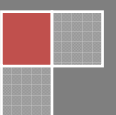


2014 to  
2024

# Autism Strategy in Fife

2014 to 2024

Supporting people with Autism  
of all Ages and abilities



## **CONTENTS**

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Background to Autism Services in Fife</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Children's Services</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>NHS Fife – Children's Service</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>NHS Fife – Adult Services</b>	<b>Page 9</b>
<b>Adult Services NHS Fife/ Fife Council</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Autism Co-ordinator Post</b></li><li>• <b>Joint Commissioning Strategy</b></li><li>• <b>Transition Charter</b></li><li>• <b>Self Directed Support</b></li></ul>	<b>Page 11</b> <b>Page 12</b> <b>Page 13</b> <b>Page 14</b>
<b>Autism Champions Network</b>	<b>Page 14</b>
<b>Independent Sector</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>One Stop Shop</b></li><li>• <b>Autism and Sight Loss Development</b></li><li>• <b>Fife Action on Autism</b></li></ul>	<b>Page 15</b> <b>Page 16</b> <b>Page 16</b>
<b>Next Steps in Developing the Autism Strategy in Fife</b>	<b>Page 17</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Outline of National Strategy</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>Appendix 2: National Strategy – 10 Indicators - Fife's position</b>	<b>Page 21</b>
<b>Appendix 3: Fife Council Education Service Autism Spectrum Disorder Improvement Plan 2011 – 2014 and Progress Report July 2013</b>	<b>Page 32</b>
<b>Appendix 4: Terms of Reference for the Autism Champions Network</b>	<b>Page 37</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The key aspiration of the Fife Autism Strategy is about **getting the right service at the right time to promote the independence and resilience of people with autism and their carers.**

Background: Over the last twenty years, services in Fife have been developing supports and resources to make life better for people with autism and for their families. Initially this was led by the non-statutory sector, but investment in statutory children's services working in partnership via the Additional Support for Learning Act meant a focus on diagnosis and family focused interventions which continue to be offered. Fife Education services developed their own ASD Strategy and continue to use this to guide their practice and service developments, offering training and specialist supports within education, and working with colleagues across all sectors. Diagnostic services for children have been further developed recently, and work is ongoing within learning disability and mental health and clinical psychology services to improve access and practice in diagnosis of adults.

Recent developments: The appointment of an ASD coordinator for a period of several years raised awareness of ASD in Fife and assisted statutory and non-statutory services to work more closely in ensuring a wide range of both general and specific resources are available in Fife. People in Fife had been very aware of the roles the Lothian One Stop Shop played, and the benefits it gave in terms of raising awareness, providing informal support and advice, as well as provision of social opportunities and health promotion for people with ASD and their families. Following the publication of the national Autism Strategy in 2011, Fife welcomed the opening of its own One Stop Shop for people with autism and their families, based currently in Dunfermline. Around the same time Fife took part in a national Mapping project and a year or so later organised further stakeholder consultation. The feedback from both of these sources has been incorporated into this report and

Where have we got to: This strategy tries to ensure appropriate supports and resources are made available to people with ASD or their families or carers either by developing awareness of ASD within the universal services provided by all statutory services, or by supporting development of specialist resources which are mainly located within the non-statutory sector, and commissioning these when necessary. Many care providers and families are taking advantage of training which has been made available in a number of ways, including our local Champions Network. Overall people are becoming better able to recognise and support people with ASD.

The Future (see Appendix 2): We will continue to work very closely together across both the new integrated health and social work organisation, across children's services, housing, employment and criminal justice services, and involving non-statutory sector in an integral way to service development and provision. This will be coordinated by the Fife ASD Steering Group. A key challenge is to find a way of ensuring that the One Stop Shop has a sustainable plan for developing the good work it has started.

We will develop methods of further developing training in evidence based skills, ensuring high expectations of services and maintaining raised awareness of ASD. We will ensure there are ways of making information about ASD and local services available nationally and locally, and that we continue to communicate with each other about these

Whilst we have developed a Transition Charter and a Joint Commissioning Strategy within Fife we now need to ensure that these are to the benefit of people with autism and their families. Along with this, Fife Council Education and Childrens' Service will continue to improve their service to young people with autism and their families through their Autism Spectrum disorder Improvement Plan 2011 – 14 (appendix 3). We will also continue to improve the information we have about people with ASD in Fife and their needs, and the services we have provided. Using this and other pertinent information we plan to evaluate improvements using a range of methodologies against national standards and local plans.

## **The Autism Steering Group**

# **AUTISM STRATEGY IN FIFE**

## **Introduction**

Autism is a lifelong developmental disorder more commonly referred to as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC). It affects people differently with some individuals being able to live independently. Others will need very specialist support.

What everyone will have in common is difficulty in three areas of functioning, sometimes referred to as the triad of impairments. People with autism experience problems with

- communication – both verbal and non-verbal, e.g. difficulties with use and interpretation of voice intonation, facial expressions and other communicative gestures
- reciprocal social interaction – this includes the ability to understand what someone else might be thinking in a real-time situation and to understand the need for social 'give and take' in conversation and overall interaction
- restrictive, repetitive and stereotypical routines of behaviour – (which may be very restricting for their family, friends and colleagues but may also be psychologically

## ***Appendix 1 outlines the Scottish Government – Autism Strategy***

### **Background to Autism Services in Fife**

Based on the 2006 Fife population of 366,220, and a prevalence rate of 90 in 10,000 people (according to Office of National Statistics survey of the mental health of children and young people in Britain – 2005), it is estimated that the prevalence figure for adults with autism in Fife is 2,630 (aged 15 and over) and 600 children with autism aged 0-14 years. The majority of adults remain unrecognised and under-diagnosed, whether in receipt of a service or not. Child and family services in Fife have been improving their practice in ASD for well over a decade. Adult services have received greater focus since 2007.

### **Who is this Autism Strategy for?**

There is a lot of activity going on in Fife at the present, to support people with Autism and their families and carers. A number of services have their own autism plans and what we want to do over the following months is to pull together all the work ongoing into one Autism Strategy for Fife. The national Mapping Project completed an exercise for Fife and produced a report and we have taken this into account alongside the recommendations of the Scottish Strategy for Autism.

This Fife Autism Strategy has been written to explain what people with autism and their families have said is needed to support them in the future no matter what age or how able they are. It will describe services and support we have available, plan to be available and how we will achieve these and how we plan to gradually improve.

## Working Together

The services and supports talked about in this Strategy are those provided by the Local Authority, the National Health Service in Fife and our key partners in the independent and voluntary sector. Our vision is that all key partners will work together to make this strategy happen and service users, potential service users and their families will be key partners in making this happen. The Fife Mapping project included the views of 70 carers and service users via a questionnaire, and 21 attended a workshop. The majority were carers of children, with 16 being carers of adults. In addition the Mapping Project reviewed several scenarios in terms of how local areas might respond. This local strategy includes these service user and carer comments on things which are going well. We have included comments on gaps and suggestions within the action plan against the Ten Indicators (**Appendix 2**).

**A key aspiration of the Fife Autism Strategy** is about getting the right service at the right time to promote the independence and resilience of people with autism and their carers. It considers the needs of older people, adults, young people moving into adult services, and children. Whilst there are some common themes across all age groups, the legislative and organisational context is quite distinct for adults of all ages and children's services. In children's services provision and priorities are set within the wider framework of the integration of planning and provision for children and young people with additional needs within the context of Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). For all adult age groups the key legislation is

- Equalities Legislation
- Adult with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000
- Mental Health (Care and Treatment (Scotland) Act 2003
- Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007
- Social Care (Self Directed Support) Scotland Act 2014

The current position in Fife in relation to the best practice indicators is attached at **Appendix 2**. This plan sets out the current priorities for improving services in Fife at this time of significant development for autism services in Scotland as the National Strategy is rolled out, new services and approaches are being developed and researched including a "Menu of Interventions". In due course, the evaluations of these will help inform development of support and services for those with autism living across Scotland.

**Appendix 2 outlines the current action, the gaps identified by service users and carers, and steps being taken in Fife to achieve the good practice outlined in the ten indicators**

## Children's Services

**Fife Council Education and Children and Families Service has an Autism Spectrum Disorder Improvement Plan 2011 – 2014** and a progress report was prepared in July 2013 (*see appendix 3*).

*"A number of positive education experiences across mainstream, autism base, specialist schools, autism specific provision and especially further education".*

There are 4 themes identified in the Improvement Plan:

1. Continuing Professional Development
2. Identification and Intervention
3. Transition
4. Working with Families, Children and Young People

Fife Council "Education Service, Autism Spectrum Disorder Improvement Plan, 2011 – 2014" is the

second Fife Education Service Autism Spectrum Disorder Improvement Plan, and covers the period 2011 – 2014. It links to the Education Service ASD Strategy (2006) and builds on the progress achieved through the previous improvement plan (2008 – 2011). It is managed by the Education Service ASD Strategy Group and links with a range of associated multi agency activities. It is part of a continuous process of reflection on how well the educational needs of children and young people with autism are met, and has been informed by ongoing research into autism and articulates with the National Autism Strategy which was published by the Scottish Government in November 2011. Overall the plan aims to continuously improve the educational experience of all our children and young people with autism by: building the capacity of schools by extending, challenging and supporting schools in the self-evaluation process, providing high quality robust information to support the self-evaluation process, identifying, developing and promoting good practice in supporting children and young people with autism.

*"Carers noted that each school has its own strengths and weaknesses"*

*"Special schools have a more complete approach, looking at health issues, medical issues as well as education"*

There is also a Fife Children's Services ASD Strategy, which was prompted by the Public Health Institute for Scotland's Needs Assessment report for ASD in 2001 (known as the PHIS report) but has been supported by the ASD Co-ordinator, and the Education ASD Strategy.

**NHS Fife Children's Service and Council Education Service** have been refining a 3 tiered multi-agency ASD assessment and diagnosis pathway since 2004.

Tier 2 of the pathway is called the ASCA process (Autism Spectrum Community Assessment) and includes children who are under 3 as well as children at nursery, primary and secondary school. The information collation and diagnostic decision making process is coordinated via a meeting held in schools and chaired by a school manager in most instances.

Tier 3 of the pathway (NHS FAST Clinic multi-disciplinary assessment) focuses on children and young adults (up to school leaving age) who have complex needs and their behaviour and are therefore more difficult to clearly diagnose.

*“Carers reported the advantage of early diagnosis and good support in early years.”*

*“33% of carers said they received support in local area when the person they care for was of pre-school age”*

Following a positive diagnosis of ASD action is taken to increase families’ awareness and knowledge of ASD, linking them in with other parents for support and to start to discuss and manage expectations for the future. The main components include a post diagnostic meeting (currently only available for Tier 3 diagnosis) and the opportunity to attend one of the parent information groups suitable for the child’s age and stage of development. These are:

- Early Bird – pre-school
- EarlyBird Plus – 4 - 8 yrs
- Parent Awareness
- Programme for Autism Spectrum (PAPAS) – 9-14 yrs

The programme will equip parents with a better understanding of their child’s autism and equip them with skills to start to problem solve and facilitate some aspects of communication and behaviour. It may be that some parents/families do not wish to attend a group programme and there is the opportunity to attend similar sessions as a single family if required.

*“The role of the ASD coordinator and the Asperger Support Coordinator received many positive comments (in relation to support for young people with Asperger’s.”*

*“Support received from Aberlour, Crossroads and PAMIS was valued”*



Ongoing actions for NHS Children's Service, in partnership with Fife Council Education Service are

- Further refinement of the referral and pathway processes leading to quicker responses and diagnostic outcomes for children and young people.
- Support for young people in transition.
- Consideration of extending post diagnostic meetings for families and children and young people who are diagnosed at Tier 2.

## **Adult Services – NHS Fife – Diagnosis**

**Future outcome** - removal of short-term barriers such as unaddressed diagnoses and delayed intervention and access to appropriate post-diagnostic support for families and individuals (particularly when there is a late diagnosis).

*“A few people with autism and carers had positive experiences of diagnosis and were pleased with most of the professionals we met.”*

*“Lack of clarity for those with Asperger's falling between primary care and mental health services if they miss appointments and are vulnerable” (taken from discussion Scenario Sandy).*

NHS Fife Psychology Service routinely receives referrals for assessment of ASD both within mainstream adult psychology and learning disability psychology service. The service has worked together with both the south east of Scotland regional service and the government funded Autism Achieve Alliance project to upskill the workforce and improve processes to reduce waits and evidence best practice. Learning disability teams can work together where further multi-disciplinary involvement is helpful.

Mainstream adult psychiatry also receive referrals for diagnosis. Further data is being collated regarding referrals to both mainstream Psychology and Psychiatry in order to clarify the demand and refine an evidence based pathway.

Those with a diagnosis are provided with detailed feedback at the end of the sessions, and referred to the One Stop Shop for further signposting and support. Where further health or social work interventions would be useful these referrals would be made.

## Adult Services –Fife Council/NHS Fife – Learning Disability

A significant proportion of people with a learning disability also have ASD or aspects of ASD. ASD awareness training is being made available through statutory and independent social care providers, via the Champions Network, via client centred training from NHS colleagues, or through formal workshops and conferences. The aim is to increase awareness and skills for person centred support and interventions.

*“Dentists take time to understand individual needs”*

*“Individuals with autism expressed a preference for environments which are quiet and peaceful”*

*“Special schools have a more complete approach looking at health and medical issues as well as education”.*

*“Day support services are excellent”*

All disciplines working within these services have become much better at formally recognising associated needs and adapting interventions and communication. Speech and language therapists and clinical psychologists are able to advise on use of social stories, structured plans, managing anxiety and behaviours in times of transition or change, as well as on the difficulties associated with deficits such as social empathy and reciprocal relationships.

*“There are examples of very good services however services are not consistent depends who you get/see”*

## Adult Services –Fife Council/ NHS Fife - Autism Co-ordinator Post

*“..the roles of the Asperger’s Support Coordinator and ASD Coordinator have received many positive comments regarding autism awareness.”*

There has been a coordinated response to identifying and planning for the needs and aspirations of people on the autistic spectrum and families through the appointment five years ago of an ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) Co-ordinator role. This co-ordinator post was jointly funded by Fife Council and NHS Fife. The post was accountable through the Learning Disability / Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategy Implementation Group (SIG). The ASD Co-ordinator developed an autism action plan for Fife which was developed with the involvement of people on the autistic spectrum, families and statutory and independent local organisations and this was taken forward through the Autism Steering Group.

*“Many people were named in the workshops, professionals and people from the community as being understanding. For instance the ASD Coordinator is important – a lot of personal support has been delivered by ASD Coordinator over the years”*

In order to determine the impact of the ASD Co-ordinator post an evaluation process was established through a negotiation with, Fife Council Social Work Service, NHS Fife and the Scottish Government, Joint Improvement Team (J.I.T.). An evaluation process was used that sought to elicit what was happening in Fife in relation to, stories of success, co-ordination, partnerships, development and areas for improvement.

Much was learned from this evaluation process in Fife and as an early adopter of the ASD Co-ordinator role, we are keen to share this learning and the outcome of the evaluation with other areas across Scotland.

*See Fife Direct website under Autism for a copy of the Evaluation report and also a link for the ASD Co-ordinator Progress Report 2008-2011*  
**[www.fifedirect.org.uk/publication/index](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/publication/index)**

## **Fife Council and NHS Fife - Joint Commissioning Strategy for individuals with Learning Disabilities / ASD who have complex needs**

*“Difficulty in early engagement of adult services with children’s’ services makes planning for adulthood difficult” (taken from discussion Scenario of Oliver with ASD, LD and challenging behaviour in specialist residential care).*

*“Lack of clarity for those with Asperger’s falling between social work, primary care and mental health services if they miss appointments and are vulnerable” (taken from discussion Scenario Sandy).*

*“Lack of clarity regarding responsibility for vulnerable teenagers with autism who is distressed by train noise and whose carers may request police support when they put themselves at risk” (taken from discussion Scenario Peter living at home with family but wandering streets near train line).*

The Strategy was developed to ensure a consistent, effective way of commissioning the most appropriate services for people with learning disabilities / ASD and complex needs and was jointly funded by NHS Fife, Fife Council and the Scottish Government’s Joint Improvement Team.

The Strategy focussed on individuals with most complex needs as this is generally the hardest group to plan and commission services for. If we can get it right for these individuals, we have a good blueprint for getting it right with other groups of service users too.

Following detailed consideration of what is meant by complex need and developing a way of carrying out data collection we developed a definition of complex needs based on work done in other areas, and which we believe may be expanded to other service user groups in future as this approach is rolled out.

The strategy document sets out how partners will approach commissioning in Fife outlining the principles which will guide how we commission services for individuals in future.

1. Person Centred Approach – Family and Carer Involvement
2. Promoting appropriate, cost effective models of Community Living and care
3. Self Directed Support
4. Quality Assurance and Review
5. Care Within Fife
6. Using Evidence Based practice to meet Health and Social Care needs
7. Taking account of all service users and the Equality duty
8. Assessing and Managing Risk
9. Purchasing within Framework Agreements



## Transition Charter

*“There is evidence of some good experiences of transition, especially with visits to primary schools and group sessions”*

*“Many carers acknowledged the importance of respite and said Day Support*

Multi-agency partners across Fife Council, NHS Fife, the Independent Sector, Further Education colleges, service users and carers have recently produced a Transition Charter which outlines how we will support young people with disabilities, ASD and mental health conditions as they move from school and Children’s services.

The Fife Health and Social Care Partnership launched the Transition Charter and a Transition Website in September 2012. It is important that we have a Charter for Transition in Fife so that young people and their families know the standard of care and support they can expect from the agencies, public services and other organisations helping them.

*Most people (who completed questionnaire) found leaving school easy”*

*“There was exceptionally good feedback on further education in Fife”*

*“Positives included organising my own time, studying independently, possibility of learning and seeing my friends”*

The Charter sets out four standards that guide how we support young people and their families through the transition process.

Fife Direct web link [www.fifedirect.org.uk/movingon](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/movingon)

*“Many carers acknowledged the importance of respite and said Day Support Services are excellent.”*

## **Self-Directed Support**

In preparation for and following the introduction of the Social Care (Self Directed Support) Scotland Act in April 2014, Fife Council has set up a small SDS team within the Social Work Service. This team have temporary funding through the Scottish Government to introduce this approach and to test out how this will work for a range of people with additional support needs, across all age groups and including people on the autism spectrum.

The SDS options are summarised as:

Option 1 – Direct Payment

Option 2 – Allocation of a provider of the individual’s choice

Option 3 – local authority selects and arranges a care and support service

Option 4 – the individual chooses a mix of options 1-3

It is anticipated that the pace of the introduction of this approach will now increase giving opportunities for individuals on the autism spectrum to consider the above options along with their assessment of need being carried out.

## **Autism Champions Network (ACN)**

The Autism Champions Network has been set up as a ‘floating’ network: which sits independently to link with the various multi-agency groups. Membership of the network is broad, from people with ASD and parents to representation across all sectors including community based services such as Job Centre Plus, Skills Development Scotland etc. (**see appendix 4**– Terms of Reference for the ACN).

The aim of the Autism Champions Network and matching one of the key aims within the Scottish Strategy for Autism is to increase awareness and develop stronger networks, through the sharing of best practice and training. Ultimately, it is anticipated, that support and interventions become more streamlined, as well as become effective in delivery and, potentially, in cost.

Members of Fife’s ACN will be encouraged to individually link, to the Autism Network Scotland discipline-specific networks, where a similar exchange may take place with other colleagues, at a national level.

[www.autismnetworkscotland.org.uk](http://www.autismnetworkscotland.org.uk)

## Independent Sector - One Stop Shop (OSS)

*“There was also very positive feedback on One Stop Shop in Edinburgh from carers and people with autism”.*

Scottish Government funding has been made available to Scottish Autism, to support the establishment of a One Stop Shop (OSS) for Autism in Fife. This is viewed as a model of good practice and there has been an OSS in Edinburgh for a number of years which has been very supportive of individuals with autism. The main objective of the One Stop Shop is to provide information and advice to professionals, parents and carers, and individuals who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

The One Stop Shop for Autism Fife opened in Dunfermline at the beginning of February 2013. The establishment of the One Stop Shop in Fife has the potential to resolve many of the issues that people with Autism may have, catering for all ages, across the full spectrum of Autism, including those with or without a learning disability. The One Stop Shop in Fife provides opportunities for support through one to one sessions, social groups, parent support groups and workshops, provided by a range of agencies.

Workshops are presented at the One Stop Shop based on feedback from families and individuals who were looking for more information. External organisations work in partnership to deliver workshops on topics such as benefits, legal advice, autism awareness and behaviour issues.

Individuals with ASD that have come to the One Stop Shop in Fife looking for help with social skills have benefited from attending social groups where they can learn social skills at their own pace in an understanding and safe environment with individuals who are facing the same difficulties.

The One Stop Shop also provides one to one support where people can attend after making an initial appointment. Information, help and support is provided on various issues that are affecting the individual. This is a confidential service tailored to the service user and their family's needs. Individuals may be referred to other organisations with the expertise in dealing with their particular problems and where we have established a partnership link.

As funding from the Scottish Government is time limited, the next task for the One Stop Shop in fife is to consider the future sustainability of this support service in Fife.

## **Autism and Sight Loss Development**

This is a 3 year Scottish Government funding development in partnership between RNIB, Scottish Autism and Napier University.

The aim of the project is to ensure that carers, health and social care professionals include eye health when providing opportunities, services or supporting adults with Autism.

To date, the project team have devised and distributed an Autism and Sight Loss survey to all Scottish Autism staff and 3 pilot sites have been identified including Fife. Scottish Autism staff have been selected and undertaken Autism and Sight Loss Awareness Training. From these participants a number of Vision Champions will be identified to receive further training. The findings and learning from this project will be published in a range of journals in the near future.

## **Fife Action on Autism (FAA)**

Fife Action on Autism (FAA) has been in existence since 1992 offering support to individuals and families with children and adults with Autistic Spectrum Disorder within Fife. FAA issues a monthly newsletter and holds monthly meetings where parents can share experiences and concerns or hear speaker's advice on education, transition, social work, health, employment, independent living/housing, the criminal justice system and other aspects of interest. FAA organises the Asperger Support Project which is run by a dedicated Coordinator (see below).

## **Fife Action on Autism - Asperger Support Project**

The Asperger Co-ordinator liaises with individuals with ASD and their families, providing a general support platform. This support is routinely provided at home in a familiar, safe and secure environment, where safety and dignity are at the forefront. Help with application for benefits and other form filling is also provided and requests for this are increasing.

Additionally, the Project runs three separate bi-weekly activity clubs at different venues in Fife for adults and adolescents with ASD, to encourage the development of interaction and social skills and to focus on realising potential.



*“The role of the ASD coordinator and the Asperger Support Coordinator received many positive comments”*

*“Aspergers Support Coordinator provides service to adolescents and adults particularly at times of transition (via helpline and e-mail) and runs three activity clubs to encourage development of social skills...”*

The Project also plays a significant and increasingly vital role in providing respite time to those with ASD and their carers/families through organised and managed residential breaks. The funding for these is applied for by the Co-ordinator and most comes from NHS Fife and Short Breaks.

### **Next Steps in Developing Autism Strategy in Fife**

The multi-agency partners in Fife are committed to taking forward the action required to meet the needs of people with Autism and to support their families and carers.

**Appendix 2** outlines Fife’s position in relation to the 10 indicators and clarifies what we will be doing next to implement the Fife Autism Strategy. This will be driven forward by the Autism Steering Group which will report regularly through the Education and Children and Families Service and the Health and Social Care Partnership through the Learning Disability/ Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategy Implementation Group.

### Scottish Government – Autism Strategy

The Scottish Government launched a nationwide autism strategy in November 2011.

This sets out a clear vision and values:

*“Our vision is that individuals on the autism spectrum are respected, accepted and valued by their communities and have confidence in services to treat them fairly so that they are able to have meaningful and satisfying lives.*

Underpinning values will be:

- **Dignity:** people should be given the care and support they need in a way which promotes their independence and emotional well-being and respects their dignity;
- **Privacy:** people should be supported to have choice and control over their lives so that they are able to have the same chosen level of privacy as other citizens;
- **Choice:** care and support should be personalised and based on the identified needs and wishes of the individual;
- **Safety:** people should be supported to feel safe and secure without being over-protected;
- **Realising potential:** people should have the opportunity to achieve all they can;
- **Equality and diversity:** people should have equal access to information assessment and services; health and social care agencies should work to redress inequalities and challenge discrimination.

*“People with Autism Spectrum Disorder should expect to have the support of professionals working in their best interests to make these values a reality.”*

Three time based goals are set out: by the Scottish Government.

#### **Foundations: by 2 years**

- Access to mainstream services where these are appropriate to meet individual needs.
- Access to services which understand and are able to meet the needs of people specifically related to their autism.
- Removal of short-term barriers such as unaddressed diagnoses and delayed intervention.
- Access to appropriate post-diagnostic support for families and individuals (particularly when there is a late diagnosis).

- Implementation of existing commissioning guidelines by local authorities, the NHS, and other relevant service providers.

### **Whole life journey: by 5 years**

- Access to integrated service provision across the lifespan to address the Multi-dimensional aspects of autism.
- Access to appropriate transition planning across the lifespan.
- Consistent adoption of good practice guidance in key areas of education, health and social care across local authority areas.
- Capacity and awareness-building in mainstream services to ensure people are met with recognition and understanding of autism.

### **Holistic personalised approaches: by 10 years**

- Meaningful partnership between central and local government and the independent sector.
- Creative and collaborative use of service budgets to meet individual need (irrespective of what the entry route to the system is).
- Access to appropriate assessment of needs throughout life.
- Access to consistent levels of appropriate support across the lifespan including into older age.

### **The Scottish Government has identified ten indicators for current best practice in the provision of effective Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) services**

ASD provision should include:

1. A local Autism Strategy developed in co-operation with people across the autism spectrum, carers and professionals, ensuring that the needs of people with ASD and carers are reflected and incorporated within local policies and plans.
2. Access to training and development to inform staff and improve the understanding amongst professionals about ASD.
3. A process for ensuring a means of easy access to useful and practical information about ASD, and local action, for stakeholders to improve communication.
4. An ASD Training Plan to improve the knowledge and skills of those who work with people who have ASD, to ensure that people with ASD are properly supported by trained staff.

5. A process for data collection which improves the reporting of how many people with ASD are receiving services and informs the planning of these services.
6. A multi-agency care pathway for assessment, diagnosis and intervention to improve the support for people with ASD and remove barriers.
7. A framework and process for seeking stakeholder feedback to inform service improvement and encourage engagement.
8. Services that can demonstrate that service delivery is multi-agency in focus and co-ordinated effectively to target meeting the needs of people with ASD.
9. Clear multi-agency procedures and plans which are in place to support individuals through major transitions at each important life-stage.
10. A self-evaluation framework to ensure best practice implementation and monitoring.

The autism strategy goes on to make 26 recommendations which require to be taken forward at both national and local level.

**SCOTTISH STRATEGY FOR AUTISM**  
**Fife Position**

<b>National Strategy</b>	<b>Current Action / Progress in Fife</b>	<b>Service users and carers views</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<p><b>1. A local Autism Strategy to be developed in co-operation with people across the autism spectrum, carers and professionals, ensuring that the needs of people with ASD and carers are reflected and incorporated within local policies and plans.</b></p>	<p>Key partners being consulted regarding draft strategy which is based on work to date within Fife across all key agencies.</p> <p>Fife Council Service Map available following the mapping exercise.</p> <p>Ongoing opportunities sought for bringing partner agencies together to facilitate joint working.</p> <p>Fife Council / NHS Fife jointly appointed an ASD Co-ordinator in 2008 which allowed a co-ordinated / networked approach to be developed across all agencies involved in delivering services for people on the Autistic Spectrum.</p> <p>Local Co-ordinator also raised awareness of people with autism when developing and implementing other universal policies.</p>	<p>Services in Fife are patchy so things need to be better co-ordinated and more consistently delivered.</p> <p>Staff at all levels need to be aware of the strategy – not just managers.</p> <p>The strategy should take into account the resource carers and the voluntary sector can offer and plan to support them in their endeavours.</p> <p>There may need to be funding for reducing waits for assessment, interventions and groups.</p>	<p>Fife wide Workshops to be arranged over early 2014 to consult with service users, carers, key partners regarding the Autism Strategy and identify a local improvement plan that will meet the needs of individuals with Autism in the future.</p> <p>Identify an approach which <i>will provide opportunities</i> to involve people with Autism and their families, increase their capacity to contribute to service developments and support ongoing engagement with the development of the strategy.</p> <p>Ensure that all key partners are involved in taking forward the action plan - including NHS Fife, employment services, criminal justice, housing services, voluntary sector and families and service users.</p>

National Strategy	Current Action / Progress in Fife	Service users and carers views	Next steps
<p><b>2. Access to training and development to inform staff and improve the understanding amongst professionals about ASD.</b></p>	<p>Autism Awareness pack was developed by ASD Co-ordinator with support from other agencies – now available for Champions to utilise across Fife.</p> <p>Variety of Autism training packs available on line. NB in particular the revised Autism Toolbox (29 April Launch).</p> <p>Briefing sessions held across Fife Council / NHS Fife.</p> <p>Autism Champions Network has been formed and this allows the sharing of knowledge and practice experience in relation to autism.</p> <p>The Discovering Autism facilitators pack has been launched.</p> <p>Training is being provided in single agencies, through Fife Council, NHS Fife and the One Stop Shop.</p> <p>Some NHS staff have taken advantage of several national training initiatives to improve practice in diagnosis.</p>	<p>Knowledge and skills can be very patchy. We need to keep offering awareness training for all staff in all sectors to improve and personalise services.</p> <p>Some carers or service users could assist in training professionals and care staff.</p>	<p>Advertise information about all available training materials nationally and locally so that individuals (including service users / carers) can receive the correct level of training re autism.</p> <p>Encourage statutory and voluntary sector to include ASD awareness as part of induction for all staff.</p> <p>Promote use of Autism Network Scotland website.</p> <p>Refer to nationally developed training framework to ensure the correct level of training / development opportunities available for key stakeholders across agencies.</p> <p>Liaise with local voluntary groups to monitor current needs.</p> <p>Consider needs for training in early years and pre-school education or care.</p>

National Strategy	Current Action / Progress in Fife	Service users and carers views	Next steps
<p><b>3. A process for ensuring a means of easy access to useful and practical information about ASD, and local action, for stakeholders to improve communication.</b></p>	<p>One Stop Shop – developing a directory of services/contacts.</p> <p>Quarterly newsletters were shared by ASD Co-ordinator – now devolved to voluntary sector.</p> <p>Transition website - <a href="http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/movingon">www.fifedirect.org.uk/movingon</a> - from children’s services to adult services has been developed through a multi-agency transition planning group.</p> <p>All schools have access to Autism Toolbox and online for use by staff.</p> <p>The communication and resources offered by the One Stop Shop and Fife Action on Autism provide information to all agencies, service users and family members.</p> <p>ASCA (Autism Spectrum Community Assessment) Manual is currently available on FISH.</p> <p>ASD Co-ordinator arranged an ASD library resource across Fife.</p>	<p>Knowledge is patchy amongst staff in various sectors in various parts of Fife.</p> <p>Websites need to be up to date.</p> <p>Professionals including GPs need to have better access to information about services too.</p> <p>There is a lack of knowledge about referral process for assessment and diagnosis.</p> <p>There is a lack of awareness in Fife of the ASD Alert Card scheme which was developed in Strathclyde but is available at Fife One Stop Shop.</p> <p>Children supported by a number of professionals should have a key worker so families know who to contact.</p>	<p>Promote use of Autism Network Scotland website for national information, update on Strategy, discussion fora and resources.</p> <p>Identify resource to update and develop ASD page on Fife Direct website until voluntary sector have capacity to maintain other sites.</p> <p>Develop the use of Fife Direct and NHS Dispatches to communicate information over the internet including information about services, the quarterly newsletter etc.</p> <p>Develop an arrangement to ensure that information regarding Diagnostic Pathways is available in an accessible format.</p> <p>Identify, share and quality assure accessible information for individuals across the autistic spectrum using the Fife Accessible Information website and GIFT process.</p>

National Strategy	Current Action / Progress in Fife	Service users and carers views	Next steps
<p><b>4. An ASD Training Plan to improve the knowledge and skills of those who work with people who have ASD, to ensure that people with ASD are properly supported by trained staff.</b></p>	<p>Local providers have training and development plans for autism practitioners. Education Service has implemented a skills development opportunity for school staff and has a training framework as part of its Autism Strategic Improvement Plan.</p> <p>The autism champions network has begun to share knowledge and practice experience across network members</p> <p>The Discovering Autism facilitator pack has been launched.</p> <p>Joint training sessions for ASCA have been delivered across Fife on a needs basis.</p>	<p>We need more workshops for parents to improve their skills in parenting and to help cope with behaviour which may be related to ASD.</p> <p>We need awareness training for the whole family.</p> <p>We need more training for early years/pre-school sector as knowledge can be patchy.</p> <p>Knowledge and skills can be very patchy. We need to keep going offering awareness training for all staff in all sectors to improve and personalise services.</p> <p>GP's need to keep up to date with ASD.</p>	<p>Refer to nationally developed training framework to ensure the correct level of training / development opportunities available for key stakeholders across agencies and all staff who support people with ASD.</p> <p>Consider needs for training in early years and pre-school education or care.</p> <p>Share all available learning resources which meet the requirements of the national training framework which sets out a tiered approach to training.</p> <p>Ensure that all relevant components are included in the training framework e.g. mental health awareness.</p> <p>Set up a Fife group discussion forum online on Autism Network Scotland (run by Strathclyde University).</p>



National Strategy	Current Action / Progress in Fife	Service users and carers views	Next steps
<p><b>5. A process for data collection which improves the reporting of how many people with ASD are receiving services and informs the planning of these services.</b></p>	<p>Fife Council and NHS Fife have a number of data collection systems in place, although NHS only captures the health concern/ diagnosis with which patients present. This may not record ASD as a secondary diagnosis.</p> <p>Social Work currently record data about people with autism on their electronic record system.</p> <p>Education currently do a bi-annual audit of the number of young people with Autism in schools.</p> <p>Housing Service, Fife Council also use a data collection system.</p> <p>ASCA data is currently collected regarding processes and waiting times.</p>	<p>Service users and carers are keen that services share information to ensure services are delivered appropriately and efficiently.</p>	<p>Improve data collection strategy to ensure that where possible, existing data is used to inform development of future support required for individuals with Autism.</p> <p>Housing Service to further develop and share their data collection.</p> <p>Involve Public Health in data collection strategy.</p> <p>Ensure GP's are informed about Autism diagnosis.</p> <p>Ongoing review and update of data across all agencies.</p>

National Strategy	Current Action / Progress in Fife	Service users and carers views	Next steps
<p><b>6. A multi-agency care pathway for assessment, diagnosis and intervention to improve the support for people with ASD and remove barriers.</b></p>	<p>A review of national guidelines for <b>adult</b> diagnosis was completed and an NHS Fife led group established to develop a Care Pathway including post diagnostic signposting.</p> <p>One Stop Shop has developed some capacity to inform individuals re availability of post diagnostic support including self assessment.</p> <p>Referrals to psychology or mental health receive evidence based psychological therapy or advice on adaptation of environments and communication to meet individual needs, encourage wellbeing and reduce anxiety. NHS Fife is working towards reduction of waiting times for psychological interventions as part of national HEAT target.</p> <p>Professional diagnostic skills have been further developed via Autism Achieve Alliance and NHS Education Scotland training</p>	<p>There are long waits for diagnosis for children.</p> <p>We need clear information about how to get a referral for diagnosis, and what it will involve, for both children and adults, and especially for more able adults.</p> <p>We would like to see consistency in diagnostic process.</p> <p>We (service user and carers and families) need support immediately after a diagnosis, and help to access groups, voluntary groups or advice.</p> <p>Investment is needed in early years with support for everyone in strategies to support learning and communication.</p> <p>Children need a Co-ordinated Support Plan which is developed promptly and a key worker as contact for families.</p>	<p>Multi agency diagnostic Care Pathway and post diagnostic support to be finalised and made available to adults in Fife.</p> <p>Communication Strategy which ensures that all individuals with autism are aware of the Care Pathway and post diagnostic support and how to access this support.</p> <p>Ensure carers are always involved as appropriate in each care pathway.</p> <p>Key individuals to attend Menu of Interventions event on 8 May to learn from others and consider how proposals apply in Fife. This could include all agencies including criminal justice professionals and Police, as well as carers and voluntary sector.</p> <p>Ensure greater and more timely access to evidence based therapeutic and support and to advise on adaptation of environments and communication to</p>

	<p>opportunities, as well as audits of local referrals for diagnosis and improvements in practice and waits.</p> <p>Audit of numbers of referrals to psychiatry and psychology is ongoing.</p> <p>In 2004 multi-agency services for <b>children</b> with ASD were developed and funded in Fife including a tiered multi-disciplinary approach to diagnosis and evidence based interventions (ASCA). These continue, having been refined over time. Some are now delivered within the One Stop Shop.</p> <p>Support can be offered by Fife Young Carers, Crossroads, Fife Action for Autism, libraries, Asperger Support Co-ordinator and Asperger Support Project.</p>	<p>Support from other carers is really helpful, also from voluntary sector and Aspergers' Support Coordinator.</p> <p>Sometimes we need advice about how to get an assessment for support from Social Work. We do not want to have to fight for services when we need them.</p> <p>Carers can organise some support and self help groups, as well as social activities but need some funding for these.</p>	<p>meet individual needs, encourage wellbeing and reduce anxiety. Self-Assessment tools to be made available.</p> <p>Ensure early intervention for young children identified with Autism by well informed staff.</p> <p>In education ensure assessment and diagnostic information is included and is part of Integrated Support Planning and review.</p> <p>Support carers groups via support for identifying and preparing suitable funding bids.</p>
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National Strategy	Current Action / Progress in Fife	Service users and carers views	Next steps
<p><b>7. A framework and process for seeking stakeholder feedback to inform service improvement and encourage engagement.</b></p>	<p>In Fife Service users / Carers are currently involved in strategy and development groups i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autism Steering Group</li> <li>• Autism Champions Group</li> <li>• Transition Implementation Group</li> <li>• LD/ASD Strategy Implementation Group</li> <li>• Developing the new Advocacy Strategy</li> </ul> <p>Service user/Carer Workshops – held monthly at One Stop Shop.</p> <p>Service users are involved in education service strategic improvement planning group.</p>	<p>Carers have delivered some services and support groups via voluntary sector but we need support to develop this area of work.</p> <p>Service users have provided feedback via the Mapping process (workshops and questionnaires).</p>	<p>Strategy / Framework for seeking feedback from all stakeholders to be developed through the Autism Strategy improvement plan. To include the development of a sustainable parent support model. e.g., PASDA model.</p> <p>This Strategy / Framework will link with the Communication Strategy to be developed by the improvement plan.</p> <p>Strategy re feedback to reflect guidelines issued via the Care Inspectorate in relation to service user feedback.</p> <p>Continue service user involvement on a planned, regular basis.</p>

National Strategy	Current Action / Progress in Fife	Service users and carers views	Next steps
<p><b>8. Services that can demonstrate that service delivery is multi-agency in focus and co-ordinated effectively to target meeting the needs of people with ASD.</b></p>	<p>Good practice examples re Individualised Person Centred Planning for children/adults in place at present.</p> <p>Transition planning pilots are in place.</p> <p>Care co-ordination is in place via Care Programme Approach.</p> <p>Joint Commissioning Strategy designed to improve joint assessment and planning for more complex support.</p> <p>Multi-disciplinary Community learning Disability teams ensure co-ordination of health care and liaison with SW.</p> <p>Multi-agency assessment and diagnostic care pathways to continue to be supported.</p>	<p>It is difficult for carers when different agencies are using a variety of communication aids.</p> <p>People with autism expressed a preference for quiet environments and value it when agencies take the trouble to accommodate their needs.</p> <p>Schools need to consider a balance of individual and peer group teaching.</p> <p>Nurseries need to make reasonable accommodations for special needs rather than insist on “inclusion” at all costs. This comment was also made about secondary schooling for more able children with ASD.</p> <p>Consideration needs to be given to addressing healthy eating whilst taking ASD into account.</p> <p>Agencies need to be clearer about the fact that some people with high functioning autism /Asperger’s sometimes have support needs</p>	<p>Further development of personalisation approach along with the development of self-directed support.</p> <p>Development of support for individuals across the spectrum and how those with high functioning autism are to be supported by community based services. This might include development of specific services i.e. Health in Mind – the mental health service model in place in Edinburgh.</p> <p>Multi agency assessment and diagnostic care pathways to continue to be supported, maintained and updated.</p>

		<p>and mental health difficulties despite not having a learning disability.</p> <p>Few people knew about the Police Alert Card system.</p> <p>Employment is very important. Carers were unaware of much support for employment and were concerned that many service users lack confidence.</p> <p>A third of carers had no support and half had no social worker.</p> <p>Carers were keen on more autism specific services.</p> <p>Advocacy must be commissioned to include people with ASD.</p>	<p>Continue to include Criminal Justice Service in all developments.</p>
<p><b>9. Clear multi-agency procedures and plans which are in place to support individuals through major transitions at each important life-stage.</b></p>	<p>Multi-Agency Transition Planning arrangements in place to support young people with additional support needs moving from School and children's services to adult services.</p> <p>Multi-Agency Transition Implementation Group driving forward developments in transition planning.</p>	<p>Most people with autism seemed unaware of what options are available after school age.</p> <p>Transitions planning should be multi-disciplinary and holistic. Families need support around this. Awareness of potential problems would be helpful.</p> <p>More services which work for ASD are required for adults.</p>	<p>Monitor, evaluation and review of these arrangements in place through the Transition Implementation Group.</p> <p>Develop a pathway for adult transitions for young people not attending school.</p> <p>Develop a multi agency pathway for life long transitions for more able individuals.</p>

<b>National Strategy</b>	<b>Current Action / Progress in Fife</b>	<b>Service users and carers views</b>	<b>Next steps</b>
<p><b>10. A self-evaluation framework to ensure best practice implementation and monitoring.</b></p>			<p>Consider existing tools to self-evaluate our improvements in developing services for people with ASD, inspection frameworks/ Standards against which to measure progress e.g. balanced scorecard approach.</p> <p>Identify timescales and person's responsible.</p> <p>Table Performance Monitoring at next Steering Group.</p>

**Fife Council Education Service  
Autism Spectrum Disorder Improvement Plan 2011 – 2014  
Progress report at July 2013**

**For Rationale and Key Outcomes in relation to each of the 4 themes please refer to the Improvement Plan.**

Progress has been evaluated using a red, amber, green model. Green indicates that the task is on track, and in some cases may have been completed. Amber indicates that the task is underway, but key aspects remain outstanding. Red indicates that no progress has been made, and that the task should be addressed as a matter of priority. No tasks are identified as red in the current plan. Amber tasks should now be give priority consideration.

**1. Continuing Professional Development**

Task	Progress	Evaluation
Establish staff cluster ASD networks	Links have now been established with the Bell Baxter and Beath High School clusters. Both clusters are very receptive to the proposal, and will participate in an audit between August and October 2013 to identify key issues, areas to be addressed and potential training needs. If possible time will be allocated on the November 2013 INSET day to progress this development.	
Convene ASD Learning Festival	An extremely successful ASD Learning Festival was held at ASDARC on Saturday 8 June 2013. This was very well attended, and initial feedback from participants concerning all aspects of the day is extremely positive. Further analysis of feedback will be undertaken and consideration given to a similar event in the future, though probably not before 2015.	√
Build capacity in schools through training, advice and support to staff.	Training and advice continue to be offered to all schools on demand across Fife. It would be helpful now to reflect on patterns of demand for such input, and on the impact of training, recognising that capacity building is influenced by changes in staffing and patterns of need among pupils. Training input to Probationer induction has been re-established and will be offered again in Session 2013-14.	



## 2. Identification and Intervention

Task	Progress	Evaluation
Establish centralised data collation system, with data analysed biannually and made available to inform planning.	The most recent survey, covering Session 2011-12 was completed and published in June 2013. While the survey tool has been streamlined from previous years there is an indication that further refinement could be undertaken to allow analysis to be completed more quickly. A number of recommendations have been made in the most recent survey, the fourth since 2005-06, and these will inform both current practice and the next ASD Improvement Plan, due in 2014.	√
Establish effective identification, assessment and appropriate interventions for children and young people on the autism spectrum and potentially on the autism spectrum in schools	Schools continue to plan effectively for children and young people with ASD across Fife, using established assessment, review and planning protocols, and taking account of legislative requirements. School staff confidence & skills have extended in response to being involved in the identification & assessment of children & young people on the autism spectrum (see more below). The Strategy Group is aware of a pattern of emerging issues in relation to links with families and the use of new technology and consideration will be given to incorporating these into the next Improvement Plan.	
Contribute to the development and delivery of effective multi-agency ASD care pathways, for identification, assessment and diagnoses of children and young people	The Autism Spectrum Community Assessment (ASCA) is now fully implemented across Fife. All schools, alongside Fife Council Psychological Service, are potentially involved in a multi-agency pathway to identify, assess and diagnose autism in Fife children and young people. The process, hosted by schools and progressed by Health and Education partners, has had a major impact on the progression of joint working assessment and intervention processes and has resulted in a 75% reduction in waiting times for children, young people & their families awaiting a potential autism diagnosis. Further joint twilight training sessions will be part of future planning and feedback from families will be part of ongoing evaluation of the process.	

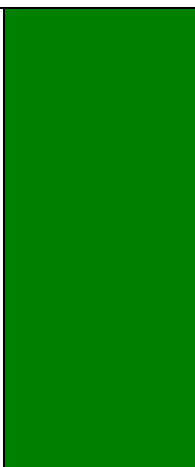
### 3. Transitions

Task	Progress	Evaluation
Identify, evidence and promote current good practice at all stages	ASIST has collated examples of good practice in relation to transition and these are being combined to form a resource to support transition at all stages.	
Capture parents' views on transition processes at each stage	A parental questionnaire has been piloted and the views of a group of parents obtained. Unfortunately the sample size was disappointingly small and consideration will be given to developing the survey method to obtain a higher return rate in future.	√
Develop Fife Transition Guidance consistent with the GIRFEC principles	As noted in task 1 a transitions resource is in preparation and will be available during Session 2013-14. The Strategy Group should now consider the Fife Transitions Charter with regard to the post school transition of young people with ASD, particularly in terms of their need for ongoing support. The principles outlined by the Scottish Transitions Forum and the Scottish Strategy for Autism will be embedded in resources prepared with a view to monitoring impact on practice.	

### 4. Working with families, children and young people

Task	Progress	Evaluation
Maintain partnership working with relevant voluntary and parents' groups, at local and national level.	The Education Service has continued to maintain effective links with key local groups, (FAOA, PHAD) and with national organisations supporting people with autism and their families (Scottish Autism, National Autistic Society). The Education Service continues to link to the Autism National Reference Group through a member of the Strategy Group, and the views of the wider parental lobby in Scotland are represented on this group. The Strategy Group has also established a link with the ASD One Stop Shop, established in Dunfermline, and a member of the Education Service sits on their steering group.	
Develop and promote good practice in working	Parents are reporting increased satisfaction regarding contact with Education Service. This is evidenced through the ASD and ASN feedback received centrally. Following discussion	

with parents and families	with Fife Action and feedback for staff the ASD strategy group recognises that work needs to be undertaken to increase staff understanding of the difficulties faced by families' outwith school life and an awareness of the need to understand and support children and young people with ASD holistically. This issue will be considered in developing the next Improvement Plan.	
Involve young people in developing appropriate support strategies	4 High Schools have been involved in piloting a Computer Assisted Interviewing Tool (CAIT), designed to support children and young people in engaging more fully in planning and reviewing their support. The evaluation findings from this pilot project have been positive in suggesting the CAIT offers a strategy to support young people to give feedback about their experiences in school. Comments from school staff also referred to the helpfulness of the guidance notes for staff (which offered advice on the consultation process) as well as the PowerPoint tool itself.	
Develop and promote good practice in seeking pupil feedback about school experiences.	Evaluation feedback from the CAIT pilot raised that there is unlikely to be a 'one size fits all' model in regards to consultation and age, stage, communication skills and style need to be considered. It is possible to draw some parallels with the feedback from CAIT evaluation and other consultation methods currently used in schools across Fife. A workshop was recently presented on developing and promoting good practice in seeking pupil feedback at the recent ASD Learning Festival and feedback from those in attendance was sought. A further scoping exercise in schools and with the psychological service is proposed in supporting practitioners to embed approaches, including the CAIT, in practice. For example, identification of good practice exemplars, description of various different consultation approaches and key elements to consider in implementation.	

<p>Explore the development of support material for parents/ carers</p>	<p>Education will continue with training for staff and parents as joint working with Health, subject to agreement and planned.</p> <p>National information and support materials will become available with the publication of the ASD toolkit online in September 2013. A Fife Education Service ASD information leaflet - <b>Supporting Autism in Fife Schools, What you need to know</b> - has been produced in draft format and will be completed in September 2013, and will include reference to the national ASD toolkit.</p> <p>The Strategy Group will continue to scan for ongoing practice developments &amp; initiatives nationally including links to the Autism Network Scotland.</p>	
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**TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
**Autism Champions Network (ACN) - Fife**

**Background**

Fife shares the same vision for individuals with ASD, as outlined in the Scottish Strategy for Autism (2011):

*'Our vision is that individuals on the autism spectrum are respected, accepted and valued by their communities and have confidence in services to treat them fairly so that they are able to have meaningful and satisfying lives.'*

Meeting this vision in Fife, there exist a number of multi-agency groups, spanning the age range. Some being ASD specific, while others consider the needs of those with ASD, within the wider focus on individuals with additional support needs; in areas, such as post-school transition, self directed support and others.

As an adjunct to these groups, the Autism Champions Network has been set up as a 'floating' network; one that sits independently, as a stand-alone model which also links to the various multi-agency groups, as above, via some of its members.

Its aim, and matching one of the key aims within the Scottish Strategy for Autism, is to develop stronger networks, through the sharing of best practice and training. Ultimately, it is anticipated, that support and interventions become more streamlined, as well as become effective in delivery and, potentially, in cost.

Members of Fife's ACN will be encouraged to individually link, to the Autism Network Scotland discipline-specific networks; where a similar exchange may take place with other colleagues, at a national level.

**Purpose of ASD Champions**

- To be a point of reference for colleagues.
- To be aware of all local services; promoting and signposting.
- To keep up with developments; locally and nationally.
- To identify gaps; reporting to relevant local fora i.e. Adult ASD Steering Group, Education and Learning Directorate ASD Strategy Group, ASD Management Group (NHS Fife – children and adolescents).
- To look for funding, as may be identified.
- To maintain and promote awareness of ASD within the community.
- To offer training, as may be identified or requested.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

- To support the Playfield Institute (NHS Fife) in the development of an online infrastructure for the ACN; the ALL-IN (Autism Local Learning and Information Network)
- To develop a supportive, co-ordinated multi-agency ASD network; between statutory, private and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations.
- To influence positive outcomes for people with ASD and their families.
- To connect with people with ASD and families.
- To maintain contact and momentum.
- To encourage the sharing of rich and diverse information and experiences, using existing and developing platforms i.e. Fife's One-Stop-Shop Newsletter and the Autism Local Learning & Information Network (ALL-IN, within the Playfield Institute website).
- To develop insight, skills and knowledge, in relation to provision and supports for people with ASD and their carers, available in Fife.
- To be both public sector and community facing.
- To collate training requests, twice yearly, via the online ALL-IN 'Autism Training Needs Questionnaire'.
- To signpost or provide opportunities for training, support and reflective practice amongst frontline practitioners, including parents/carers; via the ALL-IN.
- To demonstrate good practice in the production of fully accessible and jargon free information.
- To establish an active link to the work of all local ASD-related fora, in Fife; as well as that of national networks and the Scottish Government's ASD Reference Group (*through the ALL-IN?*).
- To evaluate and review the ACN and activities, annually.
- To evaluate and review content, and use of, the 'Discovering Autism' Training Pack, on an annual basis.

## **Membership**

- Invitations to join the network will be extended to statutory, private, 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations, employers, as well as people with ASD and their parents/carers.

## **e-Forum**

- Network members will be invited to join a 'private' e-forum. This will be a place where common interests may be explored, including ways of working, identifying common solutions, as well as sharing good practice and ideas.
- The e-forum will exist as part of the ALL-IN.

## **Meetings, Agendas and Reports**

- There will be **2 leads for meetings**, on a rotational basis, as agreed by members of the ACN.
- The network will **meet 4 times** a year; to be reviewed annually.
- **Agenda items** should be sent to agreed leads, up to 3 weeks before the next scheduled meeting.

- **Information** to be presented to the network should be circulated no later than 2 weeks prior to the network meeting taking place.
- **Minutes** from meetings will be made available to members of the network, no later than 2 weeks after meetings of the network have taken place.
- Individual members of the network are accountable to their own service; and will feed back on information, observations and outcomes from the network.
- Individual members will seek a replacement representative if, for any reason, they are no longer in a position to represent their service within the ACN.
- The network will keep up with local and national developments; contributing to consultations, as may be agreed.
- Decisions will be made with the consensus of ACN members.
- The terms of reference will be reviewed annually.

### **REPRESENTATION WITHIN THE ACN INCLUDES:**

Parent / Carer of:

- Adult with ASD
- Child with ASD

Person with ASD:

- Adult

NHS Fife:

- Adult Psychiatry
- Registered Learning Disability Nurse
- Rehab – Stratheden
- Psychologist (LD Adults)
- Child Development Nurse
- To be confirmed - representation from: Children & Adolescent services

Fife Council

Social Work:

- Supported Employment Service
- Fieldwork (Adults)
- Resources (Adults)
- Occupational Therapist Assistant – Child Health
- SW Student
- To be confirmed - representation from: SDS / MHO / CJ / Children & Families / Older People

Education & Learning Directorate:

- Autism Spectrum Information and Support Team (Schools)

## Housing

- Access & Support
- Occupational Therapist
- Specific Needs

## In the community:

- Scottish Autism
- Colleges
- One Stop Shop
- Phoenix Futures
- Cultural Trust – museums, libraries & theatres
- Job Centre Plus
- Skills Development Scotland