding engagement with the Autism agenda as screening tools are being piloted in local prisons as part of the NHS criminal justice diversion project to ensure that people with Autism are supported appropriately if entering the criminal justice system and Nottinghamshire police are routinely represented on the learning disability and autism partnership board. We also rated Amber around appropriate adults services as while these are available for people with Autism, training is not routine for all staff.

13. The final section looked at local good practice where the following were highlighted:

- The creation of a training and involvement officer role to further the training agenda and ensure better engagement with the Autistic community.
- The change of board name following the specific inclusion of people with autism in the Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Board.
- The Nottinghamshire Asperger's Team, which, following public consultation was retained by Nottinghamshire County Council, recognising the specialist knowledge which has been created by the development of this team.
- The innovative use of assistive technology in partnership with health, namely the FLO project – a mobile phone texting service offering personalised prompts and reminders which was piloted by our Asperger's service.
- The intention to use a recent government capital grant of £18,500 to ensure that the Iworks base and at least one training venue is more autism friendly by making reasonable adjustments, mainly to replace strip lighting which can cause problems for people who have sensitivities to light, a common occurrence for people on the Autism spectrum.

14. The Health and wellbeing strategy already has priority actions around diagnosis and training which we will continue to work on. There will also be a full action plan drawn up as a result of this self-assessment so that other priorities can be identified by the Integrated Commissioning Group and worked on over the coming years.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Crime and Disorder Implications

16. There is a recommendation within the Autism strategy that all public services include Autism specifically within general equality and diversity training, there is specific concentration on the importance of this within the criminal justice system.

Financial Implications

17. There is a training budget of £60,000 (one off funding) available to roll out the Autism training agenda within Nottinghamshire. However, it is hoped that additional funding will be made available by both the public and private sector in order to embed Autism awareness training across the county.

Public Sector Equality Duty implications

18. The delivery of the autism strategy is a statutory duty, under the Autism Act which aims to ensure equality of access to all services for people with Autism.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1. The Board accepts the report and acknowledges the progress made to date and the work still required.
2. Members of the board consider how Autism awareness training may be incorporated into their general equality training and provide a named link to enable this agenda to be furthered.
3. Members of the board consider whether a basic awareness training course would be useful for all board members. Nottinghamshire County Council would be happy to facilitate this.
4. Following training that members of the board to consider how reasonable adjustments may be made within their organisations to ensure equality of access.

Jon Wilson - Assistant Director, Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection

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Constitutional Comments (SLB 10/03/2015)

The Health and Wellbeing Board is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (KAS 17/03/15)

The financial implications are contained within paragraph 17 of the report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Nottinghamshire Autism self-assessment easy read version available on the Learning disability and autism partnership board website

<http://www.nottscountypb.org/>

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- 'All'