

Ten years on from the Autism Act: local governments role is meeting the needs of autistic adults and children

Chair: Simon Leftley, Deputy Chief Executive (people), Southend Borough Council.

Speakers

- **Charlotte Ramsden** Chair, ADCS Health, Care and Additional Needs Policy Committee and Strategic Director for People, Salford Council.
- **Trevor Wright** Self Advocate and Writer.
- **Lottie Harland**, Founder of the Ausome Sailing Charity.

There will be an opportunity to ask questions to the panel at the end.

Background: the review

- On 5 December 2018, the DHSC launched a review of the national autism strategy 'Think Autism'.
- The new strategy will be extended to children
- To inform the review, on 14th March 2019 a national call for evidence was launched receiving over 2700 responses.
- Key focus: to determine how autistic people are able to participate in their communities and have opportunities such as work, home, activities, as well as accessing the right support
- Councils have a key role to play.

Background: NHS Long Term Plan

- For the first time NHSE have included autism in their future plan.
- Locally the NHS need to think about how people with autism of all ages are able to access the right health and care support that they need - this includes;
 1. **Making reasonable adjustments**
 2. **Training** the workforce to have a greater understanding of autism and how it may impact on people's daily lives
 3. **Tackle health inequalities** that people face, including accessing their primary care practitioners, noticing illness earlier and accessing physical and mental health services if they are needed
 4. That people of all ages have an assessment for a **diagnosis** without waiting for a long time. Plus pre and post diagnosis support.

APPG findings

All Party Parliamentary Group review on Autism upon the 10th anniversary of the Autism Act 2009. Over 11,000 people participate in a national survey and sessions led by MPs.

Key findings:

- **Public understanding.** Limited understanding and assumptions
- **Support in adulthood.** People not getting the right support and find it difficult to get help
- **Physical health inequality.** Barriers in accessing the health care system - conditions not being recognised
- **Mental health.** People not able to access the support that they need
- **Education and preparation for adulthood.** Need to recognise the challenges a young person with autism may face in becoming an adult
- **Employment** – Low numbers of people with autism in employment. Welfare support can often not recognise the impact that someone's autism may have on their lives
- **Access to justice** – Autistic people at risk of exploitation. Difficulties in social interaction and situations can result in engagement with the police.

Trevor Wright

Local Authority / Health
Commissioner

Self Advocate / Parent

InSight Autism CIC

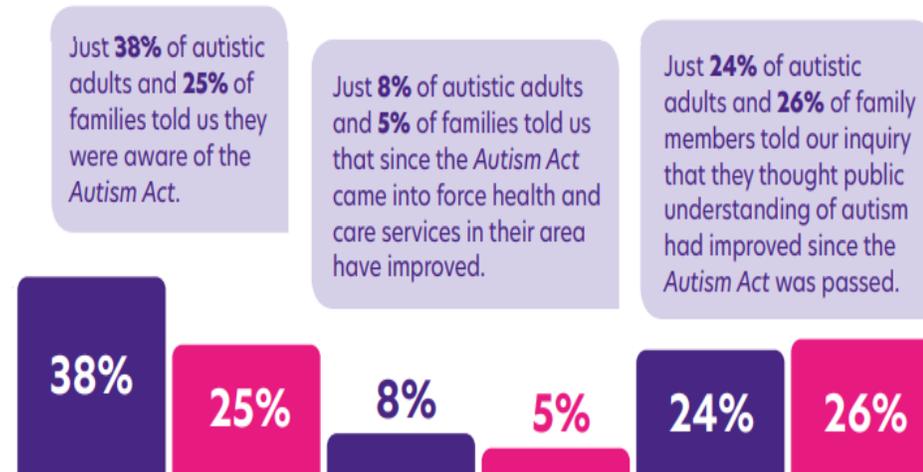
Co – Chair DHSC Autism Strategy
Executive Board



Our findings



Impact of the Autism Act:

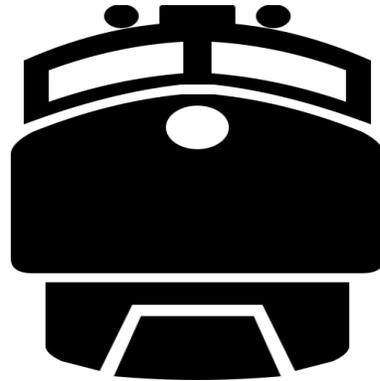


Unmet need:

- Over **two thirds** (71%) of autistic adults told us they weren't getting the support they need. That could mean as many as 327,000 autistic adults across England.

The Needs of Autistic People and their Families

What's coming down the line?



How should / can local government respond?

The Needs of Autistic People and their Families

- When was the last audit of your current autism strategies / implementation plans?
- Have you mapped current locality provision for autistic children, adults and families?
- Do you have an effective locality Autism Partnership Board? Where does it report?
- Is Autism on the radar of your CMT / Health and Wellbeing Board?
- Do they and your elected portfolio holder liaise with the statutory Autism Lead?
- Do your JSNA and Market Position Statements have up to date autism specific sections?
- Do you have structures in place to co-produce revised all ages autism strategies?
- Is there effective co-ordination across Public Health, Children's, Adults and Corporate?
- Do you need to plan for further increase in demand across operational pathways?
- Meaningful co-production in all aspects of planning, commissioning, delivery and training?
- Have you agreed shared responsibilities for autism in your locality?
- Are you investing in strengths, low level prevention and self management?

Positive Lives, not Services



Trevor's poetry is a bruised and brave music and if justice is to be done, should be housed in bookshops under Soul. If there isn't a Soul section, better make one

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Miggy Angel

The quiet ones are best

Poet and Playwright
Louise Wallwein MBE

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The Needs of Autistic People and their Families

Autism Self Assessment Exercise 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autism-self-assessment-framework-exercise>

The Autism Act 10 Years on

<https://pearsfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/APPGA-Autism-Act-Inquiry-Report.pdf>

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