

# Working Group Activity Overview

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All working groups have met at least once and considered their remit, including processes, operation and reporting. They have all set priorities and are reviewing their work plans to establish what can be realistically achieved in the given timeframe, including the frequency of meetings. Some are meeting bi-monthly, where others plan to hold four meetings over the course of the year. Working Group 2 plans to be guided by data analysis and better understanding of current process, concerns of service users and families. Working Group 1 has agreed that they will look at specific elements of their plan at each meeting, to maximise effectiveness, whereas others are maintaining a broad focus.

There are some initial findings. Parallels between the Strategy and NHS Dementia plan have been drawn. It has a focus on early diagnosis, effective post diagnostic treatment and social supports, as opposed to medication based interventions. Working Group 1 is analysing effective implementation strategies in light of this. Conversely, there is a lack of synergy with the Strategy in higher education, which has no autism strategy separate from guidelines for support for students with disabilities.

Work plans are developing as Working Groups discuss their remit. For example, the NES training framework falls under the heading of improvement to post-diagnostic support, where it was felt that it has a wider application to diagnosis, support and transition.

As referred to above, Working Group chairs have been grappling with what is realistically achievable in the given timeframe. In light of this, Working Group 2 has agreed to focus efforts on young adult transitions (ages 14-25), while remaining open to opportunities to influence positive change in other transition age groups. Working Group 4, whose main focus is the delivery of the NES training framework, is developing a plan to identify existing training and gaps in order to develop workforce skills, through practice.

The National Autism Co-ordination team are attending Working Group 3 meetings as there are synergies between their work and co-ordinating good practice locally, which is also a focus of their lead officers' collaborative events. Autism Network Scotland Advisors are also meeting with the team to provide information about Working Group activities, which is being fed back to local authorities during our visits.

A recurring challenge is that working group chairs not clear about the parameters of their responsibilities. **The Governance Group is asked to discuss how best to clarify the remit and roles of Working Groups and that of their Chairs.**