

ASD Strategic Action Plan for Wales

the bulletin April 2014

Refreshing the ASD Strategic Action Plan for Wales

You may be aware that the Deputy Minister for Social Services, Gwenda Thomas AM, has made a commitment to refresh the Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan (ASD SAP) which was first published in 2008. As the refreshed ASD SAP is nearing completion it is timely that we provide an update on the work that has been undertaken and to say more about the forthcoming public consultation.

The new priorities for the ASD SAP have been drawn from the feedback we have received from stakeholders, especially people with autism and their parents and carers. We initially held consultation events in November 2012, working in partnership with national autism voluntary sector organisations and have also had the opportunity to speak to some autism groups directly. Our consultation found that the main priorities for action identified by stakeholders were:

- Assessment, diagnosis and pre/post diagnostic support for children and adults.
- Reviewing the local authority ASD infrastructure.
- Education, transition and employment.
- Interventions.
- Training and Awareness

In developing the priorities for action, we brought together an ASD Stakeholder Advisory Group to provide us with expert advice and guidance. Membership includes a parent carer representative and an individual who has Asperger Syndrome. There are also senior representatives from the statutory services and the voluntary sector working to support people with autism.

We know that some of the issues highlighted require urgent attention and we are already taking action to establish a Children's ASD Diagnosis Task and Finish Group to address concerns which have been raised by parents and carers about diagnostic waiting times in some areas.

To improve the delivery of the refreshed action plan we are also taking steps to strengthen governance and accountability. As a result the refreshed ASD SAP will be accompanied by a Delivery Plan which will have measurable outcomes so that stakeholders can assess the progress being made. Once the draft refreshed ASD SAP is finalised the next step will be to publish the document for a 12 week consultation.

We will be seeking views from all our stakeholders and will be asking specific questions about our proposals. As well as asking for written feedback the Welsh Government will also be hosting small consultation workshops which will give us the opportunity to discuss our plans directly with stakeholders, ASD leads will be asked to put us in contact with local ASD groups to seek their involvement. Meanwhile we will ensure that the ASD leads are kept up to date with our progress so they can respond to any queries they may receive.

Once we have analysed the responses received from the consultation and made any necessary changes, we will publish the final refreshed ASD SAP and the Delivery Plan so that implementation can begin in 2015.

Developing Policy for Children and Adults, Directorate of Social Services and Integration - Welsh Government

Online Resources

Additional resources for individuals with ASD, parents and carers and professionals continue to be developed and shared via www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk.

ASD PLANNER

The ASD Planner is now available for android devices as well as Apple devices. For more information please visit www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/ASDplanner.

ASD ADVICE FOR PRIMARY HEALTHCARE PRACTITIONERS VIDEO

This short film offers advice to primary healthcare services in relation to supporting access to services for individuals with an ASD. The video is available to view online at www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/professionalvideos, DVD copies will be distributed to GP surgeries via the local ASD leads.

ASD ADVICE FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

These 5 short films offer advice to parents and carers of children with an ASD following diagnosis. They can be viewed online at www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/parentvideos or are available as a DVD from local ASD leads.

AUTISM: A GUIDE FOR ADULTS FOLLOWING DIAGNOSIS

This guide is issued in hard copy to adults following diagnosis. The book can also be downloaded from www.ASDinfoWales.co.uk/resourcesforadults.

For further information please email ASDinfo@WLGA.gov.uk