

# ASD Reference Group Template – Database of Skills and Experience

Health and Social Care Integration Directorate  
Adult Care and Support Division



We would like to develop a repository of skills / experience which ASD Reference Group members have, in order to ensure that these are adequately covered within the Group to finalise and take forward the Recommendations of the Autism Strategy. Please could you complete and return the short template below:

Val Sellars

## 1. Academic background / Training:

Qualified as a Speech and Language Therapist in 1975 – Member of Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists and registered with Health Professions Council.

Qualified as an Adult Psychotherapist in 2004- Member of the Institute of Group Analysis and registered with United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapists.

## 2. Work Experience:

Worked as an SLT in Glasgow, Forth Valley and Tayside Health Board areas since 1975. Seconded part-time to work as an SLT in Struan House School when it opened in the late 70's. Worked consistently but not solely in the field of ASD until 1989. Other specialties included neurology and neuro-surgery as well as paediatrics.

Have worked in the Scottish Centre for Autism at Yorkhill Hospital since 1989. This includes a three year part-time secondment to the post of Clinical Director for Child and Family Psychiatry.

Currently holds the post of Consultant SLT and Director of the Scottish Centre for Autism at Yorkhill hospital Glasgow, Lead professional SLT for CAMHS services in GGC and Hon. Clinical Senior Lecturer, University of Glasgow involved in post – graduate medical teaching programme.

My work is embedded in an NHS clinical service providing second opinion diagnostic assessment (0-18yrs) for about 150 cases per year, referrals coming mainly from GGC but also from across Scotland.

In addition to this I clinically manage a pre-school parent /child early intervention programme that sees about 30 children and their families per year. Two papers have been published on the programme.

Salt.J, Sellars. V, Shemilt, J. Boyd, S. Coulson. T, McCool. S.  
The Scottish Centre for Autism pre-school treatment programme: I  
A developmental approach to early intervention.  
Autism, The International Journal of Research and Practice 2001; 5(4):362-373

Salt. J, Shemilt. J, Sellars, V, Boyd, S. Coulson, T. McCool. S.  
The Scottish Centre for Autism pre-school treatment programme:II  
The results of a controlled treatment outcome.

## **ASD Reference Group Template – Database of Skills and Experience**

Autism, The International Journal of Research and practice 2002; 6 (1): 33-46

Since 2004 I have also worked on a part-time basis as Principal Adult Psychotherapist in the Department of Psychotherapy at Stobhill Hospital, Glasgow. Client group is varied but several adults have or would warrant a diagnosis of Asperger's Syndrome.

I was a member of the PHIS working group and of the original ASD Reference Group. In my local area I am a member of the GGC ASD Redesign Group and I chaired the Interventions sub-group.

Currently I sit on the local ASD Core Group Chairs Meeting and on the Interagency Language and Communication Group.

### **3. Strengths:**

The above clinical work means that there is contact on a daily basis with children, young people and their families who experience being someone or living with someone on the autism spectrum. I also have significant experience in the field of adult mental health.

I work clinically across the entire age range so this brings a developmental perspective to my work.

Have had very extensive "hands on" experience in ASD prior to becoming involved in diagnostic work. This has been crucial to allow me to understand the very different presentations of ASD that those on the spectrum experience and to be able to understand what parents are talking about as I have actually spent years in a "hands on" role.

My team has regular joint CPD clinical meetings with colleagues in ASD teams from the Western Isles, Lanarkshire, Borders, Tayside and Inverclyde. This allows for a good exchange of views between ASD clinicians across Scotland.

Regularly involved in redesign of ASD services in local area.

### **4. Skills:**

- Very experienced in ASD assessment and diagnosis across age range particularly in more complex, more subtle or more contentious cases
- Sound knowledge of co-morbidities and of child development
- Very experienced in early therapeutic interventions for families and pre-schoolers
- Very experienced in helping parents manage ASD within family environment
- Extensive experience in NHS
- Used to multi-disciplinary and multi-agency working including forensic services
- Provides counselling to families and young people
- Provides psychotherapy for adults

## **ASD Reference Group Template – Database of Skills and Experience**