

# Autism Strategy

## March 2018

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### **1. Introduction**

1.1 The Steering group Action Plan has been developed by working with a wide range of partner agencies to identify the key priorities and themes that they have found, from working with people with autism, their families and carers, and looking at what the people have said is important to them. The actions are developed with a view to make a real difference to the lives of children and adults with autism and to support their families and carers.

1.2 The aim of the Action Plan is for children, young people and adults with autism and their family and carers to have their voices heard, their needs understood, and to be supported to achieve their own wellbeing outcomes and to lead fulfilling lives.

1.3 There is currently no Neath Port Talbot (NPT) ASD strategy, however, this report sets out in detail the specific actions that will be taken, including how they will be measured and monitored, in terms of the steering group action plan. The aim is to see a real difference in the services, care and support available to people with autism and therefore close monitoring of progress and delivery will be essential.

1.4 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act includes a number of specific requirements for local authorities to establish information, advice and assistance services. The Regional Partnership Board is also responsible for ensuring there are services, care and support in place to meet the needs of people in Neath Port Talbot.

1.5 A key development is the establishment of the new National Integrated Autism Service. In March 2016, the Minister for Health and Social Services announced a £6

million investment in the development of IAS for Wales. In April 2017, the Minister for Social Services and Public Health announced additional funding taking the total funding to £13 million. This funding is provided to Regional Partnership Boards via the Intermediate Care Fund (ICF). There is a regional service which is currently being developed across Western Bay. The aim of the service is to ensure that autistic individuals, their families and carers are able to access the advice, support and interventions needed to enable them to reach their full potential where these are otherwise unavailable.

1.6 The IAS is jointly hosted between health and social care with strong links to education. The service is for all ages, this helps to ensure consistency for autistic individuals and support with transitions. The service will provide:

- Diagnosis assessments of adults
- Support for adults with a diagnosis of autism and those who care for them
- Support for children and young people with a diagnosis of autism and those who care for them
- Support for professionals

1.7 The Autism (Wales) Bill is due to be developed by 13th July 2018 and if the law is agreed by the National Assembly for Wales, it will then be called the Autism (Wales) Act 2018. The law will propose what more Welsh Government must do to support people with autism.

## **2. Definition of Autism**

2.1 The World Health Organisation's definition of autism is as follows:

"The term autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) is used to describe the group of pervasive developmental disorders characterised by qualitative abnormalities in reciprocal social interactions and in patterns of communication and by restricted, stereotyped, repetitive repertoire of interests and activities".

2.2 The autism spectrum is very broad and can affect people with all levels of ability. Appropriate support and intervention can help people with autism to reach their potential.

The Strategic Action Plan is for people on all parts of the spectrum and includes individuals who may also have a co-existing learning disability, as well as those diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome. It is difficult to estimate how many people are affected by ASD as studies vary. Current evidence suggests prevalence rates of around 1% of the total population or above. Therefore, based on 2011 Welsh Census data the number of people with autism in Wales is estimated to be approximately 31,000, although many of these may not have a diagnosis and will not necessarily be known to services. The term Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is interchangeable with the term Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). Neath Port Talbot recognises both terms but for the purposes of this strategy has adopted 'ASD' in line with the NICE guidelines.

2.3 Many people with autism will have a co-existing learning disability. Others may have mental and physical health conditions. Research indicates the most prevalent issues are sleep difficulties, gastro-intestinal problems, glue ear, epilepsy, anxiety, depression, dyspraxia, dyslexia, obsessive compulsive disorder, attention deficits and hyperactivity. The presence of autism in addition to another condition can lead to complex difficulties which may not respond to traditional approaches. It is therefore important that practitioners identify both autism and the co-existing condition and plan the care and support accordingly to best meet their needs.

2.4 The importance of National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) guidance on autism is recognised within Neath Port Talbot. NICE is also a widely recognised body providing authoritative advice and information on a range of health issues. NICE has produced several guidelines on the diagnosis and management of autism in children. The purpose of the NICE guidance is to drive and measure quality improvements and describe what a good service should look like. Health boards should take the guidance into account when planning autism services as they are the accepted benchmark of what good services should aim to provide. More information on NICE autism guidelines can be found on the website [www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk](http://www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk) or directly at NICE at <http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism>. In addition to technical advice documents NICE4 has also produced information for family and carers of children and young people to accompany this clinical guidance.

### 3. Strategic Action Plan

3.1 Since developing the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan in 2017, within Neath Port Talbot, we are making progress in delivering improvements to the lives of children, young people and adults. These include:

- Multi-agency working within the Social work teams through developing care and support plans, which include:
- Behavioural support workers within the teams
- Working with facing the challenge, who work with parents to assist with behaviour, this is both 1 to 1 and group work.
- Short breaks for families
- POP services which support with social and leisure activities
- Coordinating services

3.2 NPT ASD steering group takes place on a monthly basis. This involves both children and adult services. There is good attendance across the board which include, Health, Education and Colleges, Leisure, Housing, 3rd Sector Voluntary Agency, and more importantly parents and carers. This is a good forum for partnership working, members who attend the steering group are committed and are making excellent contributions to the group. The meetings have agenda's and development plans, which are similar across Western bay and they include:

- Mapping services within the area and identifying gaps.
- National update ASDinfo wales
- Training and rolling out ASD, including ASD awareness.

3.3 The action plan going forward includes the mapping out of services and feeding the services within the directory to help organisations and individual people to have access to signposting. Social workers across Children and Adult services have assisted in identifying gaps in services, they have identified these through speaking to individuals with autism and their families and carers about where they perceive there to be gaps in service provision. This information is fed back to the steering groups.

3.4 The action plan includes supporting NPT to be an ASD friendly authority, which involves all organisations in the town undertaking training from the website of ASD Wales info. This training can either take the form of online training which takes about 15 minutes to complete, or there are information sheets for businesses that provide the organisations with information in regards to how to recognise and communicate with individuals with ASD. NPT SSD are ensuring that all staff members in Children's and Adults services undertake the training. Following this, the Steering Group will look to roll this out to other departments and staff within NPTCBC. We can then present to the chamber of trade to assist us to encourage all businesses including, shops, dentists, GP's, hairdressers and schools to undertake the autism aware training, for the area to be an autism aware town.

3.5 There is currently some very positive work being undertaken in schools. A number of primary schools across NPT have taken part in the 'Learning with Autism Scheme' both pupils and staff have taken part and have achieved awards in this scheme. There have been some excellent examples where students have undertaken projects with the autistic children within the school, where autistic children have helped the other children to understand through play, drawings and puzzles, how autistic children feel and how they need to be treated and supported on occasions. This has been very educational for the pupils and a way for them to understand that this is a way of life and they will grow up autism aware.

3.6 There is a sub group planning an ASD awareness day. Money from families first has been awarded to help set up the day and it will be in the Aberavon shopping centre in April. The money will be spent on advertising, merchandise and media, and the aim will be to raise as much awareness as possible regarding Autism, through stands and organisations.

3.7 The ASD action plan is fed into the Disability Advisory group bi monthly which report directly to the Think Family Partnership Executive Group.

LOCAL AREA UPDATE

AREA: NEATH PORT TALBOT

MONTH: DECEMBER 2017

NATIONAL SCHEME COMPLETIONS:

	Total completions	Completion before 31st March 2017	Completions since 31st March 2017
ASD Aware Certification	329	101	228
Teacher certificate	303	102	101
LSA certificate	321	194	127
Autism Superheroes	1158	205	953
Whole School Award	5	1	4
Health and Social Care Adults	101	2	99
Health and Social Care Children	29	0	29
Housing Certificate	0	0	0
Working with Autism	53	53	0
HR training Scheme	3	3	0
Leisure Certificate	13	1	7

LEARNING WITH AUTISM PRIMARY SCHOOL STATS UP TO DECEMBER 31ST 2017

School	Teaching Staff	LSA	Generic ASD aware	Pupils	Certificate achieved
Abbey Junior School	2			1	
Alderman Davies CIW		16			
Alltwn Primary School	15				
Awel Y Mor Primary School	15	29	8	272	Yes - 26/05/2017
Blaenbaglan Primary School	14	1		1	
Blaendulais Primary School	5				
Blaenhoddan Primary School	11	13	8	124	Yes - 21/01/2017
Brynhyfryd primary school	1				
Coed Hirwaun Primary School	7				
Coedffranc Primary School	9	20		14	
Crymlyn Primary School	4				
Crynalit Primary School	19	25	14	279	Yes - 10/07/2017
Cwmtawe	1				
Gnoll Primary School		16			
Gwaun Cae Gurwen	2				
Llangwig Primary	7	6		69	
Maesmarchog Primary School		1			
Sandfields Primary School	17	27	3	141	Yes - 25/05/2017
Tywyn Primary School	27	40	8	260	Yes - 28/06/2017
Waunceirch Primary School	7	7		5	
Ysgol Hendrefelin	1	1			
YGG Castell-nedd	12				

SECONDARY SCHOOL STATS UNTIL DECEMBER 31<sup>ST</sup> 2017

Secondary School	Teaching Staff/LSA	Generic ASD aware	Pupils	Certificate achieved
Dwr y Felin	1	22		



# Neath Port Talbot ASD Strategic Action Plan 2017-2019

OUTCOME	TASKS	AGENCY /LEAD	PROGRESS/UPDATE
<b>Service Mapping</b>			
1	There is an ASD Strategy in place for Neath Port Talbot CBC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASD Steering Group to develop an Autism Strategy</li> <li>• Hold consultation events on the proposed Autism Strategy</li> </ul>	
2	There is an up to date map of services for people with ASD in the area, that is user friendly and readily available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify any voluntary/community based ASD services specific to children and young people</li> <li>• Identify any voluntary/community based ASD services specific to adults</li> <li>• Identify any Health Authority based ASD services specific to children and young people</li> <li>• Identify any Health Authority based ASD services specific to adults</li> <li>• Identify gaps in services for individuals with ASD</li> </ul>	
<b>Autism Friendly Town</b>			
3	Town Centres with Neath Port Talbot to become Autism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meet with relevant stakeholders in the local town centres</li> </ul>	

OUTCOME	TASKS	AGENCY /LEAD	PROGRESS/UPDATE
. Friendly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All social services staff to undertake awareness training</li> <li>• All Neath Port Talbot staff/Members to undertake awareness training</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local schools to continue to undertake accreditation</li> </ul>		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contact local businesses, shops, leisure centres with details of the scheme</li> </ul>		
<b>Group Representation</b>			
4 . For parent/carers to attend the ASD steering group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All steering group members to identify potential attendees to the steering group meeting</li> </ul>		
<b>Autism Awareness Day</b>			
5 . An Autism Awareness Day to be held to promote awareness of Autism in Neath Port Talbot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Date to be identified to hold awareness day</li> <li>• Location of event to be confirmed</li> <li>• Obtain publicity and promotional materials</li> </ul>		
<b>Integrated Autism Service</b>			
6 . For an Integrated Autism Service to be set up regionally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives from the ASD Steering Group to be included in the regional developments</li> </ul>		