



South Lanarkshire Council

Autism Strategy

Action Plan

Update April 2014

Ten Indicators for current best practice in the provision of effective Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) services

1. A local Autism Strategy developed in co-operation with people across the autism spectrum, carers and professionals, ensuring that the needs of people with ASD and carers are reflected and incorporated within local policies and plans
2. Access to training and development to inform staff and improve the understanding amongst professionals about ASD
3. A process for ensuring a means of easy access to useful and practical information about ASD, and local action, for stakeholders to improve communication
4. An ASD Training Plan to improve the knowledge and skills of those who work with people who have ASD, to ensure that people with ASD are properly supported by trained staff
5. A process for data collection which improves the reporting of how many people with ASD are receiving services and informs the planning of these services
6. A multi-agency care pathway for assessment diagnosis and intervention to improve the support for people with ASD and remove barriers.
7. A framework and process for seeking stakeholder feedback to inform service improvement and encourage engagement.
8. Services that can demonstrate that service delivery is multi-agency in focus and co-ordinated effectively to target meeting the needs of people with ASD
9. Clear multi-agency procedures and plans which are in place to support individuals through major transitions at each important life stage
10. A self-evaluation framework to ensure best practice implementation and monitoring

Indicator 1.

A local Autism Strategy developed in co-operation with people across the autism spectrum, carers and professionals, ensuring that the needs of people with ASD and carers are reflected and incorporated within local policies and plans

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Identify a Lead Officer for South Lanarkshire Council and Lanarkshire NHS to develop our approach to the National Autism Strategy, and link with NHS Lead Officer to contribute to their strategy, in line with the 10 Indicators of best practice
- Develop the Autism Strategy Group across all council resources to support the lead officer in the development of the strategy
- Fund a post from the £35,000 Government funding to work in partnership with key professionals and stakeholders
- Analysis and explore the findings from the national mapping exercise as it relates to South Lanarkshire

Actions progressed:

- South Lanarkshire Council have identified Lead Officer, Brenda Hutchison, Head of Adult and Older People Service, Social Work Resources
- Autism strategy group established
- NHSL plan to establish a strategic working group with membership from all key stakeholders to take forward recommendations from the Scottish Autism Strategy. The first meeting is planned for April 2014
- NHSL researched the possibility of internal secondment but could not progress at this time due to competing service demands
- SLC now progressing internal secondment to progress action plan
- NHSL have completed NHSL autism strategy report and will share the detail of this with key stakeholders
- NHSL participated in SLC mapping exercise and will participate in the exploration and analysis of these findings
- Further consultation and working group to be established to build on mapping exercise completed in February 2013

Indicator 2

Access to training and development to inform staff and improve the understanding amongst professionals about ASD

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Review current training plans across all council resources and NHS Lanarkshire and map what training has already been undertaken
- Work in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council Social Work Learning and Development board to develop a training plan across all resources
- Audit training and development needs and current gaps in knowledge base
- Raise awareness of the Scottish Strategy for Autism and the 10 Key Indicators of best practice across a range of stakeholders
- Identify priority groups and the content of the training programme specific to their role

Actions progressed:

- SLC Corporate training have developed an on-line Autism training course for all employees
- Community Living Manager, Social Work Resources currently completing Open University course on Autism
- NHSL will conduct and share training analysis that will contribute to the ASD training plan
- NHSL have delivered a range of autism training that spans across the service
- All staff within autism specific educational bases have been informed of the National Strategy.
- All education staff who engage in autism specific training are also informed.
- Future Planning Process within education ensures an enhanced level of transition support for identified young people who have significant additional support needs, including those with autistic spectrum disorder
- Training on Augmentive Communication Systems , such as, Teacch, Pecs and Makaton are available for staff
- Educational Psychologists offer Raising Awareness sessions for staff and offer support within schools.
- South Lanarkshire Education has good links to New Struan who offer training and advice to establishments when required.
- Education staff can access a range of training opportunities within the authority and from outside providers such as New Struan School.
- The Autism Outreach Team have delivered an intensive course in autism awareness to the majority of primary schools, resulting in each of these establishments having a Link Autism Teacher who can support other colleagues within their school. It is hoped that similar training can be devolved to early years and secondary establishments
- South Lanarkshire participates in a Multi Agency calendar of training events that is open to staff across the Council, Health and Third Sector partners, a core component of this is GIRFEC

Indicator 3

A process for ensuring a means of easy access to useful and practical information about ASD, and local action, for stakeholders to improve communication

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Evaluate the communication strategies in place across the various stakeholders to identify what current good practice could be built upon, to ensure our communication processes and data collection are robust and shared across resources
- Collate information and map pathways to identify how people with autism are identified within each of the South Lanarkshire Council resources, and within other agencies including Health, Police and the Voluntary Sector

Actions progressed:

- NHSL will participate in the sharing of good practice and the evaluation of communication strategies, contributing to a communication strategy
- NHSL will participate and contribute to the development of robust pathways across agencies
- Continue to develop Partnership working with voluntary organisations such as Princes carers trust, one stop shop
- Develop and evaluate strategies through the Partners in practice forum
- Delivery of public event by carers groups I Can
- Communication strategy further supported by the Carers Strategy
- A number of health pathways are well established and implemented across the lifespan
- Education staff can access a range of training opportunities within the authority and from outside providers such as New Struan School.
- The Autism Outreach Team have delivered an intensive course in autism awareness to the majority of primary schools, resulting in each of these establishments having a Link Autism Teacher who can support other colleagues within their school. It is hoped that similar training can be devolved to early years and secondary establishments.
- Who Cares? Scotland undertake an annual BIPAN event which involves, working closely with ASN schools where children and young people are able to describe their experiences and pathways to services.

Indicator 4

An ASD Training Plan to improve the knowledge and skills of those who work with people who have ASD, to ensure that people with ASD are properly supported by trained staff

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Review current training plans across all council resources and NHS Lanarkshire and map what training has already been undertaken
- Work in partnership with South Lanarkshire Council Social Work Learning and Development board to develop a training plan across all resources
- Identify priority groups and the content of the training programme specific to their role

Actions progressed:

- Education staff can access a range of training opportunities within the authority and from outside providers such as New Struan School.
- The Autism Outreach Team have delivered an intensive course in autism awareness to the majority of primary schools, resulting in each of these establishments having a Link Autism Teacher who can support other colleagues within their school. It is hoped that similar training can be devolved to early years and secondary establishments
- The Early Years Assessment Team (EYMAT) identify very young children's needs and access appropriate support for them
- The Primary Forum Process, as part of South Lanarkshire's Staged Intervention process, identifies children who require additional support, including specialised placement
- The Future Planning Process ensures that vulnerable young people's destinations after school are identified, implemented and monitored.
- The Autism Outreach Service has an overview of children on the autistic spectrum in early years and primary establishments. They have designed and delivered a programme of training that is being copied by other authorities

Indicator 5

A process for data collection which improves the reporting of how many people with ASD are receiving services and informs the planning of these services

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Evaluate the communication strategies in place across the various stakeholders to identify what current good practice could be built upon, to ensure our communication processes and data collection are robust and shared across resources
- Collate information and map pathways to identify how people with autism are identified within each of the South Lanarkshire Council resources, and within other agencies including Health, Police and the Voluntary Sector

Actions progressed:

- NHSL will participate in the sharing of good practice and the evaluation of communication strategies, contributing to a communication strategy
- NHSL will participate and contribute to the development of robust pathways across agencies
- A number of health pathways are well established and implemented across the lifespan
- Education staff can access a range of training opportunities within the authority and from outside providers such as New Struan School.
- The Autism Outreach Team have delivered an intensive course in autism awareness to the majority of primary schools, resulting in each of these establishments having a Link Autism Teacher who can support other colleagues within their school. It is hoped that similar training can be devolved to early years and secondary establishments.

Indicator 6

A multi-agency care pathway for assessment diagnosis and intervention to improve the support for people with ASD and remove barriers.

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Explore current pathways for assessment, diagnosis and intervention across agencies to identify how they could be streamlined to improve information and communication
- Identify current practice in post-diagnosis supports across resources, including Health and the impact this has on people on the spectrum and their carers
- Identify best practice models across resources, including Health, which can be shared for the benefit of those with autism and their carers
- Identify how GIRFEC supports children and young people on the spectrum to achieve better lives

Actions progressed:

- NHSL will share current established pathways with the aim of reviewing and streamlining these where appropriate to support a multi-agency approach to service delivery
- NHSL will contribute to the identification and sharing of best practice in post diagnostic support
- NHSL will share best practice models internal and external to Lanarkshire with SLC and other key stakeholders to inform and develop future service provision that will benefit people with autism and their carers
- GIRFEC is the main planning tool to identify children and young people's needs across all resources. This involves multi-agency planning with colleagues in Education, Health and Social Work.
- Education and Social Work Resources work on the principles of 'future planning partnerships' to ensure that there is robust transition arrangements in place for children on the autistic spectrum.

Indicator 7

A framework and process for seeking stakeholder feedback to inform service improvement and encourage engagement.

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Engage with a range of stakeholders including people on the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and carers to identify what makes a meaningful life for them

Actions progressed:

- NHSL have a number of service user/carer forums and focus groups that facilitate engagement with stakeholders/service users/carers
- NHSL provide services within a rights based person centred framework across the lifespan
- Education Resources (Inclusion)/ social work child care and NHSL has a Staged Intervention approach to meeting additional support needs, including autistic spectrum disorders, within their mainstream school.
- Children requiring more support are presented to Additional Support Needs Forums who may recommend a specialised placement eg an autism specific base.
- Parents are fully consulted and views considered at each planning stage.
- The Council has a specialist resource for young people with autism (Arran House), this followed a consultation to bring children back from out of authority placements. Families wanted to ensure continuity of care, as a result the Council commissioned the National Autistic Society to provide the service.

Indicator 8

Services that can demonstrate that service delivery is multi-agency in focus and co-ordinated effectively to target meeting the needs of people with ASD

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Identify current partnership working in the development of services for people with autism to inform service improvement and encourage stakeholder engagement

Actions progressed:

- NHSL will participate and contribute to the development of the robust pathways across agencies
- NHSL will identify areas of good practice within transition processes to support and inform future service planning
- The Staged Intervention Process within Education means that children with additional support needs are identified, tracked and monitored at each stage of their education pathway
- As part of the development of Self Directed Support (SDS) there have been a number of stakeholder consultation events, including young carers group to examine their role.
- Social Work Resources worked in partnership with In Control Scotland around 'Taking the First Steps' to provide families with an opportunity to test out the SDS approach.

Indicator 9

Clear multi-agency procedures and plans which are in place to support individuals through major transitions at each important life stage

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Identify good practice in current transition processes within South Lanarkshire and evaluate the impact they have on stakeholders to inform future planning

Actions progressed:

- GIRFEC is embedded in all aspects of the education process, leading to effective multi-agency working
- The delivery of 17 courses delivered across South Lanarkshire of the Early Bird programme for parents whose child has received a diagnosis of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and is of pre-school age
- The Future Planning Process provides a framework for schools to put into practice the principles of the ASL Act with regards to transition planning, giving guidance about the range of agencies and how best to engage with them in supporting pupils to move on from school to a positive destination. The process is designed to support collaborative work and to identify the range of options, supports, strategies, interventions and resources which may be required to achieve an effective transition. Pupils and their parents are central to this process

Indicator 10

A self-evaluation framework to ensure best practice implementation and monitoring

Actions to meet the indicator of best practice:

- Through Connect our Council Plan and individual Resource Plans we will evaluate and ensure processes are robust effective and deliver outcomes required for all individuals on the spectrum and their carers

Actions progressed:

- The main planning tool for children with additional support needs is the Additional Support Plan. A few children who have involvement with other agencies, such as Social Work or Health, may also require a Coordinated Support Plan
- The Children's Services Strategy Group deals with services delivered to Children in its broadest sense and provides an opportunity to raise issues pertaining to autism to partners in a multi agency forum.