

Autism
Children and Young
People's Scrutiny
16 April 2018

What is Autism?

- Autism is a life-long disability
- It affects the lives of people with autism and their families and carers.
- It is a spectrum condition in terms of impact and severity;
 - Those with mild autism often need no formal support.
 - Those with severe autism may require 24 hours support with all areas of their health and wellbeing
- There will be people without diagnosis who do have autism

Legislation and statutory guidance

- The work of the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is directed by a range of legislation such as;
 - **For adults;** The Autism Act (2009), the National Autism Strategy (2010), The Equality Act (2010) and the Adult Autism Strategy: Statutory Guidance (2015).
 - **For Children;** the National Autism Plan for Children (2003), The Special Education Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2014)
 - We are also directed by overarching legislation such as the Care Act (2014)

Autism in Herefordshire

- It is estimated that 1.1% of the national population have autism. For Herefordshire this would mean that approximately 2,000 people would fall within the autism spectrum.
- The council has worked with the CCG and partners and the autism community in the county to co-produce a comprehensive outcome-focused Autism Strategy
- The action plan within the strategy describes how we will create real changes in the lives of people with autism through changes to service design and the commissioning culture.

What have people told us?

- When we engaged with the public they have told us things like;
- *“After going repeatedly to the doctors to be told there was no help to be diagnosed in Herefordshire. I have given up going.”*
- *“All school staff need more training on autism as I'm finding that they don't understand me”*
- *“There is not enough support for unpaid carers”*
- *“I was unaware, until recently, that being abused was not right.”*

Autism strategy 2018-2021 (1)

The strategy;

- Sets out the outcomes and actions required to achieve change within the statutory guidance framework as well as the wider strategic aims of the council and the clinical commissioning group;
- Ensures that all commissioned activity is aligned to the health and wellbeing blueprint for adult social care, the Council's aim of keeping all children safe and giving them the best start in life and with the NHS's long-term commitment to ensure reasonable adjustments are made in both primary and acute health services.

Autism strategy 2018-2021 (2)

- Our strategic themes have been developed and agreed by the Autism Partnership Board, building on the themes of the first Autism Strategy for Herefordshire, originally published in 2014.
- The action plan identifies actions through information gained from:
 - The joint strategic needs assessment (JSNA);
 - The children's integrated needs assessment (CHINA) and;
 - National benchmarking data;
 - A number of engagement exercises with a range of service users their families, carers and practitioners; and,
 - Discussions with a range of partners such as Herefordshire NAS, Herefordshire Carer Services and West Mercia Police.

Autism strategy 2018-2021 (3)

- The strategy is 'all-age' meaning that it is relevant to children, young people as well as adults with autism and their families. The outcomes we are looking to achieve are:
 - Everyone is as healthy and well as they can be;
 - Everyone has access to appropriate educational provision so they can fulfil their potential as learners;
 - Families and unpaid carers get the help and support they need;
 - Everyone can access transport, high quality housing and suitable employment opportunities; and,
 - We are all safe in our communities.

Our immediate priorities

- Local diagnostic pathways will be in place to enable people to be diagnosed and, where appropriate, to access suitable services in a timely manner
- Review the full range of educational provision for CYP with autism
- Improve awareness of autism amongst all education professionals
- Improve the quality of information for Carers and Families so that the right support can be identified and provided effectively
- Improve awareness within the autism community of community safety.

How we will review progress

- The Autism Partnership Board to regularly review progress
- Full review of progress to be made annually
- Action plan to be updated on a rolling basis