

Priorities 2015-17 Strategic Outcome 1

A Healthy Life: People with autism enjoy the highest attainable standard of living, health and family life and have timely access to diagnostic assessment and integrated support services.

What we will do

Improve access to integrated service provision across the multi-dimensional aspects of autism.

Why we need to do this

For people with autism getting an assessment of autism is the first step to accessing services they need to meet their personal outcomes.

What we have achieved:

- In partnership with the Autism Achieve Alliance we have produced action research which has provided evidence to address waiting times for diagnosis.
- Funded a wide variety of autism development and innovation, projects across health and support services.
- Developed and rolled out a Menu of Interventions, to professionals across Scotland, that supports people with Autism.
- Put in place a National Coordination team to work strategically with LAs to develop autism action plans and implement them based on local needs.

What we will do next:

- We will take steps to improve how people with autism are captured in health and social care data to better understand and evidence their needs.
- Share best practice in the use of the menu of interventions.
- Provide leadership for an improvement programme across NHS Boards to improve diagnostic services and increase diagnostic capacity.
- Continue to support implementation of local action plans ensuring that local authorities and third sector organisations can identify local autism needs and commission the appropriate services to meet those needs.
- Encourage innovation and improvement in autism services through Autism Funded projects and explore how learning from these projects can be evaluated and shared wider.

Priorities 2015-17 Strategic Outcome 2

Choice and Control: *People with autism are treated with dignity and respect and services are able to identify their needs and are responsive to meet those needs.*

What we will do

Consistent adoption of good practice guidance in key areas of education, health and social care across local authority areas.

Why we need to do this

People with autism tell us that they experience variation in access and how services respond to their needs. Professionals must be able to understand autism and develop services that are responsive to the needs of people with autism.

What we have achieved:

- Published a strategy edition of Good Autism Practice that highlights autism practice in Scotland.
- Worked in partnership with Scottish Autism to develop a web based Autism Toolbox to improve accessibility of this educational resource for teachers and support staff.
- Shared good autism practice through the delivery of good practice events on the Menu of Intervention, Transitions and local autism action plans.
- Supported the development of professional networks and good practice events with autism professionals and autism leads across health, social care and third sector.
- In partnership held research into action workshops to highlight autism research which could impact autism practice.

What we will do next:

- Explore how research on autism can be shared and translated into practice. Further develop opportunities to take forward gaps in autism research.
- Continue to work across all sectors to improve autism practice through networks, good autism practice events and annual national events. Explore how these networks can work collaboratively to improve services.
- Work in partnership to continue to promote the use of the Autism Toolbox in schools and teacher training colleges.
- Encourage innovation and improvement in autism services through Autism Funded projects and explore how learning from these projects can be evaluated and shared wider.
- Promote the use of a person centred approach to identify and improve personal outcomes for people with autism.

Priorities 2015-17 Strategic Outcome 3

Independence: People with autism are able to live independently in the community with equal access to all aspects of society. Services have the capacity and awareness to ensure that people are met with recognition and understanding.

What we will do

Capacity and awareness building in mainstream services to ensure people are met with recognition and understanding of autism

Why we need to do this

People with autism experience barriers accessing community facilities. Having the right support and a knowledgeable workforce to deliver services are important aspects of an independent life.

What we have achieved:

- Piloted a One Stop Shops approach for people with autism.
- Funded Open University and University of Strathclyde to provide free autism modules to build professional capacity in autism in a range of sectors and settings.
- Developed the NES Training Framework to identify training provision and gaps for further development.
- Through our partners we have developed a national network to provide information about autism and facilitate professional autism networks to share knowledge and good practice.

What we will do next:

- Support One Stop Shops to become sustainable by embedding the service in local strategic delivery plans.
- Work in partnership with policy colleagues across wider government to identify joint objectives and develop shared outcomes.
- Develop the skills and competency of the health and social care workforce through implementing the NHS NES autism training framework and further develop training opportunities where gaps in provision have been identified.
- Support access to the community for people with autism by increasing an understanding of autism in mainstream services and breaking down barriers to access.
- Explore alternative solutions to out of area placements for people with complex care needs drawing from the data obtained in the Mental Health Day Bed Audit.
- Promote personal outcomes approaches for people with autism by working to influence the choice self-directed of support providers and support available for people with autism.
- Understand the level of autism alert card schemes across Scotland and consider the benefits and any risks.
- Explore the impact of Open University and University of Strathclyde free autism modules schemes to determine how training is building professional capacity, in order to identify future need and prioritise further funding.
- Encourage innovation and improvement through Autism Funded projects to enable people with autism to live independently and explore how these can be shared wider.

Priorities 2015-17 Strategic Outcome 4

Active Citizenship: *People with autism are able to participate in all aspects of community and society by successfully transitioning from school into meaningful educational or employment opportunities.*

What we will do

Improve access to appropriate transition planning across the lifespan

Why we need to do this

People with autism can experience barriers to participation in aspects of community life including education, employment opportunities and social activities. A good transition plan from school will enable young people with autism to plan their future participation in and contribution to their community.

What we have achieved:

- Supported people with autism to contribute to Scotland's economy through a range of supported employment models i.e. Project SEARCH, Diversity works 4 Me and Iwork4me.
- Published a guide to employment policy structures and initiatives in Scotland for people with autism to understand supported employment routes.
- Funded the development of the updated Principles of Good Transitions Guidance for professionals working in pre to post school transitions and beyond.

What we will do next:

- Work in partnership with Association for Real Change and statutory bodies to embed the Principles of Good Practice into transitions practice.
- Promote personal outcomes approaches for people with autism by working to influence the opportunities for people with autism in opportunities for all, young workforce strategy and employment.
- Encourage innovation and improvement through Autism Funded projects that enable people with autism to be better socially connected and explore how these projects can be shared wider.
- Work with partners to improve Modern Apprenticeship opportunities for young people with autism.
- Promote further positively evaluated models of supported employment.