

Worcestershire Autism Partnership Board Meeting

Tuesday, 17th June 2025 11.00 am – 12.30 pm

People Present:

Name	Organisation/Job Title
Laura Westwood	Co-Chair, Lead Commissioner, Worcestershire County Council
Valerie Fitch	Chair of Herefordshire Partnership Board
Emma Allen	Commissioning Officer, Worcestershire County Council
Sue Onions	Carer
Harriet Morton	Assistant Manager, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Community Service, Autism West Midlands
Cat Bennett	Ourway Self Advocacy
Jill Hughes	Group Manager All-Age Disability Service & Designated Social Care Officer for SEND, Worcestershire County Council
Debbie Lamont	Healthwatch Worcestershire – Lead for Children and Young People
Jack Caine	Programme Lead for LD and Autism, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Anna Swift	Lead Neurodivergent Children and Young People, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Cass Margetts-Currie	Expert by Experience/Co-chair of Worcestershire Autism Reference Group
Ugo Jonathan	Project Manager Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training & Reasonable Adjustment Digital Flag People & Workforce NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire
Louise Oland	Interim Principal Educational Psychologist and Head of Inclusion Support Services, Worcestershire County Council
Linda Ebbutt	National Autistic Society volunteer

Apologies:

Name	Organisation/Job Title
Hazel Shaw	Co-Chair, Expert by Experience, parent carer and Co-Chair of Worcestershire Parent Carer Forum
Bridget Nisbet	Carer

Item	Notes
1	Welcome and Introductions Members reflections from last meeting:

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	<p>One group member explained they had shared details of the ADASS report on their social media and with a Facebook group for home educators.</p>
2	<p>Minutes from last meeting March minutes - no errors or amendments raised, now finalised, and will be put on the Autism Partnership Board website.</p> <p>Actions from previous meeting/s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training (OMMT) - Invite Ugo Jonathan to a future meeting to update on the rollout of the OMMT – on agenda. 2. WCC Adult Neurodiversity Team (ANT)- Invite back in 6 months' time along with the Adult Front Door to give examples of the support that has been accessed - invite to next meeting. 3. Work Well Project - Invite David Mehaffey back in 6 months' time – invite to next meeting. 4. Reasonable adjustment resources – Autism West Midlands to share the resources they have – Harriet progressing this action. 5. Data on the number of Children and Young People that currently do not have a school place - Daniela Carson, Assistant Director for All Age Disability clarified this information is not in the public domain. It was then asked why the data is not available, Daniela agreed to follow up on the action and find out why. 6. Circulate ADASS parental blame research webinars when published – completed. 7. Establish what professionals are already doing against the 8 research considerations published from the parental blame research. 8. Agenda parental blame research at a future APB meeting when ADASS have the findings/recommendations from phase 2 of the research. 9. Daniela will take neuro affirmation training/education action to the SEND committee to inform the wider training package that is being developed. 10. CWD SW team to understand the parental blame research and consider how they mitigate against issues raised within day to day practice whilst ensuring safeguarding remains a key priority – Update from Jill Hughes: parental blame workshop being organised for July for Children with Disabilities Team, Young Adult Team, Adult Neuro Diversity Team and Early Help with the view that this learning can be taken and rolled out to the teams.
3.	<p>Oliver McGowan update - Ugo Jonathan, Project Manager Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training & Reasonable Adjustment Digital Flag, People & Workforce NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire</p> <p>Key points:</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the last financial year 9.2% of training was achieved. Key Performance Indicator set by NHS England was 30% and was set for NHS staff only (the Trust, GPs and the PCNs), and does not include non NHS staff (ICB, social care, voluntary sectors, or councils). <div data-bbox="392 354 931 549"> <table> <tr> <th colspan="2">NHS</th></tr> <tr> <td>Worcestershire Acute Trust</td><td>283</td></tr> <tr> <td>Health & Care</td><td>450</td></tr> <tr> <td>Wye Valley Trust</td><td>172</td></tr> <tr> <td>GPs/PCNs</td><td>948</td></tr> </table> <table> <tr> <th colspan="2">NON-NHS</th></tr> <tr> <td>ICB, Herefordshire & Worcestershire County Councils, VCSE / Social Care</td><td>1721</td></tr> </table> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funded by NHS England until September this year, 90% full. - Code of practice not yet published. - The funding model has changed, will move to payment by results, which means once an area has hit 30% of both T1 and T2 training then can claim for funding. Locally we are still below 30%, so we are unable to claim for the funding. - Not prioritising who can access the training between now and September, first come, first serve. - Post September it will not be run by the ICB, training will be handed over to providers, and everyone will provide their own training. <p>ACTION: Ugo to share a further breakdown of take up e.g. by district councils, social care providers etc.</p> <p>Observations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whether the KPI of 30% take up was ever achievable. - That the training is high quality and recognised as such by people who have had it but very time intensive to deliver. - The lack of a code of practice has limited being more flexible in rolling the training out. - OMMT referenced in the national strategy and local strategies. - It was felt due to recruitment and training delays at the outset has impacted the rollout and feel it is stopping before it has had the chance to properly get going. - ACTION: Laura to discuss with Co-Chair of the Autism Partnership Board and write to NHS England to raise the APBs concerns re the above changes to OMMT and as a system feel it needed more time to get off the ground. 	NHS		Worcestershire Acute Trust	283	Health & Care	450	Wye Valley Trust	172	GPs/PCNs	948	NON-NHS		ICB, Herefordshire & Worcestershire County Councils, VCSE / Social Care	1721
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4.	<p>Autism Reference Group update Laura gave an overview of what was discussed at the most recent Autism Reference Group. Jack Caine attended, and the discussions were centred around priority four of the autism strategy.</p>
5.	<p>Autism Strategy Priority 4 update – Jack Caine, Senior Programme Lead – Learning Disability and Autism, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire.</p> <p>Jack went through a presentation, and updates were provided by Jack, Ugo, and Anna:</p> <p>The Reasonable Adjustments Digital Flag (RADF) – draft patient policy has been circulated to organisations that attend the ICB meetings. RADF expected to commence early 2026 but this has not been confirmed yet.</p> <p>Annual health checks for people who are autistic - awaiting instruction from NHS England.</p> <p>Sensory friendly environments in health settings – completed in two-thirds of all GP practices in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Also looked at a range of other health settings as well. Priority for the sensory friendly team is how to make assessment tools available to as many health settings as possible.</p> <p>Dual diagnostic assessment pathway for children and young people - business case went to ICB Board in December, unfortunately at this time the funding was not made available to be able to implement.</p> <p>1.2 million made available to outsource diagnostic assessments to help to reduce waiting times and additional investment into the health and care trust in Worcestershire to look at implementing some of the elements of that pathway going forward over the next year including developing an ADHD nurse led medication service. Phased implementation as and when funding becomes available.</p> <p>Successful in gaining funding for a new support service for neuro-divergent young people and their families which will go out to tender shortly. All the engagement that was completed 18 months ago looking at what the support needs were of families and young people and the additional work that has happened through Healthwatch and other forums, informed the development of that specification.</p> <p>A “While you wait” Information booklet has been developed, on the agenda for the ICB Clinical Assurance Group meeting tomorrow for sign off. If approved, it can then go out to everybody that is on the pathway currently for autism or ADHD waiting for diagnostic assessments and it will be given to all new families that come onto the waiting list. Will also be given to the right to choose providers and put on the “While you wait” website. Support available in Worcestershire while waiting for your appointment :: Herefordshire and <u>Worcestershire Integrated Care System</u>.</p>

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	<p>Local right to choose providers will be accredited to deliver against our specification locally for autism and ADHD. People will be able to go to their GP and be referred through to one of our local right to choose providers. The list will be made available to GPs, parents, and schools as well. Right to choose providers will have to notify NHS trusts to take that person off the NHS waiting list.</p> <p>The 1.2 million to outsource current diagnostic assessments will be transferred from our local NHS providers and spread across those accredited right to choose providers focusing on those assessments that have been waiting over 104 weeks already for an assessment.</p> <p>There was also an action to improve mental health support – there is a new mellow service and a good proportion of young people who have got neuro divergent needs are coming through that service.</p> <p>A neuro divergent support group held a workshop looking at the workforce development needs for the children's frontline workforce, and a potential package of support has been developed which the new support service could provide and part of this will include masking.</p> <p>Expressions of interest went out to be part of the 'pins' program, 34 schools that are interested. Purpose of pins is to develop neuro inclusive environments, systems, leadership, and culture to support all pupils but to benefit young people who have neurodivergent needs. Anna offered to come back at a later date and update on the progress.</p> <p>The Autism Support Service for Herefordshire and Worcestershire provided by Autism West Midlands; contract will be reviewed as contract comes to an end in March 2026.</p>
6.	<p>AOB and partner updates</p> <p>Harriet, from Autism West Midlands – will be hosting a reasonable adjustment workshop over the summer. Teams initially and then will progress to face to face meetings. Further information to follow.</p> <p>Hazel and Laura are going to the Being Well Strategic Group in Worcestershire next week. This is a subgroup of the Health and Well-being Board. The terms of reference from this group state an annual update is to be given on where we are in delivering on the strategy.</p>
	<p>Next Meeting: 17th September 2025 09:30-11:00</p>