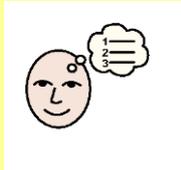




Northamptonshire County Council

Easy Read



Northamptonshire All Age Autism Strategy

The Northamptonshire All Age Autism Strategy is the plan that says how different organisations in Northamptonshire will work together to support autistic people in a much better way. We say Autism Plan in this document.



Who this plan is for

Autism is a spectrum condition, which means it is different for everyone. In this plan when we say “autism”, we mean everyone on the spectrum, whatever their ability.

This plan is for autistic children, autistic young people and autistic adults of any age.



The meaning of some of the other words or phrases used in the plan:

Autistic person – children, young people and adults who have been diagnosed or waiting to be diagnosed with autism whatever their ability.

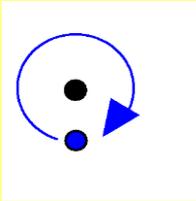
Parent or Parents and Families- includes biological, birth, foster and adoptive parent(s) and families

Carer - someone who is looking after a partner, friend or family member who is not able to manage by themselves

Child – defined by the Children and Families Act as being up to 16 years old and of compulsory school age. However, in other areas of law, 'child' is a person under the age of 18.

Young person – a person aged between 16-25 years old

Adult – any person over the age of 18 years



What this plan is about

This is a plan to make life better for autistic people in Northamptonshire.

The plan says what organisations like Northamptonshire County Council (NCC), Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (NHFT), Corby CCG and Nene CCG will do and when they will do it (CCG).

There is no new money to do the things in the plan. To make it happen organisations will:

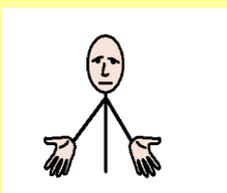
- find new ways to work,
- listen more to what people with autism want
- and work much closer together to make it happen.



The people who helped to say what should be in the plan

The plan was written by a very mixed group of people in a steering group that included autistic people and their family and carers.

The group made sure they linked this plan to other important plans and work groups so that it works well.



Why a plan is needed

Autism is not an illness or disease. Autism lasts all of someone's life. It affects how the person understands other people and how they make sense of the world. There are more autistic people than many other people think and there are more people in

Northamptonshire that need services each year. All sorts of services offer support like, health, education, social care, mental health and many more.

Autistic people often have very good skills and knowledge and choose how they will live a happy and independent life.

On the other hand, living with autism can also cause stress for the person that affects their health and life and also their family or carer.

This means that autistic people, their families and carers sometimes need help and support.

Individuals, families and carers face many barriers when attempting to access the support and services they need including:

- professionals and people in wider society not recognising someone is autistic
- finding it difficult to get the right support and services to live independently in the community
- finding it hard to get a meaningful job
- people who are from black and minority ethnic communities (called BAME for short) not getting the right support for their needs
- women and girls not always getting recognised as being autistic or getting the help they need
- not getting the right support with transitions, by this we mean moving classes or changing lessons or teachers at school, moving to a new school or leaving school to join the adult world
- having no choice but to live at home for a long time as an adult because it is very hard to find the right type of home to live in and the right support to live there.



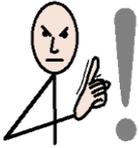
The Vision

The vision is the goal that should be reached over a longer period of time. The vision in the Autism plan is to develop and improve services and the experiences of autistic people and their families in Northamptonshire. To do this there have to be very big changes in the way people think about autism and how they work together to make things better. Staff across all the organisations involved will also have to be well trained to do the best job possible.

To make sure the vision happens the following things also have to be done:

- every organisation and person that needs to should work together so even the most difficult problems can be solved
- support for autistic people of all ages should be given by well-trained people as early as possible
- autistic people should get the right support so that they can use the same services as everyone else if appropriate
- organisations should be available in the local community
- autistic people should have as much choice and control over their lives as possible
- autistic people should help decide what services there should be and how they should work
- services should work together as partners to buy services and measure if they are doing the right things for autistic people

- new ways of working and types of services should be thought about that can be more flexible and help autistic people in different ways.



Priorities

The plan says that 5 main things should change as soon as possible. These are called priorities and are:

Priority 1: Raising awareness and understanding regarding the complexity of autism.

Priority 2: Effective, quality assured, pre and post diagnosis support.

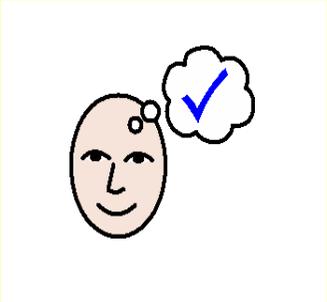
Priority 3: Enhancing education, employment, accommodation, and life opportunities.

Priority 4: Seamless progression throughout periods of transition.

Priority 5: Providing effective and enabling care and support.

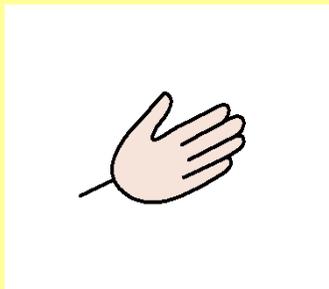
There is more information in the next table about each priority and what it means. This is called the ambition. The part of the table called actions, says what will be done to make the priorities happen.

The part of the table called outcomes says how it can be seen that the actions are successful and things have got better for people with autism.

Priority – the main thing that will change	Ambition – more about the priority and what it means	Actions – what will be done to make the priorities happen	Outcomes – how it can be seen that the actions are successful and things have got better for people with autism.
<p>Priority 1:</p>  <p>Raising awareness and understanding regarding the complexity of autism.</p>	<p>Many more people will know about and understand autism and how every autistic individual has different skills and needs. This will give people with autism the best chance to have a good future.</p>	<p>A group will be set up to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree different types of training for the staff in all the main services. This might be general training or special training if the staff work very closely with people with autism or make decisions about their lives. • Bring together a network of Autism Champions in different services. These 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More staff get the right training to support people with autism. • Autism Champions make good changes happen in their service. • Less people get directed to the wrong type of service or support. • Less people need urgent help. • Less people go into

		<p>champions will share their knowledge and experience of autism with their teams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make a place online called a portal where anyone can get advice and information about autism.• Make sure autistic people are safe in the community and free from the risk of discrimination, hate crime and abuse.	<p>hospital because they did not get good early support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• More people go online to get help and advice from a special place called a portal.• Less people are victims of discrimination, hate crime or abuse.• Less people get into trouble with the law.
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Priority 2:



Effective, quality assured, pre and post diagnosis support.

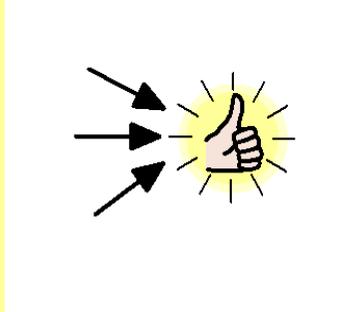
There will be a clear way (called a Pathway) for people to get advice, guidance, and support based on individual need. Care and support will be given by staff that know what support they should give and why.

A group will be set up to:

- Develop a clear, consistent, step by step, pathway for people of all ages to get support if they think they have autism and when they know they have autism.
- Develop a clear and consistent way of recording the data or information about autistic people, including waiting times and outcomes.
- Get a clear understanding of the needs of autistic people who live in the local community.

- Access to support is much easier for people when they think or know that they or someone they know has autism. In particular for older adults, women and children.

Priority 3:



Enhancing education, employment, accommodation, and life opportunities.

The views, wishes and feelings of individuals, families, and carers will be at the centre of personalised planning.

Northamptonshire will make sure:

- people of any ability can access supported opportunities
- employers are more aware of autism and they will be encouraged to make reasonable adjustments
- Disability Employment

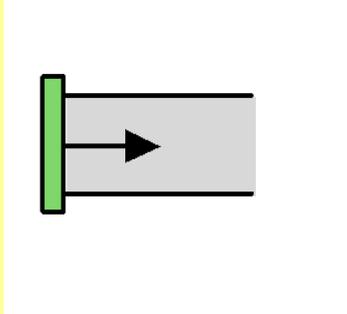
A group will be set up to:

- Make sure people get easy access to the routes into employment or benefits.
- Make sure people get support to get the right job and to stay in it.
- Make sure people get easy access to, and positive experience of, meaningful social and leisure opportunities.
- Make sure autistic people and their families have clear information & advice about, and access to an appropriate range of accommodation options. This should include financial

- Appropriate accommodation, autism friendly employment opportunities, peer mentoring schemes and meaningful social and leisure options are easily available

	<p>Advisors are given specialist autism knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apprenticeship schemes, job coaching, work experience, and self-employment are promoted.	<p>information and support about how to manage personal finances and household budgeting.</p>	
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Priority 4:



Seamless progression throughout periods of transition.

Transition means any time that people move from one thing to another usually in school or at the end of school. The aim is to identify and use an agreed Transitions process.

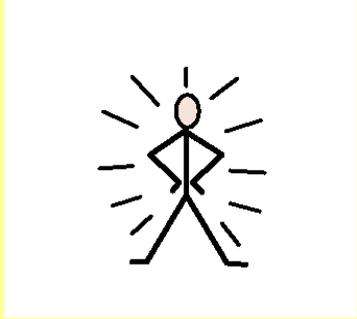
This will be done by working with autistic people who receive care and support, as well as their families and carers. This type of working is called co-production.

A group will be set up to:

- Help autistic people to communicate their hopes and wishes to plan the life they want after leaving education.
- Have a process that involves all the right organisations to plan support at key stages in the lives of autistic children, autistic young people and autistic adults of any age.
- Make sure key transition times are well-planned and managed.
- Promote sharing of information between organisations.

All agencies will work together to support transitions.

Priority 5:



Providing effective and enabling care and support

Care and support meets the needs of autistic people and allows them to progress.

- Create a new team to support autistic people.
- Develop and agree a way of checking the standard of communication used for autistic people. This is called a Quality Assurance (QA for short) scheme. The QA scheme will check all types of communication including tailored communication methods and recognition of sensory, communication and environmental needs.
- Make sure services use a Positive Behaviour Support method which actively supports the

Person centred care and support focuses on positive outcomes, autistic people are better able to manage their own lives.

		reasons behind behaviour that challenges helping people remain calm. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure people get the right support at the right time including mental health support.• Build partnerships with criminal justice agencies or organisations.	
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To make sure all the work happens when it should the groups doing the work will report upwards into the Autism Steering Group. In turn the Autism Steering group will report to other Boards made up of more senior staff and councillors and send information to two other groups. The next picture shows all the groups and Boards and the arrows show which way reports are sent.

