

Working Group 3 meeting minutes  
15 April 2015  
Number 6 One Stop Shop, Edinburgh

**APPROVED**

**Members present:** Ken Aitken, Ken Aitken Consultancy, Jayne Kemp, Social Work Scotland, Alison Leask, Autism Argyll, Jane Neil-MacLachlan, Independent Advisor, Moira Park, Scottish Autism, Roo Philip, Tailor Ed, Jayne Porter, Autism Network Scotland

Invited guests present: Donald Macleod, National Autism Co-Ordination Project, University of Strathclyde

**Apologies:** Bill Colley, Caledonia Learning and Care, Aline-Wendy Dunlop, University of Strathclyde, Jane Hook, Parent, Zoe Robertson, Social Work Scotland, Cathy Steedman, Autism Initiatives, Charlene Tait, Scottish Autism, Ali Taylor, Scottish Government Care, Support and Rights Division

**Minutes by:** Tracy Wenzl, Autism Network Scotland

- I. **Introductions** - Introductions were made around the table
- II. **Apologies** - JNM gave apologies on behalf of members unable to attend
- III. **Minutes** – the minutes from 4 February 2015 were approved
- IV. **Matters Arising**

JP attended the March meeting of the Governance Group in JNM's place. The question sent to the Governance Group by Working Group 3 - **How does info gathered re: Good Autism Practice translate into appropriate ASD commissioning?** – was raised. The question was briefly discussed but no answer was reached. DM reported that an event on commissioning would be held at the University of Strathclyde on May 5, 2015, led by Jean MacLellan.

JP also reported that she asked the Governance Group about the performance measures for local authorities' autism strategies and plans, currently in early stages of development between Social Work Scotland and the National Autism Co-ordination Project (NACP.) Jean MacLellan responded that the performance measures were in "embryonic stages" and that stakeholders like education would be considered before the measures were finalised.

JP further reported that the One Stop Shops are getting help with commissioning from the Joint Improvement Team – the Scottish Government has appointed Julie Haslett from JIT to work with the OSSs. The OSSs will be funded for a further year (through March 2016.)<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Post meeting, Ali Taylor (Scottish Government) added that Julie Haslett's role is to support OSS managers in gaining a clearer understanding of the local authority commissioning process and to support OSSs in exploring future sustainability options.

## V. Review of Work in Progress

- a. **Update on Research Series Report (JNM for AWD)** – the report is due as soon as possible. JNM read a few highlights from the summary report sent by AWD. It was noted that the report mentions the work of Working Group 3's charge to look at consistent adoption of good practice and that the pending Research Series Report will feed into the group's work. The summary also noted the challenge of translating research into practice, and noted several key outcomes expected as a result of the Action on Autism Research project, to include an event in June 2015.

**ACTION ITEM:** JNM to follow up with AWD to get more details about this proposed event

AWD had previously suggested teaching people to audit their work for presentation, rather than to write for journal publication, might be more effective. KA suggested that a national framework for research was needed, so that everyone works the same way and populations translate across studies and to application in practice. He noted that the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee in America is doing this already. They ask families what they need, and fund research to answer those questions. JNM noted that Scottish Autism has a research centre. MP noted that Scottish Autism's research centre has ties to the University of Glasgow and others. . AL and MP both recommended the group ask CT about this at the next meeting. KA again noted that it was crucial to standardise the way research is done in Scotland, so that findings could be used to build a database

- b. **Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (JADD) edition update** – JNM read a message from AWD that indicated JADD was more likely to consider publishing an edition with a theme over a country-focused one. She also mentioned a book proposal, but further information was not available on this. KA further elaborated on the JADD edition, and said that a Scottish edition could be done but would require funding of approximately £7000. AWD and Tommy Mackay have indicated they would be interested in editing a special edition. He expressed concern that there might not be enough new Scottish research to publish an entire Scotland-focused edition. He noted that Scottish research on autism needs to get "on the map" as America and Europe have funding opportunities.

**ACTION ITEM:** KA and AWD to liaise on JADD edition

- c. **Knowledge Hubs/Virtual Networks** - JP has created a Knowledge Network on Autism Network Scotland website. To be useful, it needs a description to explain what it is. JP joined National Autistic Society's Network Autism to learn more. She reported it was difficult to navigate because it is so full of information, and that very little was Scotland-specific. She noted that there is value in having something just for Scotland. JNM noted that the ANS Knowledge Network could be a good way for providers to share their findings. TW reported that she checked out the Knowledge Hub website and that it was formatted in a way that didn't appear to foster much exchange – mostly a message board and blogs. JP proposed that the ANS Knowledge Network could be promoted through major autism charities, local authorities and Autism Champions, and would be free to use and only require ANS membership. She said the group would need to consider a code of conduct, privacy settings and who would act as moderator. Links to Scottish Autism Research Group (SARG) and Research Autism were suggested. Inviting someone from SARG to present at a future group meeting was also suggested.

**ACTION ITEM:** JP to send examples of forum descriptions (“blurbs”) to full group for consideration.

**ACTION ITEM:** Group to send ideas on blurb, code of conduct, privacy settings and moderation to TW for collation and dissemination before next meeting.

**ACTION ITEM:** JP to invite someone from SARG to attend a Working Group 3 meeting to tell the group about their start up and processes.

d. **Update on Standards/Quality Frameworks** – JP has not received the information from CT as of today’s meeting

e. **Update on knowledge exchange events for practitioners**

i. JP reported that upcoming events include: SWAN Conference for girls and women on the spectrum, April 27 – focus on education, transitions and wellbeing; Emotion Works training April 23; Listening to Community event for people on the spectrum, families and carers in Perth on May 20; Commissioning event May 5; NACP Collaborative event on April 29

ii. MP reported that Scottish Autism is using some new locations for their Knowledge Share events. The Autism Toolbox is trying to get in where teacher training occurs, and to colleges for support assistants.

iii. RP is speaking to a Dentistry Association, and holding parent workshops

**ACTION ITEM:** JP to send RP contact information for dentist in Highland with autism resources

f. **Autism Development Fund update** – JNM hasn’t heard anything further on when or how analysis of completed ADF projects will occur. A discussion of the contents of the evaluation form followed, with a note that the form focused on output, not outcomes. The group would still like to see the forms, and/or have some involvement in guiding the assessor the Scottish Government intends to employ. The group noted concern that someone who doesn’t have autism expertise might struggle to assess the projects. KA noted that IACC does this in a transparent way, we could look that as a model.

**ACTION ITEM:** JNM to call Annette Pyle to ask about status and offer for a small group to help to guide the assessor on what to look for.

g. **Discussion of good autism practice festival** – the group discussed connecting the event to the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Strategy Conference in November. ZR submitted the following suggestion via email before the meeting:

*That after the event a letter is written to the local authority and health board in the area the service/ practitioner is based congratulating them on their work, and how their work has highlighted the drive in their geographical area to progress the Scottish Autism Strategy and local action plans. I would suggest this is a letter that comes from the Scottish Government, ANS and Strathclyde University and is sent to the Chief executive within local authority and the equivalent within the NHS.*

JNM noted the group would need to see the ADF outcomes and final report on the Research Series to find examples of good autism practice for the event. She wondered whether there were also good examples in local authorities that could be included.

- h. **Local ASD Strategy developments** – DM reported that the April 29 event would focus on out of area placements and complex care. JK is facilitating a workshop on good practice at the event. NACP is focused on getting the last four outstanding local authorities who do not have strategies or plans yet to completion. DM updated the group on recent developments in several areas across Scotland, including that Aberdeen has a DVD about working with children that they'll show at the April 29 event. He also noted that Scottish Parliament has been talking about autism. JNM asked if the local authorities leaving COSLA were the same ones who still need to submit plans; DM say no, that is not connected. JNM asked if the submitted plans were mainly child-focused; DM replied no, adults were included too. JNM asked if services are linked to learning disabilities, DM replied that in some cases, yes they were. JNM expressed a serious concern that autism was at risk of continuing to be seen as only a matter for LD or children's services.
- VI. **Any other current business** – discussed returned to item V.b. and is summarised there. JP will deputize for JNM at June Governance Group meeting.
- VII. **Key Messages**  
Topics: Consideration of virtual network, access to ADF project outcomes, good practice festival, commissioning guidelines, JADD edition
- VIII. **Date of next meeting**  
The next meeting will take place **Wednesday, June 24 in Glasgow at 10:30 am**, venue TBD.

#### **KEY MESSAGES**

The group would like to continue to pursue the idea of a Scottish research-focused edition of the Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, and members of the group will continue to discuss this before the next meeting. The group would also like to continue pursuing the idea of a good autism practice festival, where good examples from across Scotland could be shared, and would like to do this in connection with the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on the Scottish Strategy for Autism, tentatively scheduled for November 2015. The group is keen to see two key pieces of work; the final report from the Action on Autism Research Series, and the outcomes from the Autism Development Fund funded projects. The group will continue to consider good autism practice and how it relates to commissioning. The group plans to launch a Knowledge Network on the Autism Network Scotland and is currently working to develop this. The Knowledge Network will be a place where researchers and practitioners can share examples of good practice and discuss it with each other. It is hoped that this could be formally launched at the November Conference.

#### **ACTION ITEMS**

- ACTION ITEM:** JNM to follow up with AWD to get more details about proposed event (June 2015)
- ACTION ITEM:** KA and AWD to liaise on JADD edition
- ACTION ITEM:** JP to send examples of forum descriptions ("blurbs") to full group for consideration.
- ACTION ITEM:** Group to send ideas on blurb, code of conduct, privacy settings and moderation to TW for collation and dissemination before next meeting.
- ACTION ITEM:** JP to invite someone from SARG to attend a Working Group 3 meeting to tell the group about their start up and processes.
- ACTION ITEM:** JP to send RP contact information for dentist in Highland with autism resources
- ACTION ITEM:** JNM to call Annette Pyle to ask about status and offer for a small group to help to guide the assessor on what to look for. (DONE)