

SHROPSHIRE

ADULTS AUTISM STRATEGY

2012 - 2015

April 2013

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

a. Context

This strategy covers Shropshire local authority area and has been written in response to the Autism Act 2009 and the national adult autism strategy 'Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives' which was published in March 2010.

The national strategy focuses on five core areas of activity:

- ✓ Increasing awareness and understanding of autism among frontline professionals
- ✓ Developing a clear, consistent pathway for diagnosis in every area
- ✓ Improved access to the services and support which adults with autism need to live independently within the community
- ✓ Helping adults with autism into work
- ✓ Enabling local partners to plan and develop appropriate services for adults with autism to meet identified needs and priorities

The Shropshire Adult Autism Strategy has been prepared with the aim of addressing these objectives. This strategy relates to adults and people coming through transition only.

b. Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Adult Autism Partnership Board

This Adult Autism Partnership Board has been established to enable collaborative working across neighbouring local authority areas in developing and implementing local autism strategies.

Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire and Telford and Wrekin are part of the Board as we commission services from some of the same providers: Shropshire commission mental health and learning disabilities health services along with Staffordshire through South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Having a joint Board provides a basis for partnership working, sharing of ideas and information and an excellent model for joint commissioning.

In Shropshire, an Autism Strategy Steering Group will directly oversee the commissioning, planning and provision of autism services and support across the County which also includes low level preventative services.

2. WHAT IS AUTISM?

In this strategy we recognise that there are a number of terms that different individuals and groups prefer to use for recognising autism. In this strategy we use the term 'autism' to include all the terms listed below:

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC)
- Asperger Syndrome
- Autistic Spectrum Difference
- Neuro-diversity

Autism is a lifelong condition that affects how a person communicates with and relates to other people. It also affects how a person makes sense of the world around them. The word "spectrum" is used because the characteristics of the condition vary from one person to another.

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects social interaction, communication, social relationships and making sense of others and social situations.

The three main areas of difficulty experienced by all people with autism are:

- ✓ Social communication, which includes understanding facial expressions and body language, tone of voice and giving and receiving verbal and non verbal communication
- ✓ Social interaction – recognising or understanding other people's emotions and feelings and expressing their own
- ✓ Social flexibility – understanding and predicting other people's behaviour, making sense of abstract ideas and imagining solutions outside of their own fixed routines

However people struggle in different ways depending on how autism affects them.

Many people with autism may also experience some form of sensory sensitivity or under-sensitivity to sounds, touch, taste, heat, light or colours have balance and proprioception difficulties.

3. INTRODUCTION

This strategy has been developed by Shropshire, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Telford and Wrekin Partnership Board. Its purpose is to provide the strategic direction for statutory health and social care organisations in Shropshire with regards to supporting adults and young people with an Autism Spectrum Conditions.

(NB: This strategy replaces the draft Shropshire Adult Autism Strategy 2010 – 2013, in order to respond to the significant changes that have taken place in financial and structural context across health and social care, both in statutory and voluntary sector services.)

The document:

- ✓ Sets out the objectives and outcomes for Autism services and support in Shropshire in line with the National Autism Strategy published in April 2010, national guidance published in December 2010 and the Essential Outcomes Framework published in April 2011.
- ✓ Considers the national and local drivers, prevalence statistics and stakeholders who need to be involved in the development work.
- ✓ Provides a framework of how we want to monitor and evidence service quality to ensure that it will support the achievement of national and key local targets and performance indicators.
- ✓ Includes an action plan of how the work programme will be taken forward over the next three years.
- ✓ Sits within the HWB strategy

4. WHY DO WE NEED A STRATEGY?

a. National Context

During the last few years there has been a strong message from Central Government and people within the autism communities that there is a need for local services to meet the needs of adults and young people who have autism.

“For too long people with autism have been failed by a system that doesn’t treat them as an individual and excludes them because they do not fit in with the way

*services are structured locally. The Autism Act 2009 aims to put an end to¹ this.”**

(Paul Burstow MP November 2011 Minister of State for Care at the time)

The Autism Act 2009 was England’s first ever disability-specific law. This ground-breaking piece of legislation aims to revolutionise the way services are delivered to adults with autism.

The Government has recognised there are many challenges and has put in place a range of key documents that aim to raise the profile of autism across society and public services and also endeavours to make progress in improving the lives of people who have autism and their carers. (NB many people who have autism do not have or wish to have any carers!)

i. Key events and dates:

- ✓ November 2006 – ‘Better services for people with an autistic spectrum disorder’
- ✓ 2009 – Valuing People Now
- ✓ June 2009 – Supporting People with Autism through Adulthood, National Audit Office
- ✓ 12th November 2009 – Autism Act
- ✓ 3rd March 2010 – Department of Health publish Adult Autism Strategy ‘Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives’
- ✓ July 2010 – National Institute Clinical Excellence (NICE) begin to work to develop a clinical guide for Autism in Adults
- ✓ December 2010 – Statutory guidance published for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support the implementation of the Autism Strategy
- ✓ The Standard Contract for Mental Health and Learning Disabilities for 2010/2011 explicitly requires service providers to explain how reasonable adjustments for people with autism are made
- ✓ April 2011 – ‘Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives’ Evaluating Progress Essential Outcomes Framework published
- ✓ By 2013 there will be a pathway to diagnosis in every local area

ii. Objectives from the National Autism Strategy

In no particular order:

Objective - Make sure people can get a diagnosis if they want one

Currently there is no formally defined diagnostic pathway in Shropshire once an individual reaches 18 or leaves school. A referral for a diagnosis, usually at the request of the individual or their parents, will depend on where you live, how knowledgeable a GP is about autism, the determination of the individual, parents or carer to pursue a diagnosis and/or their means to pay for private consultation.

¹ Getting in on the Act: Scrutinising services for adults with autism Centre for Public Scrutiny October 2011

For some people with an undiagnosed condition of autism, the desire to have a formal diagnosis is very important. It can begin to answer many questions and assist them in beginning to understand why they behave, react and respond to situations in the way that they do, to make the most of their strengths and to develop coping strategies.

Without a formal diagnosis, individuals may have difficulty in accessing welfare benefits or support.

Objective - The identification of adults who have autism

Key staff working across stakeholder groups receive the appropriate level of training to more accurately identify potential signs of autism in adults and are able to adapt their behaviour and communication as appropriate.

Objective - The assessment of the needs of adults who have autism for relevant services

Diagnosis or identification of autism is not enough; an important outcome can be that, where appropriate for the individual and carer, a diagnosis can lead to an assessment for care and support, which may identify eligible needs, and/or signposting to other relevant services or support. Diagnosis of autism should also be recognised as a catalyst for a carer's assessment.

Objective - Planning in relation to the provision of relevant services to people who have autism as they move from being children to adults

Effective transition planning will ensure that support remains in place once people who have autism reach adulthood as appropriate to the individual.

Effective transition planning should include career preparation up to age 16 and plans for education, employment, training, transport, housing and leisure from 16 to 19 and beyond. Crucially transition plans should be individually tailored to the needs and wishes of the individual young person and reviewed and updated each year.

Objective - Local planning in relation to the provision of services and support to adults who have autism

Having good leadership is crucial to making sure adults with autism get the help they need. This objective ensures appropriate planning of services for example employment, housing and leisure for adults who have autism ranging from locally based community services through to the provision of specialist or dedicated autism services, and including access to universal services in line with identified needs and priorities.

Objective - The training of staff who provide services to people who have autism

Our objective is to ensure that training around autism is provided to all public service staff particularly those working in health and social care. This includes not only general autism awareness training, but also refresher and highly specialised training for staff and carers in a range of roles that wish to develop their knowledge of autism.

Objective - Local arrangements for leadership in relation to the provision of services to adults who have autism

Our objective is to ensure there is effective leadership that ensures that the needs of adults who have autism in Shropshire are met.

iii. A Summary of Key Themes from the Autism Strategy

The 'must do's'

- ✓ Ensure effective training is developed and delivered to everyone working in health and social care
- ✓ Improve access for adults who have autism to the services and support they may need to live and work as independently as possible within their community
- ✓ By July 2013 – a pathway to diagnosis in every area
- ✓ Local appointment of a senior professional lead on the development of pathway and to develop a local diagnostic and assessment service
- ✓ Standard contract for Mental Health and Learning Disabilities explicitly requires explanation of how 'reasonable adjustments' will be made
- ✓ Local partners to develop a local commissioning plan for services and support for adults who have autism
- ✓ Consider the establishment of local autism partnership boards
- ✓ People who have autism and their family carers to be involved in the planning

The document makes reference to best practice, particularly the need to:

- ✓ Increase awareness and understanding of autism
- ✓ Develop a clear, consistent pathway of diagnosis of autism

- ✓ Help adults who have autism to gain a sustainable lifestyle which includes maintaining work and suitable accommodation
- ✓ Enabling local partners to develop and maintain relevant services for adults who have autism to meet identified needs and priorities
- ✓ Greater involvement of clients, parents, carers and partners of, advocates, personal assistants and interpreters

National Guidance and policy:

- ✓ Implementing Fulfilling & Rewarding Lives – statutory guidance for local authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the autism strategy (Dec 2010)
- ✓ Carers to be recognised and supported as expert partners – an outcome of Recognised, Valued and supported : Next steps for the Carers Strategy 2010
- ✓ NICE clinical guidelines on recognition, referral, diagnosis and management of adults on the autism spectrum – issued June 2012
- ✓ Lead professional to ‘get on with’ examining existing services and to be in good position to act on NICE guidelines
- ✓ Review of Adult Autism Strategy “Fulfilling & Rewarding Lives” in 2013.

b. The Local Context

Historically the way that services have responded to people with autism, and the support they have consequently received, has been patchy and inconsistent. Currently, statutory organisations are operating in a changing local environment which is presenting opportunities to review and re-design the way services and support is provided, including those for people with autism.

We would wish to see a range of outcomes from re-designed service models:

- ✓ A truly user and carer led service
- ✓ Locally based services with care and support closer to home
- ✓ Services that offer early recognition and intervention, and that encourage and maintain independence and fulfilling lives
- ✓ A review of the workforce skill base

- ✓ Development of training programmes for staff to enable them to deliver high quality, effective services

Shropshire, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Telford and Wrekin statutory organisations are committed to working together to improve services for people with autism and their carers. The diagnostic and care pathway will be drawn up to include provision of support and prevention for all people with autism, and recognise the greatest area of unmet need which is support for autistic people without learning disabilities.

i. Current Service Provision

At the present time some people who have autism may have access to a range of services in various settings. However, it is difficult to come to an accurate picture of exactly how many people who have autism are using which service, if any. To date there has been no statutory or performance indicator requirement to keep this data.

Currently in Shropshire there are no statutory sector funded services specifically for adults who have autism.

As detailed in Section 8 of this strategy, applying national prevalence rates to the population indicates that we would be expecting 1 in 10 adults with some form of autism in Shropshire. However, we would not necessarily expect all of these people to be accessing statutory services for a variety of reasons, for example some will not meet criteria for services or wish to access them.

Given that there is not a specific statutory service catering for people who have autism, we can expect that this client group will be present in a number of mainstream services:

- ✓ Caseloads of learning disability social workers
- ✓ Caseloads of mental health social workers
- ✓ People within services provided by the specialist Mental Health and Learning Disability Provider Trust
- ✓ Caseloads of Consultant Psychologists/Psychiatrists
- ✓ Attending learning disability day services
- ✓ Attending mental health day services
- ✓ Short break and respite services
- ✓ Living in independent sector residential and nursing homes
- ✓ Living in supported tenancy schemes
- ✓ Third sector provision

This is not an exhaustive list and does not take into account the accessing of housing, supporting people, leisure or educational/training services by people who have autism. It is also recognised that many people will not be known to any service.

ii. Current challenges

There are a number of challenges facing local services. These include:

- The current financial context is very challenging and there are no extra resources to implement the autism strategy;
- We do not have accurate figures for the numbers of people with autism living in Shropshire. The majority of adults who go undiagnosed are over the age of 35.*¹
- The changes in Welfare Reform may have a major impact on the stability of people with autism and their families carers and partners.*²
- Other people with autism may struggle with some aspects of their lives, and this can be because of their autism. They may need extra help to live independently but may find it difficult to get the right support or services especially if they do not have a diagnosis of autism. As more people gain a diagnosis there may be more need for support and hence implications for services.
- Only 15% of people with autism are in full time employment.*³
- All resources should be built around an understanding of autism and be accessible to people with autism. For this to happen there is a need to develop autism awareness across universal services and all parts of our communities so that people with autism can have the same access to services as everyone else and can be active citizens.
- Each person with autism is unique with differing needs which means that 'one size does not fit all'.

1 <http://ww2.le.ac.uk/offices/press/press-releases/2011/may/2018most-adults-with-autism-go-undiagnosed2019-new-findings>

2 National Autistic Society *Who Benefits?* – The impact of DLA reform on people with an autism spectrum disorder - 2011

3 National Autistic Society, *Think Differently, Act Positively – Public Perceptions of Autism* (2008), p. 19 (<http://www.autism.org.uk/content/1/c6/01/47/21/think%20diff%20act%20pos.pdf>).

5. AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

The aims of the strategy are to:

- ✓ Ensure a planned and open approach to commissioning of services and support for people with autism making use of information about demand, unmet needs/service gaps, resources and the voluntary sector
- ✓ Ensure that services are personalised and centred on people's needs and their family carers.
- ✓ Ensure a transparent relationship with stakeholders in the commissioning and provision of services.
- ✓ Provide direction and structure for both Health & Social Care provision within Shropshire and for other universal services such as housing, Leisure, Education, training & employment.
- ✓ Continue to review service requirements identified through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment with due regard to available resources and the need to work within existing budgets for the main Stakeholder organisation.

6. KEY PRIORITIES

The strategy document includes key priorities for action which focus on outcomes to address service gaps. It is about adults who fit the definitions of autism and young people over the age of 14.

It includes specific services commissioned and mainstream, universal services such as leisure, housing and education. The strategy and action plan reflects the five key themes of the national autism document 'Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives'.

1. Increasing awareness and understanding of autism among frontline professionals
2. Developing a clear, consistent pathway for diagnosis in every area, which is followed by the offer of a professional needs assessment
3. Improving access to the services and support which adults who have autism need to live independently within the community
4. Helping adults who have autism into work

5. Enabling partners to plan and develop appropriate services for adults that have autism to meet identified needs and priorities

In addition to these key themes from the national autism strategy, this strategy includes the following key areas which can have a positive impact on the lives and wellbeing of adults who have autism:

6. Access to health services
7. Planning in relation to the provision of services to people who have autism as they move from children to adults
8. Criminal Justice System and Safety
9. Planning around family carers

The strategy sets out specific key actions to improve services and support in these areas, and promote choice and inclusion for people with autism.

7. STAKEHOLDERS

The Stakeholders in this strategy are:

- ✓ Young people aged 14 and over and adults with autism living in Shropshire
- ✓ Carers and family members of adults with autism
- ✓ Shropshire Social Care and Health
- ✓ Shropshire Primary Care Trust & Clinical Commissioning Group
- ✓ South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- ✓ GPs
- ✓ Advocacy services
- ✓ Providers of day time activities and education
 - Local Authority
 - 3rd sector services
 - Voluntary Services
 - Supported employment providers
- ✓ Police, Probation, Prison Service and Criminal Justice System
- ✓ Housing Providers
- ✓ Leisure services
- ✓ Carers Support Services
- ✓ Prison Service
- ✓ Criminal Justice
- ✓ Disability Employment Advisors (DEA's), Employment Support Providers and Employers

8. PREVALENCE DATA

It is estimated that autism affects 1 in every 100 adults. The estimated numbers have been worked out from the population of the UK as given in the 2011 census 58,789,194 of who 13,354,297 were under 18.

Literature on the provision of services for people with autism repeatedly states that statutory organisations do not collect data on many people they are providing for or how many live in the catchment area.

Estimates of the proportion of people with autism who have a learning disability (IQ less than 70) vary considerably and it is not possible to give an accurate figure. It is likely that over 70% of those with autism have an IQ in the average to high range and a proportion of these will be very able intellectually.

Prevalence in Shropshire

The Shropshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment document, February 2009 quotes the following prevalence data for autism in Shropshire:

Table 8.3: People aged 18-64 years old projected to have autistic spectrum disorders in Shropshire

	2008	2010	2015	2020	2025
18-24	220	229	225	210	207
25-34	267	269	304	323	313
35-44	419	399	338	326	366
45-54	410	429	462	436	376
55-64	422	420	411	454	490
Total	1,738	1,746	1,740	1,749	1,752

Source: Based on the report 'Prevalence of disorders of the autism spectrum in a population cohort of children in South Thames: the Special Needs and Autism Project (SNAP)', Baird, G. et al, The Lancet, 368 (9531), pp. 210-215, 2006, National Statistics population projections 2006, projections produced by Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information System (PANSI) www.pansi.org.uk Crown Copyright, 2007.

In 2011, the Shropshire Children & Young People Autism Steering group identified that there were approximately 120 children from 0 – 18 being supported by the CAMHS-LD team, with an Autism diagnosis. The Consultant Paediatrician was supporting between 400 – 500 children and young people with a diagnosis of autism or autistic traits.

The Shropshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) has recently been refreshed and a first stage version is now available. It is recognised that more work needs to be carried out locally to improve the collection of data around people with autism which can then be fed in to the JSNA to gain a more complete picture. Improved information about the numbers of adults in the area will enable better local service planning within health and social care

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group will monitor and review the strategy and report to the Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Adult Autism Partnership Board.

'Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives' Evaluating Progress released on 1st April 2011 identifies seven quality outcomes that can be used to show progress in service development and performance. It provides guidance on measuring progress towards implementation after one year for the following seven areas:

1. Adults who have autism achieve better health outcomes
2. Adults who have autism are included and economically active
3. Adults who have autism are living in accommodation that meets their needs
4. Adults who have autism who have eligible needs are benefiting from the personalisation agenda in health and social care, and can access personal budgets
5. Adults who have autism are no longer managed inappropriately in the criminal justice system
6. Adults who have autism, their families and carers are satisfied with local services
7. Adults who have autism are involved in service planning

Shropshire will work towards these outcomes listed above to make a difference to the lives of adults who have autism, their families and carers. We will also embrace the following three key service ambitions:

8. Local authorities and partners know how many adults who have autism live in the area
9. A clear and trusted diagnostic pathway is available locally
10. Health and social care staff make adequate adjustments to services to meet the needs of adults who have autism

Monitoring of progress will be in line with the Self Assessment Framework 'Essential Quality Outcomes for local self-assessment'.

Good Practice and Developments	Gaps in Services
Shropshire is linked in to an active Autism Partnership Board for neighbouring authorities, which involves people who have autism and carers	Data around people with ASC is not consistently collected within organisations
Shropshire is working in partnership with Staffordshire and is part of an active Expert User and Carer Reference Group	Diagnostic process is inconsistent and needs development and formalising.
Supporting People providers to ensure that developments in community hubs are accessible for people with autism.	
Good provision of training through Joint Training Unit which routinely involves experts by experience.	Need to widen take-up of awareness training across public sector.

Findings from the First Autism Self Assessment completed in January 2012

10. AUTISM STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The Implementation Plan is included at Section 12 and progress will be regularly tracked through monitoring by the Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group. The plan will be further developed as priorities are worked through and will be revised at least on a yearly basis following completion of the self-assessment framework update.

Performance management targets will be developed as appropriate to enable progress to be measured and to ensure that it is robust and fit for purpose. The aim of this will be to hold people to account for their actions and ensure regular action is taken to implement the strategy.

There is a need to focus on building capacity and capability at a local level to enable local partners to develop and support relevant services, or adjust existing services, for adults who have autism to meet identified needs and priorities of the local area. We therefore also need to develop a commissioning plan for services and support for adults who have autism.

11. Appendices i. AUTISM STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

Priority 1 – Training of staff who provide services to adults autism

Objective: develop an agreed Autism Awareness and Training Best Practice Framework, with agreed content and learning outcomes, which will be a resource for local organisations			
	Action	Lead	Target Date
1.1	Establish Autism Training Sub Group with reps from Social Care and Health to agree work programme	Autism Lead & Training Lead from Joint Training	Completed
1.2	Review Department of Health on line materials and local programmes to identify best practice	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	Completed.
1.3	Undertake mapping exercise across organisations about training carried out	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	Partially completed.
1.4	Identify current training providers and scope of provision.	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	December 2012
1.5	Identify key priority groups for training	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	February 2013
1.6	Agree content and learning outcomes of Autism Awareness Training, & content of specialist training, and who should receive it, incorporating any requirements of the Diagnostic and Care Pathway.	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	March 2013
1.7	Develop an Autism Awareness & Training Best Practice Framework, which will include agreed content and learning outcomes as in 1.6, suggested materials & resources that will support this and training providers who	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	March 2013

	deliver training that is in line with this framework.		
1.8	Ensure people who have autism and carers are involved in the development and delivery of training and that this is recommended within the framework.	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	On-going.
Objective: to improve the take-up of appropriate autism training and awareness in line with national guidance			
1.9	Develop a plan to deliver appropriate levels of training to front-line staff	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	March 2013
2.0	Provide advice and support for stakeholders developing appropriate Autism awareness training for their staff in line with agreed framework.		
2.1	Provide advice and support for stakeholders in developing appropriate Autism refresher training for their staff in line with agreed framework.	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	March 2013
2.2	Provide advice and support for stakeholders in developing appropriate Autism advanced training for their staff in line with agreed framework.	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	April 2013
2.3	Provide advice and support for stakeholders in developing appropriate Autism specialist training for their staff in line with agreed framework.	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	April 2013
2.4	Develop a process for review and evaluation of training undertaken	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	As appropriate
2.5	Work across all public services to ensure that autism is included within the general equality and diversity training programmes.	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	October 2013
2.6	Develop and implement a plan to promote the need for autism training among stakeholders.	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	On-going

2.7	Promote the requirement for services to make reasonable adjustments for adults with autism as specified in the Equality Act 2010, with suggested actions.	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	On-going
2.8	Identify opportunities to promote and support initiatives that improve wider autism awareness, within local communities and organisations outside the public sector.	Autism Training and Awareness Sub Group	On-going
2.9	Develop a mechanism for monitoring uptake of Autism training across organisations	Autism Training & Awareness Sub Group	June 2013

Priority 2 – Identification and diagnosis of autism in adults, leading to assessment of needs for relevant services

Objective: to develop a model diagnostic and care pathway for Shropshire			
	Action	Lead	Target Date
2.1	Work in partnership with Telford and Wrekin colleagues through organised workshops to map out a model diagnostic and care pathway for Shropshire	Joint Commissioner, Telford and Wrekin/ Shropshire PCT	January 2013
2.2	Review existing best practice and other models across the country.	Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire Diagnostic & Care Pathway Group	January 2013
2.3	Ensure that pathway includes the provision of low-level prevention support	Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire Diagnostic & Care Pathway Group	
2.4	Agree where the responsibility for developing diagnostic and assessment services for adults with autism should rest. Identify and appoint a lead professional to develop diagnostic and assessment services for adults with autism in Shropshire.	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering group	January 2013
2.5	Consider interface with the proposed West Midlands diagnostic and Support Centre (SPAAARC).	Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire Diagnostic & Care Pathway Group	
2.6	Review NICE guidance and review local model against this.	Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire Diagnostic & Care Pathway Group	January 2013
2.7	Review regional best practice model and review model against this.	Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire Diagnostic & Care Pathway Group	April 2013
2.8	Consider the role of a dedicated Autism Worker to help support people who		

	have autism and raise awareness across all stakeholders		
2.9	Consider the benefits and need for establishment of a specialist team / Hub for provision of low cost low level intervention, support and prevention	Care Pathway Sub Group/ Shropshire Autism Steering Group	July 2013
Objective: implement agreed model for diagnostic and care pathway and promote awareness about the pathway			
2.10	Work with NHS and LA partners to ensure commitment to local Diagnostic & Care Pathway model across organisations and secure necessary adjustments to services.	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	July 2013
2.11	Inform statutory organisations about the pathway – Social Care & Health, Health, 3 rd Sector	Regional Autism Partnership Board & Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	September 2013
2.12	Inform wider stakeholders about the pathway and ensure that there is consistent, clear and accessible information about this.	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	September 2013
2.13	Explore current data recording of autism within health & social care, and identify steps to improve recording.	Regional Autism Partnership Board & Shropshire Autism Steering Group	February 2013
2.14	Create a range of resources and information for people who have autism to tell them what help and support is currently in Shropshire. Ensure Shropshire & Telford Community Directory is fully utilised to signpost and support people.	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	December 2012

2.15	Ensure a diagnosis is recognised as a reason for a community care assessment or re-assessment,	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	
Objective: improve local knowledge and data collection about the needs of people with autism in Shropshire and feed into the JSNA			
2.16	Explore current data recording of autism within health & social care, and identify steps to develop a mechanism for collecting and collating information. improve recording.	Regional Autism Partnership Board & Shropshire Autism Steering Group	February 2013
2.17	Contribute knowledge, evidence and data about people with autism to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment		March 2013 initially, and on-going

Priority 3 - Improving access to the services and support which adults who have autism need to live independently within the community

Objective: to improve opportunities for adults with autism to live in accommodation that meets their needs			
	Action	Lead	Target Date
3.1	Find out more about accommodation needs of people with Autism.	To be agreed	On-going
3.2	Ensure that relevant information relating to the housing needs for people with autism is fed into the forthcoming Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.	To be agreed	January 2013
3.3	Seek opportunities to develop appropriate housing provision for people with autism in accordance with identified gaps, needs and recommended best practice.	Autism Lead and Housing Lead	
3.4	Ensure people with autism and their families have clear information about all housing options		
3.5	Make links with Supporting People providers networks to ensure that the needs of people with autism are highlighted.		
3.6	Work with Supporting People networks to ensure that the support offered through evolving Community hubs is accessible to people with ASC.	Autism Lead/	December 2012
3.7	Explore opportunity to develop current community based schemes such as Good Neighbours, to include support for people with autism.		
3.8	Link with Care & Community Coordinators in GP pilot project sites to raise awareness of autism and ensure knowledge of signposting options.		

3.9	Ensure that people with autism are a key consideration in the design, delivery and evaluation of accommodation provision across the County.	Housing Team	On-going
Objective: to ensure that people with autism are supported where appropriate, to be financially independent			
3.10	Develop clear plain English information leaflets regarding key changes to welfare and benefits that are being brought in over the next 12 months.	Autism Lead/ Benefits Options Team	December 2012
3.11	Work with Benefits Options Team to identify those people with ASC in Shropshire who may be affected by the changes to housing benefits in relation to the bedroom tax.	Autism Lead/ Benefits Options Team/ STACs/ Autonomy	
Objective: improve opportunities for people with autism to be active members of their community/ social life			
3.12	Explore opportunities/ potential to roll out of Autonomy model of informal mutual support and social opportunities to local areas in Shropshire.	Autism Lead/ Autonomy	
3.13	Continue to support the development of autism awareness and understanding in organisations and staff who provide social and leisure activities.	Autism Lead	
3.14	Explore the potential for increasing the capacity of local buddying and mentoring schemes, such as that offered by Autonomy, to enable people with autism to become more independent and confident.		

3.15	Work with partners to ensure that people with autism and their family carers can access and benefit from approaches to future planning (ie: planning for when a carer is no longer able to care).	Autism Lead	
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Priority 4 – Helping adults that have autism into work

Objective: to improve opportunities and support for people with autism to gain and maintain employment			
	Action	Lead	Target Date
4.1	Make links with all local providers of employment support for people with autism to form a task and finish group with the aim of mapping local employment services and support that meet the needs of people with autism, explore good practice examples nationally and identify gaps and opportunities, and required action.	Autism Lead	April 2013
4.2	Explore the possibility of implementing a work experience scheme, potentially through the Jobcentre Plus Work Experience programme, within the local authority that would give opportunities to people with autism to develop employment skills.	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group, Maggie Fobister (Shropshire Council)	September 2013
4.3	Ensure people who have autism are able to access the Shropshire Council Apprenticeship Scheme		
4.4	In Partnership with Children's services & Shropshire Youth ensure that young people and adults with autism get information about employment programmes and benefits advice	Children's Commissioner	
4.5	In partnership with Children's Services, ensure that work placement programmes for young people in schools include those with autism	Children's Commissioner	
4.6	Ensure that people with autism can access, where appropriate, schemes which could support with funding of equipment, travel training or personal		

	support needs.		
4.7	Explore opportunities to build support for people with autism who are interested in, or who are already in, self-employment.	Wavelength	
Objective: to promote better understanding amongst employers about autism			
4.8	Raise awareness with Employment Stakeholders in Shropshire about the advantages of employing people who have autism and support available.	WaveLength	June 2013
4.9	Promote sources of advice, guidance and information around reasonable adjustments for people who have autism.	WaveLength/ Autonomy	June 2013

Priority 5 – Local planning and leadership in relation to the provision of services for adults who have autism

Objective: develop a strategy for adults with autism for Shropshire			
	Action	Lead	Target Date
5.1	Identify autism leads in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin as new CCG structures emerge.	Shropshire Council & PCT/ CCG commissioners	November 2011 – Completed for Local Authority.
5.2	Develop autism strategy and action plan	Autism Partnership Board/ Shropshire Autism Strategy Leads	April 2013
5.3	Consult family carers, people who have autism and local interest groups in autism planning as part of the strategy work	Autism Partnership Board/ Shropshire Autism Strategy Leads	On-going
5.4	Establish a Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering group to oversee the local implementation of the strategy.	Shropshire Autism Strategy Leads, Autonomy and STACs.	April 2013
Objective: ensure that mainstream and autism specific services are accessible to people with autism consistently throughout Shropshire			
5.5	Continue to engage people with autism and their families throughout the implementation of the Autism Strategy and in the development, commissioning and review of services.	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	On-going
5.6	Collect and collate data on total numbers of people who have autism through the Joint Strategic Needs refresh	Research and Intelligence Department	March 2013

		Shropshire Council; Autonomy	
5.7	Continue to raise wider public awareness and profile of autism across Shropshire, including to Shropshire Council members.	Autism Strategy Steering group/ Autism Training & Awareness Group	June 2013
5.8	Work with stakeholders to raise awareness about support, advice and services available. Review key local procedure, policies and strategies to ensure that the needs of people with autism are included.	Autism Strategy Steering group	June 2013
5.7	All stakeholders make explicit their ability to make reasonable adjustments to support adults who have autism including risk assessments	Autism Strategy Steering group	December 2013
5.13	Support and promote local autism specific organisations in their vital role in helping people who have autism and their carers	Autism Strategy Steering group	On-going
Objective: Develop an integrated commissioning plan around services for adults with autism.			
	Develop improved and informed planning for people with autism by building on our current knowledge and understanding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the numbers of people with autism; - what people with autism need ; - what people with autism and their supporters say about what they want and what works for them - best practice from other areas and - resources available. 	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	

	Review examples of good practice from around the region, through the Partnership Board, and nationally to inform and support local planning	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	
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Priority 6 – Access to health services

Objective: to improve the health of people with autism through improving access to mainstream health services			
	Action	Lead	Target Date
6.1	Work with commissioners in the PCT to establish key leads in the emerging CCG and leads within provider services to explore how health services can be supported to make the necessary reasonable adjustments to enable people with autism equal access to all health services.	Autism Strategy Lead (SC)/ Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	January 2012
6.2	Consider the benefits of an annual health check for people with autism especially for people with autism who live independently	Shropshire Strategy Steering Group and Lead Commissioner CCG	To be confirmed
6.3	Work with lead commissioner in the CCG to develop an action plan to achieve the above.	Shropshire Strategy Steering Group and Lead Commissioner CCG	To be confirmed
6.4	Work with mental health services to improve the response to people with autism who may also have mental health difficulties.		

Priority 7 – Planning in relation to the provision of services to people who have autism as they move from children to adults

Objective: to ensure that young people with autism are supported to plan for their futures as they move from children’s services into adult life and that there is a smooth and coordinated transition.			
	Action	Lead	Target Date
6.1	Work with Shropshire ASC transition group to ensure that revised Transition Protocol reflects the needs of people on the autistic spectrum	Shropshire Autism Steering Group	Commenced / on-going
6.2	Work with ASC transition group to ensure feedback mechanisms in place around transition planning	Transition Leads and Children’s Autism Lead	November 2012
6.3	Ensure the involvement of people who have autism and their families in transition planning and support process	Transition Leads and Children’s Autism Lead	On-going
6.4	Collect data of young people in transition with ASC and provide an annual update	Transition Leads and Children’s Autism Lead	On-going
6.5	Review transition planning process to ensure compliant and capture with best practice	Transition Leads and Children’s Autism Lead	On-going

Priority 8 – Criminal Justice System and Safety

Objective: to ensure that existing approaches to tackling Hate Crime includes and meets the needs of people with autism.			
	Action	Lead	Target Date
7.1	<p>Make links with the Hate Crime Sub Group of Shropshire Equality Forum. This includes members from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ West Mercia Police ✓ Crown Prosecution Service ✓ Victim Support ✓ LGBT ✓ Citizens Advice ✓ SCAT ✓ Probation Service ✓ Shropshire Council ✓ Shropshire County PCT ✓ Shropshire Council members ✓ OSCA 	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	December 2012
7.2	Look at investing in Autism Alert Cards or ATTENTION cards for people who have autism within Shropshire	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	December 2012
Objective: to reduce the likelihood of people with autism entering the criminal justice system, but where this has not been possible, to make sure that people with autism are supported appropriately through the process			
7.3	Make Links with the Criminal Justice Leads from South Staffordshire and Shropshire Foundation Trust	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	Completed

7.4	Make links with Probation Services and explore development of links into diagnostic pathway	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	
7.5	Work with colleagues in the Criminal Justice System to identify current measures in place to appropriately support adults with autism in the Criminal Justice System and measures that could be implemented to improve the way people are supported in the system.	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group	
7.6	Consider the value of implementing a 'communication passport', a tool used in Hampshire which collects information about the communication needs of individuals with autism and is then held on an electronic system by the Police and allows criminal justice teams access to information and strategies to support the individual.		

Priority 9 – Planning around Carers

Objective: to improve the support for family carers of people with autism by ensuring that services and support for carers in Shropshire include and respond to the needs of family carers of people with autism			
	Action	Lead	Target Date
9.1	Make links with the Shropshire Family Carers Partnership Board (facilitated by Shropshire Council) and ensure that carers of people with autism are supported to be involved in the development of services and support for carers and people with autism.	Autism Lead, Shropshire Council, Partnership Board Facilitator	December 2012
9.2	Ensure that carers of people with autism are taken into account in the delivery of all carers services available in Shropshire, for example, respite and emergency care, and future planning for people in maturity.	Shropshire Autism Strategy Steering Group/ STACs	
9.3	Ensure that carers of people with autism are enabled to shape Personalisation/ transformation in health and social care services	Personalisation lead	
9.4	Ensure that carers of people with autism have the same access to a carer's assessment in their own right as other carers.	Autism Lead/ Social Work Team Managers	On-going
Objective: to improve the support for family carers of people with autism by improving post diagnosis support			

9.	Ensure that the work to improve post diagnosis support services will take into account carers' needs for on-going information advice and support.		

11. Appendices ii. Overview of quality outcome, service ambitions and steps to success

Seven quality outcomes that will show progress

1. Adults with autism achieve better health outcomes.
2. Adults with autism are included and economically active.
3. Adults with autism are living in accommodation that meets their needs.
4. Adults with autism are benefiting from the personalisation agenda in health and social care, and can access personal budgets.
5. Adults with autism are no longer managed inappropriately in the criminal justice system.
6. Adults with autism, their families and carers are satisfied with local services.
7. Adults with autism are involved in service planning.

Service Ambitions

1. Local authorities and partners know how many adults with autism live in the area.
2. A clear and trusted diagnostic pathway is available locally.
3. Health and social care staff make reasonable adjustments to services to meet the needs of adults with autism.

10 Steps to Progress

1. Appointing a local autism lead.
2. Including autism within key procedures.
3. Collecting and collating relevant data about adults with autism.
4. Developing an integrated commissioning plan around services for adults with autism.
5. Developing a plan to deliver appropriate levels of training to front-line staff.
6. Mapping local employment services that support adults with autism.
7. Mapping local voluntary services and groups that support adults with autism.
8. Involving adults with autism, their families and carers in service design and planning.
9. Developing and implementing a staff survey about working with adults with autism.
10. Learning from and sharing best practice.