

## Autism Partnership Board Updates

Work Programme	Overview	Current Position / Next Steps
Annual Health Checks	<p>A health check once a year for people with a LD (14 years+).</p> <p>Will build strong foundations for extension of AHCs to Autistic when national roll-out implemented (timeframe unpublished).</p> <p><b>National Target</b></p> <p>By 2023/24, at least 75% of people aged 14 or over with a LD will have had an annual health check.</p> <p><i>Local stretch target</i></p> <p>PCNs 85% of people aged 14 or over with a LD will have had an annual health check.</p>	<p>We don't have a final end of year figure for annual health check uptake in 2024/25 yet. We anticipate that we will achieve uptake above 80% again.</p> <p>NHS England have dropped national targets for Annual Health Check uptake. However, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire will maintain a local target of 85% and we will continue to report on our uptake to NHS England.</p> <p>An AHC Quality Programme will be maintained into this year – likely with similar focuses to last year. We will confirm our priorities in the next AHC Priority Action Group meeting.</p> <p><a href="#">A study day for doctors, nurses and health care assistants involved in the delivery of annual health checks in Herefordshire will take place on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025 at Herefordshire Town Hall.</a> We have sold the majority of tickets for this event.</p> <p>No further updates yet from NHS England regarding combined checks. As a reminder - combined SMI, Autistic and LD Health Check is being</p>

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-	-	<p>trialed in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Some engagement work has taken place by NHS England to decide the template for the check.</p> <p>Autism annual health check randomised control trial is taking place with Newcastle University. This will report in Q2 2025</p>
Sensory Friendly Environments	<p>Improve the physical environment /accessibility of GP practices &amp; healthcare settings for Autistic people by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raised awareness about sensory needs, autism, and reasonable adjustments</li> <li>• Ensure that services are inclusive and comprehensible to people with sensory requirements</li> </ul> <p>Targets</p> <p>All PCNs required to have 50% of GP Practices assessed by end March 2024.</p>	<p>The SFE Team achieved their target of assessing 66% of practices in the financial year 2024/25. We are now focusing on processing the backlog of assessments in the coming weeks so reports can be issued to these settings.</p> <p>Sensory friendly assessments were completed at Kidderminster Treatment Centre, Ward One and Day Surgery. In addition, Sensory assessments were also completed of Acute MH Inpatient Units in March (Athelon Ward and Holt Ward).</p> <p>A full project report about the impact of the SFE Project is available on the <a href="#">ICS Autism pages</a>. A recording has been made of the presentation delivered at the OT show and this will be shared on the ICS autism pages soon.</p> <p>Priorities for the project in 2024/25 will be formalised following discussions with the SFE Team. We will explore opportunities to integrate our processes with the Health Checkers Team to make joint approaches to health settings.</p>

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-	-	We hope to confirm an assessment at Much Birch Surgery soon.
Reasonable Adjustment Digital Flags (RADF)	<p>Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public services to take reasonable steps to enable disabled people/person to have access to the same service/s as non-disabled people. This can be through adapting the environment of a building or room, a change to a policy, or working practice or by providing extra support.</p> <p>RADF is a national NHS initiative which puts a digital 'flag' on patients records so health professionals are aware that a person needs them to tailor support and make adjustments to help them engage with their care.</p> <p>Aims:</p> <p>All patients with LDA are recorded on health and social care systems with a digital flag</p>	<p>The national RADF training has been shared with all NHS organisations and Councils. The training will be put on the GP training site by the end of December and is also on the ICS Academy. It is unlikely we will be able to get any accurate information currently about who has been trained.</p> <p>Every organisation, apart from Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, completed a questionnaire last year to say how ready they are for implementation. This highlighted that:</p> <p>[a] no-one has a clear policy for reasonable adjustments and for sharing information via a Flag</p> <p>[b] Primary Care (who use EMIS) and Herefordshire &amp; Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (who will be using RIO from Spring 2025) have an electronic patient system that can record reasonable adjustments and create a flag</p> <p>[c] we need to understand better what the other organisations can do</p>

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-	<p>SNOWMED codes are used to record type of LD&amp;A</p> <p>Reasonable adjustments to support each individual are recorded</p>	<p>[d] the ICB's patient record system cannot record reasonable adjustments and create a flag</p> <p>The Group agreed that the next steps are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft a policy that can be adopted by all organisations</li> <li>• Find out how ready Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust is</li> <li>• Understand better what Wye Valley NHS Trust and the two Councils can do</li> <li>• Explore if the ICB can use a different record system</li> </ul> <p>Management of the Reasonable Adjustment Digital Flag now under Ugo Jonathan. Digital Spine for sharing reasonable adjustment records not expected to be in place until December 2025.</p>
Review – Accessibility of Mental Health Services Autistic People	<p>New guidance '<a href="#">NHS England » Meeting the needs of autistic adults in mental health services</a>' has been issued.</p> <p>Improving timely accessibility and suitability of treatments for Autistic people to mental health services is a key priority of All-Age Autism Strategy.</p>	<p>See SFE update above regarding completion of SFE assessments of acute MH wards.</p> <p>Richard Keble and Jack Caine are reviewing the guidance and intend to survey relevant organisations. Significant amount of the guidance overlaps with current schemes of work such as SFE, OMMT and RADF.</p>
Neurodivergent Children & Young People's Programme	<p>Programme of work to improve support and diagnostic assessments for neurodivergent children and young people</p>	<p>Below update previously shared with LDA Programme Board in February. Please come back to Anna Swift directly with additional queries.</p>

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-	<p>aged 0-25 years and their families, in Herefordshire &amp; Worcestershire.</p> <p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve communication and information for CYP, families and professionals</li> <li>• Develop a combined Autism and ADHD Diagnostic service</li> <li>• Improved support for CYP &amp; families through early identification, early intervention and accessibility of support throughout the life-course</li> </ul>	<p>Reducing Waiting Times</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A local process has been developed to increase the number of providers of Autism and ADHD diagnostic assessments for under 18s. The independent providers will be quality assured by the Integrated Care Board and have a contract to deliver under the NHS. The Family Psychologists are the first to be accredited 2 more providers are going through this process. This will help reduce waiting times. The process is called Right to Choose. Guidance for professionals and parents on the Right to Choose is being co-produced (available Feb 25).</li> <li>• Investment has been made to Herefordshire &amp; Worcestershire Health &amp; Care Trust to increase capacity of the service to undertake</li> <li>• ICB have funded extra Autism assessments for young people over 10 years in Herefordshire who are waiting over 52 weeks for diagnostic assessment.</li> <li>• 120 Worcestershire young people aged 16-18 years waiting for an Autism diagnostic assessment have been transferred to the Adult service for autism assessment. 50 Herefordshire patients were transferred in Autumn 2024 and their assessments are complete.</li> <li>• Final sign-off the new Autism and ADHD diagnostic pathway for 0-18s has yet to be agreed by the Integrated Care Board. This will be informed by the priorities and available funding within the NHS planning guidance &amp; financial settlement for 2025/26.</li> </ul> <p>Support</p>

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-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Children's Neurodivergence Workforce Development Workshop planned for March 11th 2025.</li> <li>• A While You Wait booklet is in development for Autism and ADHD for families on the diagnostic pathway (finalised March 2025).</li> <li>• While You Wait information booklet has been delayed following feedback from parents and extra content needing to be drafted and agreed – in progress. Completion end March 25.</li> <li>• Autism West Midlands and ADHD Foundation Trust have been commissioned to deliver workshops for parents and young people dates have been circulated.</li> <li>• A review of Autistic young people's access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and appropriate treatment/therapy is planned (dates to be confirmed).</li> </ul>

## Area Specific Issues

### Herefordshire

Issue / Work Programme	Summary	Response
<p>GP surgeries making their bookings systems more accessible on surgery websites</p> <p>-</p>	<p>Each surgery has their own website and construction so their ability to do this will also be dependent upon the structure of the website. Some of them have also changed their processes for example, Stourport MC has stopped using a form and instead has a medical enquiry form managed by Accurx.</p>	<p>GP Lead is Dr. Marie Gibson – please approach her directly for her views on this: <a href="mailto:marie.gibson@nhs.net">marie.gibson@nhs.net</a></p> <p>-</p>
<p>Partnership for Neurodiversity in Schools (PINS) project.</p>	<p>PINS, part of a national programme bringing health and education specialists and expert parent carers into mainstream primary settings to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help shape whole school SEND provision</li> <li>• provide early interventions at a school level</li> <li>• upskill school staff</li> <li>• support strengthening of partnerships between schools and parent carers</li> </ul> <p>Support available to 40 Primary Schools. Each successful school will be allocated 5 days of support to be delivered within the school year 2024-2025.</p>	<p>Other Partnership Board colleagues are likely better briefed regarding PINS.</p>