

LINCOLNSHIRE HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Open Report on behalf of Glen Garrod, Director of Adult Social Services

Report to	Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board
Date:	9 December 2014
Subject:	Lincolnshire's All-Age Autism Strategy 2015 - 2018

Summary:

In response to the Government's national strategy for adults with autism, health and social care colleagues have worked together to develop a joint strategy for Lincolnshire covering people with autism of all ages. The purpose of this strategy will be to set out the strategic direction to ensure that people with autism in Lincolnshire are able to live fulfilling and rewarding lives within autism-friendly communities that understand their needs and make reasonable adjustments, so that there is access to and support from mainstream public services. This report outlines the development of the strategy and presents the draft strategy to the Board for review and comment as part of the consultation that is being conducted with key stakeholders on the document.

Actions Required:

That the Board receives the draft All-Age Autism Strategy for Lincolnshire and takes the opportunity to comment and provide feedback on the content of the document as part of the consultation process that is being undertaken with key stakeholders.

1. Background

Fulfilling and rewarding lives, the Government's strategy for adults with autism in England, was published in 2010 with the following key aims;

- To help adults with autism to access the services they need easily and free of discrimination
- To improve diagnosis

- To increase awareness of autism across health, care and community services

A recent refresh of the national strategy, *Think Autism*, was published earlier this year and puts a focus on the need for more autism-friendly communities.

In response to the national strategy, the original intention was to produce an adults' autism strategy for Lincolnshire and a 3-month public consultation was conducted in 2013 in order to help inform its development.

Having comprehensively evaluated all of the feedback from the consultation, a number of key themes arose. One area which received repeated discussion and focus was the transition from children's to adults' services. We recognise that transition is often a very difficult time for individuals with an autism spectrum disorder and as such it is critical that improvements are made to enable a more seamless service so that individuals feel sufficiently supported through the transition from children and young people to adult services.

With this in mind Lincolnshire took the proactive decision to develop an all-age autism strategy. A further engagement process commenced in 2014 conducted by the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi), which additionally incorporated themes and key stakeholders representing children and young people, as well as adults.

The draft Strategy itself incorporates a proposal for 8 Strategic Principles that underpin the development and model for the Strategy. These are as follows;

- Equalities-based
- Reflects parity of esteem
- Strengths-based
- Person-centred
- Proactive and preventive
- Safe
- Local, mainstream and inclusive
- Ambitious but sustainable

The consultation and engagement process completed with people with lived experience of autism and other stakeholders has highlighted key issues and emerging themes. This has resulted in the development of building blocks for action, which incorporate all of these themes, many of which are overlapping and have things in common, and will inform how and what we deliver locally for our citizens living with autism.

An action plan has been developed, which incorporates four key strategic programmes to deliver the Autism Strategy, and has underpinning measurable objectives. It will be overseen by the Autism Partnership Board, which will take a leadership role and be accountable for the delivery of the plan. Work is being undertaken to develop and strengthen the Autism Partnership Board, including a review of the membership, to ensure that it is fit to meet this purpose.

2. Conclusion

The key themes around autism arising from consultation and engagement with stakeholders have been incorporated into the proposed strategy and drive the strategic direction of the document. These align with and are consistent with many of the themes and cross-cutting issues running through the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Lincolnshire.

There is an emphasis on ensuring that appropriate support is provided to people with autism and that accessibility to mainstream public services and all aspects of community life is available. This social inclusion will aid the development of healthier lifestyles for those people living with autism. Improvements in service provision will be developed, including a fundamental review of the pre and post diagnostic pathways, to ensure that high quality systematic care is delivered. The implementation of autism-friendly communities through increasing public awareness and understanding of autism will help promote equality for those people who have the condition. The proposed strategy also aims to address and include the needs of families and carers of people with autism, who need to have appropriate support themselves to provide the crucial role they undertake.

3. Consultation

Consultation on the draft Lincolnshire All-Age Autism Strategy has now commenced with key stakeholders and will be open to the public to respond on the proposed 8 Strategic Principles and building blocks for action.

Any comments from the Health and Wellbeing Board will be fed into the final version of the strategy, which is currently intended to be formally launched in April 2015.

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Draft Lincolnshire All-Age Autism Strategy 2015 - 2018

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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