

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD



TO:	Health and Wellbeing Board
FROM:	Steve Tingle, Director of Commissioning and Adults
DATE:	June 23 rd , 2014

SUBJECT: Outcomes of the National Autism Self-Assessment Framework (2013)

1. PURPOSE

To update the Health and Wellbeing Board on the Public Health England Reviews of the Autism Self-Assessment Frameworks (SAF) to Public Health England and the revised National Autism Strategy (2014) "Think Autism".

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Health and Wellbeing Board note the contents of the report.

3. BACKGROUND

Autism is a developmental disability that can have a significant impact on an individual and their family carers. It is a spectrum condition, which means that, while all people with autism share certain difficulties, their condition will affect them in different ways. Some people with autism are able to live relatively independent lives but others may have accompanying learning disabilities and behaviours that need a lifetime of specialist support.

In particular people with autism frequently face challenges around communication, social and emotional interaction and managing the world around them. Given all these factors, some people require very high levels of specialist support that require significant resources.

In 2009 the government published "Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives, the strategy for adults with autism in England" with an underpinning legislative framework that sets out the duties of local authorities and partner agencies in meeting the needs of adults on the autistic spectrum.

Given the significant changes and developments since the implementation of the strategy additional guidance has now been published through the 2014 refresh of this important area – "Think Autism".

4. RATIONALE

Blackburn with Darwen has been working closely with the Pan-Lancashire Autism Partnership Board to support the implementation of this strategy, focussing on a number of key areas including

- increasing awareness and understanding of autism among frontline professionals;
- developing a clear, consistent pathway for diagnosis in every area, which is followed by the offer of a personalised needs assessment for adults with autism and their carers;
- Identifying the numbers of children and young people with autism and opportunities to support better transitions;
- improving access for adults with autism to the services and support they 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;

Clearly the challenges faced by people on the autistic spectrum and their family carers require an integrated approach across all aspects of life.

Whilst the legislation is primarily concerned with adults with autistic spectrum disorders Blackburn with Darwen Council and Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group are working to ensure that the needs of all people affected by this condition are identified and supported e.g. The Blackburn with Darwen 0 – 25 Complex Needs Strategy.

Following the publication of “Think Autism” work has begun to develop a Blackburn with Darwen Autism Partnership Board.

5. KEY ISSUES

In April 2011, the Department of Health provided all local authorities in England with a template to assess progress with the National Autism Strategy. This survey was followed up in 2013 with the completion and submission of the Autism Self-Assessment Framework (October 2013) that analysed progress around a number of key areas, including:

- Planning for services;
- Workforce training and Development;
- Diagnosis pathways;
- Care and Support;
- Housing and Accommodation;
- Employment;
- Criminal Justice;

Feedback on all local authority SAF submissions by Public Health England has been provided on a national basis and key highlights include:

- An overall improvement in all areas contained in the SAF – though year on year comparisons not possible due to changes in questions asked;

- Good progress on developing transition protocols and processes for young people but with more to do across England;
- The number of staff provided with autism training is rising;
- Diagnostic pathways are improving and closer links being developed between Clinical Commissioning Groups and Local Authorities;

Overall, Public Health England noted considerable progress has been made since the initial baseline survey though clearly more work needed to achieve the outcomes of the Autism Strategy throughout the country.

To further the implementation of this important area a number of actions are being undertaken including the creation of a multi-agency Autism Partnership Board with strong representation from family carers and people with autism to co-produce a whole life strategy and implementation plan for the revised "Think Autism" priorities.

An initial scoping meeting has been held with key partners including the parent led local branch of the National Autistic Society. This group will meet initially on a monthly basis and drive further progress and ensure regular reports on progress are made to the Health and wellbeing Board.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This approach will continue to enable Blackburn with Darwen Council and partner organisations to meet the requirements of the revised National Autism Strategy (2014) "Think Autism"

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The increasing number of individuals of all ages diagnosed with Autistic spectrum conditions will increase demand pressures on public sector commissioning organisations. The potential demand pressures will be scoped as part of the over-arching development of a local Autism Strategy.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

This approach will continue to enable Blackburn with Darwen Council and partner organisations to meet the requirements of the National Autism Strategy and underpinning legislation (Autism Act, 2009).

9. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

This project will be carried out within current project resource identified across partner organisations including the appointment of a designated joint post-holder between Blackburn with Darwen Adult Social Care and Health and Blackburn with Darwen Clinical Commissioning Group (January 2014).

10. EQUALITY AND HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

Delivery of the National Autism Strategy is aimed to ensure that health inequalities for people with autism are reduced through full access to services, advice and guidance.

11. CONSULTATIONS

Consultation has been had with the Pan Lancashire Autism Board and Blackburn with Darwen Learning Disability Partnership Board.

The Autism Self-Assessment and requirements have been reported through the Adults and Health portfolio area.

VERSION:	1.0
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Peter Dillon, Head of Strategic Commissioning and Procurement
DATE:	09.04.14
BACKGROUND PAPERS:	

