

Appendix 1:

Bradford City, District, Airedale, Wharfedale and Craven CCG's and Bradford Metropolitan District Council response to the recommendations from Health-watch Bradford and District on:

Autistic Spectrum Conditions: access to support in Bradford and District

| Report conclusions: | Lead agency | Response for inclusion in the report |
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| <p>1. Autistic people in Bradford are currently struggling to get the help that they need to live a fulfilling, happy, and independent life. The ongoing problems with access to diagnostic assessment have left people in limbo, in some cases for several years. Without a diagnosis, adults in particular are unable to access support, which can make it difficult to live well, stay in education or employment. It can also have a negative effect on people's mental health.</p> | <p>CCG</p> | <p>Work is on-going with commissioners who are actively seeking solutions to mitigate against the current situation on waiting list for diagnostic services. This includes working in partnership with providers across west Yorkshire. The Care Trust, with support from the Leeds service, is introducing a more robust triage process to ensure that early referral to appropriate service is made and that the right information is collated prior to assessment.</p> |
| <p>2. However, even where people are able to secure a diagnosis and access specialist support, they often still struggle. While the support available is welcomed, people often feel that they are not offered enough. The process of accessing funding can be challenging, and professionals do not always have sufficient understanding of autism to help them.</p> | <p>CCG/BDCFT</p> | <p>Social Care – pathway to social care assessment following/for people with diagnoses needs review – this will be picked up in the SAF/strategy action plan which will be monitored by the reformed/reconstituted autism partnership.</p> <p>CCG commissioners are working with providers to make sure that people diagnosed with autism without a learning disability can access services like Improving Access to Psychology Therapies (IAPT). Non –recurrent money has been made available via</p> |

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| | | the Integrated Better Care Fund (IBCF) to support post diagnostic pathway work) |
| 3. A lack of autism awareness was reported across a wide range of professionals, including GPs, mental health workers, social workers, and those carrying out Care Act 2014 and other assessments. This can leave people without the support they need, and can be upsetting and frustrating. | CCG/BDCT/CBDMC | Training of key front line personnel across the health and care system will be picked up in the action plan/workplan. Raising awareness about Autism and training to support this has been identified as a priority for the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Health Care Partnership. CCGs across West Yorkshire are being asked whether they would support a regional approach to this |
| 4. There is limited information available about diagnoses pathways and support in Bradford, which can make it more difficult still to get support. Health and other information is often not tailored to the particular needs of people with autism which can affect their access to healthcare as well as other services. | CBMDC/CCG/BDCT | To be picked up in the action plan/work plan. Wider Council health and care webpages are being reviewed and updated in 2019 – this will provide an opportunity to add info and advice for people with autism and their families. Learning from Leeds service, which has recently been through a service improvement project, is being shared with Bradford. Bradford may wish to adopt the same approach |
| 5. It is vital that these issues are addressed. We welcome additional funding to address the waiting list for BANDS, but believe more needs to be | | The Healthwatch report and the recent Autism self-assessment exercise (November/ December 2018) will be the basis for refreshing the autism work in |

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| <p>done to ensure that people with autism can leave happy, healthy and independent lives – and to fully meet the statutory regulations relating to autism.</p> | | <p>Bradford, and updating the action/work plan that was an appendix of the 'Autism and other Neuro-diversity strategy' (2017).</p> <p>The Autism partnership will be reconstituted and will link to the Transforming Lives Programme. The first new meeting of this group will be on 31st January.</p> |
| <p>6. People need to be able to access support before receiving a formal diagnosis, and better information is urgently required to help people understand the pathway, and where to turn for help.</p> | <p>CCG/ CBMDC</p> | <p>The Adult Social Care 'Home First' programme of work focusses on strengths and assets based approaches to support people to be as independent as possible. The focus is on a 3 tier model: the first tier is 'help to help yourself' which includes access to good info and advice and active signposting by the social care access team. This offer should be available to people with autism and their families and will be picked up in the action plan and service development plans in social care.</p> |
| <p>7. Greater awareness and understanding of autism is needed to ensure that people can live well and access the services to which they are entitled. All staff across the local authority and NHS who are likely to work with autistic people should be trained to have a proper understanding of how this affects people, and how to best</p> | | <p>Training of key front line personnel across the health and care system will be picked up in the action plan/workplan.</p> <p>As above – this is also a priority for the WYHHCP</p> |

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| support them. | | |
| 8. We hope that the Council, NHS, voluntary sector and wider autism community can come together to work in partnership to improve support available to people with autism. | | The Autism partnership will be reconstituted and will link to the Transforming Lives Programme. The first new meeting of this group will be on 31 st January. |
| Report recommendations: | | |
| 1.The implementation of the Autism Strategy and other Neurodiversity including the Implementation Plan and Training Strategy, and the appointment of a named local lead for the local authority and CCG. | | The Healthwatch report and the recent Autism self-assessment exercise (November/ December 2018) will be the basis for refreshing the autism work in Bradford, and updating the action/work plan that was an appendix of the 'Autism and other Neuro-diversity strategy' (2017). The Autism partnership will be reconstituted and will link to the Transforming Lives Programme. The first new meeting of this group will be on 31 st January. |
| 2.Provision of a service for diagnosing Autism and other Neurodiversity either by reopening or re-organising BANDS so it is fit for purpose, or commissioning a new service to facilitate undertaking diagnoses of Autism to include those on the current waiting list and those waiting to be | CCG | Work is on-going with commissioners who are actively seeking solutions to mitigate against the current situation on waiting list for diagnostic services. This includes working in partnership with providers across west Yorkshire. The CCGs have identified non recurrent funding to implement a new process to triage the adult referrals which aims to |

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| referred onto it. | | clear the list of those waiting for assessment. |
| 3.Collection and publication of length of time to diagnosis for people with autism in Bradford. | CCG | <p>The SAF report identifies the following data around waiting list:</p> <p>185 – reporting period April 2017 – July 2018. 80 on the current waiting list for referrals.</p> <p>107 requests for assessment were made to the IFR group whilst referrals to BANDS were closed. 40 of these have been made into a formal referral.</p> <p>This will be monitored via the new triage progress mentioned above.</p> |
| 4.Bradford should become an <i>Autism Friendly City</i> , with health services and the Council aiming for the National Autism Society's Autism Friendly Business accreditation. GP practices and other organisations who will support people with autism should be encouraged to apply for this. | | To be picked up in the new action/work plan. |
| 5.Continuous professional development training should be made available, ideally compulsorily for NHS and council staff, to improve understanding of autism and how to ensure services are fully accessible to people with autism and | | Training of key front line personnel across the health and care system will be picked up in the action plan/workplan. |

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| <p>other neurodiversity. This should be made available to all staff who may come into contact with people with ASC, including those performing financial and Care Act assessments, mental health services, learning disabilities services, and Bradford's First Response service.</p> | | |
| <p>6. Access to autism-specific services should be improved, and made available while waiting for a diagnosis. This is particularly urgent while significant delays to diagnosis remain.</p> | <p>CCG CBMDC</p> | <p>CBMDC – community led support model (CLS) and active signposting, as well as improvements to information and advice and 'connect to support' are all part of the wider social care Home First work programme and autism needs should be picked up in this work.</p> |
| <p>7. Clear and accessible information on Autistic Spectrum Conditions and other Neurodiversity, and on accessing diagnosis and support, including support for carers, in Bradford and District, should be easily available in one place. This should be co-designed with people with lived experience to ensure it meets their needs.</p> | <p>CCG/BDCT/CBMDC</p> | <p>To be picked up in the action plan/work plan.</p> <p>Wider Council health and care webpages are being reviewed and updated in 2019 – this will provide an opportunity to add info and advice for people with autism and their families.</p> |

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| <p>8.Support for parents, families, and carers should be expanded. This should include clear information about autism, diagnosis and support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ A clear pathway should be set out that enables parent/carers and autistic people themselves to identify where they are, and what help is available at any points. This should include a pathway for transition from child to adult services. • The Cygnet programme should be opened up to parents/carers who are waiting for diagnosis • Peer support should be easily available • Online 'good practice' examples of other families' experiences, aspirations, and practical ways forward should be made available | <p>CCG Children's social care</p> | <p>The CCGs have worked with health service providers to redesign our clinical pathways for the assessment and diagnosis of autism in children and young people – the new pathways are currently being piloted. We await the evaluation of the pilot but initial indications are that there has been a significant reduction in the time taken to complete the assessment process. Next steps include understanding the financial impact of the new clinical pathways.</p> <p>The SEND Strategic Partnership have acknowledged the need for a system wide discussion around the support required by and available to families as children and young people are identified for an ASC assessment.</p> <p>Children's social care are changing the Cygnet delivery model to a 'train the trainer' model so that we can work quicker through the waiting list that we seem to have every year that is growing – this will also give more of an insight of ASC to Children's services prevention and Early help staff as we do with all the other parenting programmes we run, as we will train 20 practitioners to deliver this throughout the year.</p> <p>However we will be insisting that parents/carers can only come on the training if they have had a JAC</p> |
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| | | diagnosis, as families that go through this system should have a range of support needs being addressed by other professionals. |
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