

Lancashire and South Cumbria

Plan for Autistic People in Easy Read









July 2022



**Lancashire and
South Cumbria**

Health and Care Partnership

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Introduction

This plan aims to make Lancashire and South Cumbria a great place to live for autistic people.



We need to understand autism and celebrate autistic people.



This means making sure there is good quality support and care across the **system** and people have full lives.



The **system** is a partnership of organisations that meet health and care needs across an area by organising and planning services.



A list of values and beliefs were coproduced for this work.

They were used for quality checking and challenging.



Values



Inclusion

Including people working across the whole health and care system and Experts by Experience.



Nothing About Me Without Me

Listening to feedback and making changes.



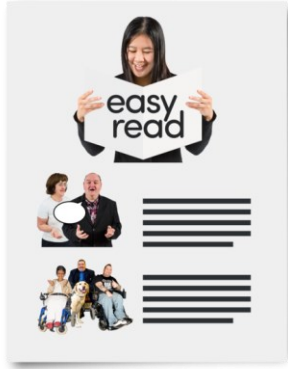
Self-Advocacy

Learning from Experts by Experience as well as their friends, carers and professionals who support them.



Resources

Treating people as experts and making best use of their time. Also stop doing the same things over and over again.



Accessible Communication

Only communicate in ways that everyone can understand.



Beliefs



This plan can only be written by all of us.



Sharing the work will give us the energy we need to make this plan happen.



This plan will never be finished and will need regularly checking and changing.



It is our job to bring people together to think about what is needed and get the resources to make change happen.



Vision

We want to make Lancashire and South Cumbria a great place to live for autistic people.



Society will understand autism and celebrate autistic people.



Our health and care services will support people and be there when they need them.



People will live long, healthy and happy lives.



Plan



The aims of this plan may be hard to achieve.

Organisations will need to work together in a way not seen before.



We will need to run services in different ways.

We will need to think differently about how autistic people live their lives.



People need to be involved in planning change and making decisions.



1. Communities will understand autism and value autistic people

Autistic people tell us it is important that the public understand autism.



Stories about autistic people that are not true make them feel on their own and misunderstood.



We want everyone to understand autism and to celebrate **neurodiversity**.

Neurodiversity is when a person's mind works differently.



We need to:

- Improve the public's understanding and celebrate autism and neurodiversity.



- Communicate the views of autistic and neurodivergent people, their families and their carers.



- Get an accurate picture of autism and neurodiversity across our area.



We will:

- Develop information to raise awareness of autism in:
 - Education
 - Health
 - Social care
 - Community services.



- Work with local businesses to raise awareness and improve work opportunities.



- Use information about how many autistic people there are to plan support and services in the future.



- Agree what people should learn when they do autism training.



- Help schools make simple reasonable adjustments which make a difference.



- Make sure different people get autism support including black and minority ethnic, LGBTQI+ and traveler communities.



- Ask for information from across the system on autism which will be used to plan and check support is working.

Lancashire and South Cumbria will be a place where:



- there is more understanding of autism and autistic people feel fully included and celebrated in their communities.



- we know how well health and care services are working for autistic people.



- more autistic people are in paid employment than in most other places.



- autistic people have good experiences in education.

2. Assessment and diagnosis will be supportive and available when needed.



Diagnosis can be a powerful and positive thing for a person and those around them.

But at the moment it can be a challenging and difficult experience for autistic people and their families.



People have told us there needs to be more support and information.



We need to:

- Develop our assessments in partnership with autistic people so that they meet their needs.



Make sure good information is available to people before and after their assessment.



We will:

- Follow national guidelines for assessments.
- Agree across the system what information to collect and what to do with it.
- Make sure everyone sent to an autism team starts getting assessed within 13 months.
- Aim for at least 3 out of 4 people to be diagnosed autistic.
- Agree key goals during assessments and when they should be reached.
- Set a date when we will be up to date with assessments.



January						
Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31



- Make children and young people in education a priority for assessments.
- Make sure all autistic children and young people in education have a good support package.
- Give everyone who has been assessed a toolkit which tells them what will happen, when and what support is available.
- Develop a Autism Assessment Team to provide autism management and support.
- Accept that diagnosis may not be the right thing for everyone.
- Support people that need it, whether they have a diagnosis or not.
- Accept that some autistic people may not want or need support.



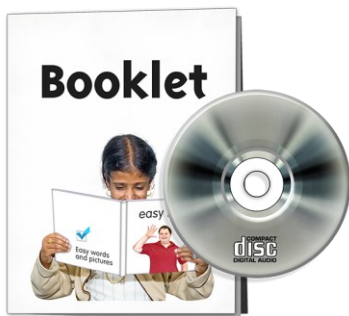
- Train staff to only send the right people for an assessment.



- Talk to GPs and adults in the community about whether an autism assessment is needed.



- Tell people the positives about autism as well as the support available.



- Develop a information pack to support people to help themselves.



- Make sure there are sensory assessments and support for autistic people.
- Understand the sensory needs of autistic people and make adjustments to healthcare, education, employment and leisure.



- Develop support and signposting for people not diagnosed with autism as well as support for autistic people.



- Develop an online 'one stop shop' which includes live waiting times, where people are in the process, support resources and signposting to online materials and communities.



Lancashire and South Cumbria will be a place where:

- autistic people are able to live good lives because they have a diagnosis and support package that works for them.



- autistic people feel happy, supported and able to cope with their diagnosis.
- there are less diagnoses that say the person is not autistic.



- care is quickly made available to autistic people who need it.



- autistic people do not have mental health issues because of bad experiences around diagnosis and support.



3. Make sure people have access to good housing, education, jobs and relationships

The public's view of autism does not match the lives of autistic people. We should work to change this.

We need to:

- Make sure people get an education which meets their needs.





- Make sure more people get paid jobs.



- Make sure people live a full life.



- Accept the importance of love, sex, friendships and relationships.



- Make sure adults can get good supported housing where needed.



We will:

- Pay for adverts that show the good outcomes from including autistic people in business and education.



- Raise awareness that autism can be a hidden condition and adjustments may be needed.



- Make employers aware of autistic talent and the benefits of employing autistic people.



- Make sure autism hubs deliver support to remove barriers to getting and keeping a job.



- Make sure classrooms and lessons meet the needs of autistic children and students.
- Help teachers and schools improve their knowledge of autism and make schools inclusive.



- Make sure that organisations follow the law when people move from children's to adult's services.



- Accept that some autistic people have a learning disability and other autistic people want to be seen as separate from people with learning disabilities.



- Deliver training for autistic people on love, sex, relationships and online awareness.



- Young people's services should work together to understand supported decision making around love, sex and relationships.



- Work with community organisations, sports clubs and social groups to make sure they are welcoming and accessible to neurodivergent people.



- Make sure people live somewhere they have chosen that meets their needs.
- Give more new affordable homes to autistic people.
- Make sure the sensory needs of autistic people are thought about when developing housing.
- Make sure all training and guidance includes the sensory requirements of autistic children and learners.

Lancashire and South Cumbria will be a place where:

- autistic people live happy and full lives in their communities.
- fewer autistic people experience trauma.
- autistic people have a good experience in education and employment.

4. All services will be simple and easy to use



People have told us that it is difficult to access autism services.

We need to make them easier to use.

We need to:

- Run local joined up systems to provide care.
- Make sure people can access autism support in a clear and easy way.



We will:

- Develop autism hubs across the area which will be one stop shop for autism services.



- Make sure that autism hubs become the first place people go to for information and support.



- Allow employers and other organisations to access training from autism hubs.



- Make sure that autism hubs provide information about what is available in the community assets and not just services.



- Develop online support as part of the Autism hub for people who do not want to come to a building.



- Make sure autism hubs have good links with everyday services like:
 - career advice
 - job schemes
 - benefits advice
 - health services.



- Make sure there is no wrong way to access support.
- It should not matter who is providing the service. Everyone should have good support.



- Make sure people are offered online as well as a face-to-face appointments and can book online.



Lancashire and South Cumbria will be a place where:

- people are happier and healthier because services are easy to use.
- health outcomes are better for autistic people.



- organisations for autistic people can be accessed in the community.



- autistic people get equal access to health services.



5. Work in partnership to make sure people live long, healthy and happy lives

Everyone wants to live a long, healthy and happy life.



Autistic people are not living as long as others.

Some medical conditions are a lot more common in autistic people.



We need to make sure autistic people get equal access to health services.

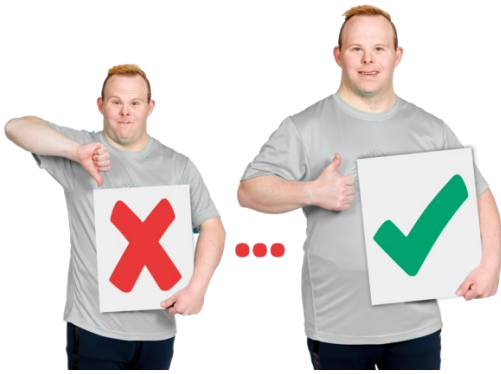


We need to:

- Work in partnership to make sure autistic people get good healthcare.



- Make sure autistic people get equal access to health services.



- Improve health outcomes for autistic people

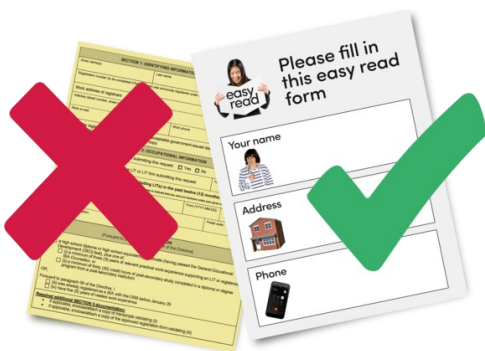


We will:

- Have a lead provider in charge of making sure autism services join up.
- Set up a group for providers which reports to the lead provider.



- Agree what information the system will ask for and how it will be used.



- Make sure people can choose a way of communicating that is accessible to them.



- Nobody should be stopped from using any health or social care service because they are autistic.



- Better support to autistic people who may be self-harming or thinking of suicide.



- Fund community autism teams to go into secure hospitals and make sure:
 - People get good quality treatment
 - People are not there longer than they need to be.



- Make sure GP records say if a person is autistic so that reasonable adjustments can be made.



- Make sure GP surgeries make reasonable adjustments to appointments including longer timeslots.



- Use the information we ask for to plan support.



- Put fewer autistic people in secure hospitals.
- Send as few people as possible out of the area to get treatment.
- Make sure autistic people get equal access to health services whatever their:
 - Race
 - How much money they have
 - Where they live.

Lancashire and South Cumbria will be a place where:



- autistic people have less illness and disease.
- autistic people live as long as everyone else.
- autistic people can easily access health and care services
- autistic people spend less time in hospital
- fewer autistic people self-harm or commit suicide.

Easy read version of the All-Age System Strategy for Autism



For more information contact:

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