



Autism Statutory Guidance,
Fulfilling and rewarding lives
(17th December 2010)

Autism
West Midlands

the first disability specific piece of legislation – placed two key duties on the Government: to produce an autism strategy, *Fulfilling and rewarding lives* (DH, March 2010), and to produce statutory guidance for local authorities and local health bodies. The latter document, *Implementing fulfilling and rewarding lives*, was published on 17th December 2010. It had immediate statutory force from the day of publication; this means the requirements of the statutory guidance also apply to adults with Aspergers. The statutory guidance uses the umbrella term ‘autism’ to cover all individuals on the spectrum. It **helps local authorities, NHS bodies and NHS Foundation Trusts to ‘develop services that meet the locally identified needs of people with autism and their families and carers’ (DH,2010: 5)**

to provide services to adults with autism
awareness training - should be available for everyone working in health and social care – including those in frontline service delivery

training for staff working in key roles – such as GPs, those responsible for conducting assessments, and those in leadership roles locally.

Diagnosis of autism in adults, leading to assessment of needs for relevant services

every local authority should put in place a clear pathway for diagnosis of autism

When someone is diagnosed with autism, the healthcare professionals making the diagnosis should inform the individual, and/or their carers, **that they have the right to request a community care assessment**

Local authorities to assess a person who may be in need of community care services if they have autism, whether or not they have a formal diagnosis of autism and irrespective of whether they are currently receiving services

Community care assessments should be carried out by trained practitioners; the assessment taking into account the communication needs of adults with autism.

Provision of services to people with autism as they move from being children to adults

Local authorities and NHS bodies should ensure that all professionals involved in transitions for young people with autism have received autism training; professionals should inform the individual they are transitioning that they have the right to a community care assessment as they reach adulthood

People with autism who do not have a statement of SEN may instead have a Health Action Plan.

Local authorities should ensure leadership in relation to the provision of services for adults with autism

Local authorities should appoint a lead professional to develop diagnostic and assessment services for adults with autism in their area.

Local authorities need to gather data on the number, age range and needs of adults with autism and their families and carers, and those of their families and carers, into account in order to develop and commission services for adults with autism.

The Department of Health produced an *Essential Quality Outcomes Framework for Local Self Assessment* (DH, 2011) to help local authorities and NHS bodies to implement the statutory guidance. Skills for Autism has produced an *Autism skills and knowledge list, for workers in generic social care and health services*, adding detail to the general training requirements of Section A of the Statutory Guidance. In the financial context in which local authorities and NHS bodies are currently operating, it is vital to have a clear focus on this issue because, as the National Audit Office Report shows, there are long term implications for providing services for adults with autism (2009).



About Autism West Midlands

Autism West Midlands is the leading provider of specialist autism services in the West Midlands. We are a charity supporting people across the autism spectrum and their families, through our residential homes, supported living provision, family support, criminal justice support, education, training, information helpline service and support into employment.

Briefing your Scrutiny Board

Autism West Midlands would like to come and talk to your Scrutiny Board, as we have done for other local authorities, so that we can enable the Board to understand the implications of the Statutory Guidance.