

# Autism Partnership Board





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**CORNWALL**  
**COUNCIL**

# Autism focus paper 2018

Richard Sharpe  
Public Health



# Public Health Team



- We collect information about the health of all people in Cornwall every 5 years
- This is called Cornwall's needs assessment
- We have recently published new information for people with autism

# DID YOU KNOW?

Over 3,700 people have autism in Cornwall (known to services)

More men than women have autism

Some people with autism have complex needs;

- 50% have a learning disability
- 70% have a mental health problem
- 40% have two or more health conditions



# Information about people with autism



- There is growing awareness to understand health needs
- Supported by national policy such as the Think Autism strategy
- Despite this support there is a lack of information about people with autism

# Factors influencing the health of people with autism

- People with autism have higher health needs e.g. higher rates of epilepsy, respiratory and cardiovascular problems
- These can be further affected by lower levels of exercise, poor diet, smoking and drinking alcohol, education and employment
- Emotional or behavioural problems, bullying and victimisation are also other key issues affecting health

# Interventions to help improve the health of people with autism

- Majority of evidence focuses on children with autism
- Some support for group-based and social skills programmes to improve health
- Family support and early programmes appear to be effective

# Interventions to help improve the health of people with autism

- Improving exercise levels (healthier lifestyles) can improve health
- Limited information about housing, transport and other issues such as care and neglect



# Services and activity in Cornwall

A range of support is available locally;

- Cornwall's Autism Spectrum Team
- Education and social care provision
- Limited support for early years settings for children with autism
- Cornwall Partnership Foundation Trust
- Outlook South West
- Cornwall's Autism Partnership Boards
- Cornwall People First

# What we want to happen

The right care at the right time  
for all children and adults  
with autism.





# We need to work together



- Cornwall Council
- Health providers
- Local voluntary organisations
- Partnership Boards

# What you told us in the autism strategy consultation



There is a need for improved;

- Diagnostic services
- Training and educational support and classroom settings
- Access and signposting to healthcare
- Friendly leisure services
- Access to community activities

# Your previous feedback

To include the following areas and provision of;

- Training
- Autism specific assessments
- Independent and financial advocates
- Improved data collection
- Preventative services
- Independent living
- Diagnostic services

# Cornwall strategy update

Working towards the Think Autism priority categories;



- an equal part of my local community;
- the right support at the right time during my lifetime; and
- developing my skills and independence and working to the best of my ability.

# We don't know enough about



- The impact of living in poverty
- Mental health
- Whether people are living healthily
- Housing / transport
- Family stability / Impact of aging carers
- Social opportunities



# Potential known barriers...

- Existing estimates of the number of people with autism are not accurate
- We know nothing about levels of unmet health needs
- Diagnosis and care pathways vary for children and adults





# Potential known barriers...

- No single agency in Cornwall to meet the needs of children and adults
- A lack of understanding of the risk factors for autism
- Limited high quality evidence on the effectiveness of health interventions (e.g. health promotion)



# Health checks



- We identified no evidence on the availability of annual health checks (those with autism)
- Aim to conduct work to see whether health checks are effective
- Need to know the number of people who are not;
  - Accessing local services
  - Having a health check



- Thank you for listening