

## **Appendix 3 - Reading All Age Autism Strategy Priorities - What we said we would do and is still outstanding**

### **PRIORITY 1 – IMPROVING AWARENESS, UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE OF AUTISM WITHIN SOCIETY**

#### Planning

- Create opportunities for more regular and informal engagement (coffee mornings, autism forums)
- Review pathways to ensure these recognise specific needs of older autistic adults, women with autism, autistic people from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

#### Awareness and Training

- Employment - Improved understanding and guidelines for employers, including reasonable adjustments (applying anticipatory reasonable adjustments duty – Equality Act 2010).
- We will develop and test an autism public understanding and acceptance initiative, working with autistic people, their families, and the voluntary sector.
- Use multiple methods of raising awareness of existing pre assessment and post diagnosis support provision and making it clear and easy to find including addressing language and cultural barriers for underrepresented groups, to aid proactive identification of people awaiting assessment, crisis prevention and prevention of avoidable admissions into inpatient mental health settings, making it easier to find and engage with the appropriate support, offered throughout the life course.

### **PRIORITY 2 – IMPROVING SUPPORT AND ACCESS TO EDUCATION, SUPPORTING POSITIVE TRANSITIONS AND PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD**

- Ensuring school transport is appropriate for autistic children through training for drivers and escorts to know the needs of the autistic children and how best to communicate with them, so provide better assistance. Liaise with relevant Transport teams.
- Additional support of getting driving licence for people with anxiety and sensory difficulties
- Autistic CYP are supported to ensure better outcomes throughout their education by schools making reasonable adjustments and a commitment to address bullying towards autistic children.
- Improve transitions planning for all (education/social care/health) children and adult services – more work to be done so Young People and family are provided with robust information to support.

### **PRIORITY 3 – SUPPORTING MORE AUTISTIC PEOPLE INTO VOCATIONAL TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT**

- Identify the strengths and needs of neurodivergent CYO and adults and support them to make good progress and have good outcomes.
- Develop a clear pathway through school, from school, in further and higher education and into vocational training, volunteering and work opportunities
- Peer mentorship/ championship training
- Improved understanding and guidelines for employers, including reasonable adjustments both during recruitment and in employment.

**PRIORITY 4 – BETTER LIVES FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE – TACKLING HEALTH AND CARE INEQUALITIES FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE, BUILDING THE RIGHT SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY AND SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN INPATIENT CARE**

- Continue to work to reduce waiting times for autism assessments for children and young people.
- In order to tackle morbidity and preventable death in individuals with autism it is of utmost importance to provide regular physical health checks and to maintain high level of clinical suspicion towards physical health problems in autism
- Raise the long waiting times for adult assessments in order to increase resources to bring the waiting times down.
- Provision for autistic adults who received a late diagnosis and have different support needs to those who have had earlier diagnosis or who are without learning disabilities – an identified gap.
- Action to tackle the over representation of autistic young people in mental health beds.
- Groups for adults especially social clubs for diverse interests in spaces appropriate for autistic people due to noise and sensory stimulation (i.e. light, noise, volume of music)
- Invest into activities and services adapted/adjusted to meet the needs of autistic people and to minimise sensory impact.

**PRIORITY 5 – HOUSING AND INDEPENDENT LIVING**

- Improved data to help inform future commissioning of adapted / specialist housing.
- Autistic adults supported to access suitable accommodation
- Improve transitions planning to support independent living
- Develop innovative models of accommodation with agile care and support options including reablement.

**PRIORITY 6 – KEEPING SAFE AND IMPROVING SUPPORT WITHIN THE CRIMINAL AND YOUTH JUSTICE SYSTEM**

- Work with partners to better understand the representation and needs of Autistic people within the CJ system
- Ensure partners are aware of and using the registered intermediary where appropriate.

**PRIORITY 7 – IMPROVING SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES AND CARERS OF AUTISTIC PEOPLE**

- In order to support carers better, all organisations will refer all parents needing pre-assessment or post-diagnosis support to the Berkshire West NHS Autism and ADHD support service,
- To support carers better, all organisations will refer all parents to the Local Offer, so they can access information and signposting, as some parents are reporting that they are unaware of the service.