

SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE TRUST		COMPLETED BY: Claire Bailey & Claire Wright, ASD Coordinators, SHSCT
PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL – Autism (Amendment) Bill		DATE: 11.10.21
Additional components of strategy		
Section	Objective	Where <u>applicable or relevant</u>, please state how this will impact on your Department, including potential costs.
Section 2 (4A)	<p>The autism strategy must set out how training (including accredited training) is to be provided to the staff of Northern Ireland Departments and other public bodies to best address the needs of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) People with autism, and (b) The families and persons with autism. 	<p>The following training has been provided by the SHSCT's Autism Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Autism Awareness training was delivered by the Autism Service in conjunction with ABC Council to local community providers and businesses across the local area in 2019. The first Autism Awareness session was launched on Autism Awareness Day in April 2019 at Armagh Planetarium, followed by trainings in Newry Leisure Centre and Portadown Town Hall. The sessions included videos made by young people known to the Autism Service, talking about their experiences of growing up with ASD. Autism Lightbulb symbols were provided for shops to display to show they had attended the Autism Awareness session. ▪ Autism Awareness training was provided to PSNI staff before the pandemic – approx. 60 PSNI officers attended this training session at The Oaks. This training was bespoke to the PSNI and was delivered on the basis of train the trainer.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Autism Awareness training is provided 4 times a year to SHSCT staff in conjunction with the SHSCT's Promoting Wellbeing Team. ▪ Autism Awareness training is provided annually to staff from the Southern Childcare Partnership. ▪ Autism awareness training offered to foster carers once a year. ▪ Staff within the SHSCT can avail of e learning training on Autism Awareness. ▪ The Autism Service provide additional training on request.
(4B)	<p>The autism strategy must set out how the Department is to make provision for an autism early intervention service.</p>	<p>Pre- ASD diagnosis: The SHSCT's Autism Service currently offer families pre-diagnostic support and intervention as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Monthly drop in Zoom twilight sessions are offered to all parents/carers/those with parental responsibility whose children are open for assessment and intervention. This is a partnership approach with parents who suggest what topics are to be covered each month. These topics include anxiety, autism and mental health, emotional regulation, Occupational Therapy, visual resources, sleep, autism awareness, carers' support, behaviour, signposting to other community supports. The Trust has seen over 200 people log in to these sessions. ▪ A support line was developed during COVID

which parents could either phone ad hoc or book in to. From this senior clinicians would support parents and either signpost or send resources.

- The Incredible Years - Autism programme for parents of children under 6 is offered when appropriate. This programme focuses on play, language, positive behaviour. Some sessions run in conjunction with Parenting Plus team. The Trust Autism Service has been running this programme for two years and due to the success of the programme they have expanded the programme therefore being able to offer this to more families.
- Parent plus programme for children attending special school; co-hosted with ID CAMHS.
- Online resources available to all families on SHSCT Trust website – these include voice over presentations on play skills, language development, toileting, sleep.
- Play therapy is offered for some complex cases.
- Re-mind programme – this programme is offered to young people on a needs basis where either the young person is known to CAMHS and is referred or is undergoing an Autism assessment.
- Back to school Zoom session offered to all families open to assessment and intervention in August 2021. This session was delivered by a team of clinicians such as team leaders, occupational therapists, psychologists and nursing staff who were available during the

session to answer questions posed by parents.

- A Joint initiative with Surestart to develop a pilot Surestart programme for 2-3 year old children with additional needs. Both services saw a need for a particular group of children attending SureStart programmes and agreed to run the pilot with a small group of children.

Post-ASD diagnosis:

- Post-diagnostically, children and families can access workshops on visual strategies, communication strategies, play skills and emotional regulation.
- A range of booklets have been developed for families on various topics to ensure consistency of information provided to families. Topics include Autism and anxiety, family rules, money management, signposting to local community organisations, personal space, family therapy, independent living skills.
- A variety of programmes are offered/funded in conjunction with local organisations such as the ABC Council, the Arts Council, the AmmA Centre. E.g. yoga, equine therapy, IT skills.
- Joint working with Stepping Stones and Incredible to facilitate:
 - Social Saturdays
 - Weekends away
 - Annual 5 day holiday
- Co-produced Translink travel support booklet is nearing completion and due to be launched

		<p>shortly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual summer festival at The Oaks for families run each August with a range of activities/entertainments for children/young people, siblings and parents. ▪ SHSCT Autism Service run an annual Christmas which is organised in conjunction with the young people and the Acorns for Autism parent group. ▪ Interface meetings 3 times a year with EA's AAIS – developing collaborative working between Health and Education. ▪ Walled garden outdoor play area has been created at The Oaks for young children/families in conjunction with our young people and Acorns for Autism parenting group.
(4C)	<p>The autism strategy must set out how the Department is to make provision for an autism information service which is accessible (both in person and remotely) by –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) persons with autism, (b) the families and carers of persons with autism, and (c) professionals working with persons with autism, and their families and carers. 	<p>SHSCT Autism Service offers a support line to parents of children undergoing ASD assessment – parents are offered information and can be signposted to other supports, e.g. Family Support Hub.</p>
(4D)	<p>The autism strategy must set out how the needs of adults with autism will be addressed, including their needs in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lifelong learning • employment support • recreation • emotional and mental wellbeing, and • supported living 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ SHSCT's autism intervention service works with people up to the age of 30 to support them with independence, education and employment. ▪ SHSCT have service level agreements with community organisations the Appleby Print Room, Gathering Rooms and refer young people into these for employment education

		<p>opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whilst this resource is small within the Autism service the young adults are supported via remote resources to meet for quiz nights. From this young adults have formed friendships etc. outside of this setting. ▪ The Autism Service delivers groups on emotional health and wellbeing which are co-produced with our young adults to meet their needs.
Section 3 (A) (1)	The Department will take into account best international practice on autism.	<p>SHSCT Autism Service takes into account best international practice in all areas of work.</p> <p>ASD assessments are completed in line with NICE guidelines and diagnoses are made using DSM 5 diagnostic criteria. The service has continued to take account of international best practice guidance in planning how to continue ASD assessments during the pandemic.</p> <p>The service is taking forward recommendations of the HSC Emotional Health and Wellbeing Framework by developing the pre-diagnostic offer and developing a dual ASD/ADHD assessment pathway. Intervention is provided in line with NICE recommendations.</p> <p>Regular development days are held for all staff. All staff engage in regular CPD and training courses, as appropriate. Staff attend regional training days/conferences offered through the Autism Diagnostician's Forum NI and Middletown Centre for Autism, where applicable.</p>

<p>3 (A) (2)</p> <p>3 (A) (3)</p> <p>3 (A) (4)</p>	<p>The autism strategy must take into account that persons with autism, and their families and carers, have individualised needs.</p> <p>The autism strategy must take a multidisciplinary approach.</p> <p>The autism strategy must aim to ensure consistency of practice across all HSC trusts.</p>	<p>All assessment and intervention is based on a child/family's individual needs. Assessment pathways are based on the needs of the child and comply with NICE guidelines. Intervention plan is devised following meeting with the family to identify individual priorities for intervention.</p> <p>The Autism Service meets the needs of families through a multidisciplinary team approach. The service includes a range of disciplines, including Autism Senior Practitioners, Autism Intervention Therapists, SLTs, OTs, CAMHS Practitioner, Family Therapist, Psychologist. A strong multidisciplinary ethos exists within the team and multidisciplinary case discussions are held weekly.</p> <p>The SHSCT Autism Coordinators participate in monthly meeting with ASD Coordinators from the other 4 Trusts develop consistency of practice across the region.</p>
<p>3 (A) (5)</p> <p>3 (A) (6)</p>	<p>The Department must set out measurable targets against which its effectiveness may be assess.</p> <p>Without limiting generality of consultations required under section 2 (2) those measurable targets must be developed in consultation with bodies with an interest in promoting the rights of persons with autism.</p>	<p>We currently meet government waiting list targets for initial contact for assessment and intervention for under 12s (13 weeks).</p> <p>The Autism Spectrum Star outcome measurement tool is used within the intervention team to show how a service user's intervention needs are being met within the service. Functional intervention goals are set jointly with families and reviewed throughout intervention. Evaluations are sought from all service users after all group based interventions.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>The Minister must lay before the Assembly, for each financial year, a report setting out how the funding for autism in respect of that year, to account of:</p>	<p>Please also state how, and if, this can be managed within your Department.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the autism strategy, • the prevalence of autism in children and adults, • the needs of persons with autism. • the needs of families and carers of persons with autism, and • the potential for collaboration with bodies with an interest in promoting the rights of persons with autism <p>in this section 'funding for autism' means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) in respect of the Department, the allocation of funding for health and social care, in so far as it relates to the autism strategy; b) in respect of other Northern Ireland departments, the allocation of funding for that part of the autism strategy which falls within their responsibilities. 	
5	<p>The Department must appoint a person as an autism reviewer.</p> <p>The reviewer must issue a report annually on the exercise of their functions and may issue additional reports.</p> <p>The reviewer must send a report annually on the exercise of their functions, and may issue additional reports.</p> <p>The reviewer must send any report to the Department.</p> <p>On receiving the report, the Department must it before the Assembly.</p> <p>The Department must pay the reviewer expenses and allowances which are reasonably necessary in order to allow the reviewer to carry out their functions.</p> <p>The functions of the reviewer are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the autism strategy; • to assess the efficacy of the funding arrangements in respect of autism; • to keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of the law and practice relating to autism; • to keep under review the adequacy and effectiveness of services provided for persons with autism, their families and carers; 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to commission independent research on best international practice on autism; • to advise the Assembly, if requested, on matters relating to autism; and • any other function which the Department may confer upon the reviewer. 	
<p>Further clause (presented in Explanatory and Financial Memorandum NIA Bill 31/17-22 EFM but not in Bill)</p>	<p>As well as an obligation to consult other Northern Ireland departments before preparing the strategy, the Department is now obliged to consult other persons.</p>	<p>A consultative questionnaire to request call for evidence launched on 23 August and will close on 8 October.</p> <p>Autism Strategy 2023-2028 Department of Health (health-ni.gov.uk)</p>