

Minutes of the Norfolk All Age Autism Partnership Board (NAPB)

Held on: Tuesday 25th March 2025 13:00 -15:00

Venue: Microsoft Teams

Please note: These notes represent an overview summary of this meeting rather than a verbatim transcript.

Members of the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board

Attendee	Role	Organisation	Attended	Apologises	No response
Adrian Grant	Co-Chair	NAP	✓	-	-
Andy Hudson	Head of Personalisation, Quality of Care for LD and Autism	ICB	-	-	✓
Caroline Williams		Healthwatch Norfolk	✓	-	-
Caron Ager	Learning Disabilities and Autism Programme Senior Manager	ICB	✓	-	-
Cathrine Hankin	Policy, Research and Equalities Officer	Norfolk Constabulary	✓	-	-
Catherine Haig	Clinical Lead	Autism Service Norfolk	-	✓	-
Claire Jones	Local Offer Manager	Norfolk County Council	-	✓	-
Holly Purchase	Autistic Person		-	-	✓
Joanna Smith	Consultant Clinical Psychologist/Clinical Lead (Autism Intensive Support)	Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust	✓	-	-
Joseph Jarvis	Autistic Person		✓	-	-
Joseph Royal	Neurodiversity Support Manager	HMP Norwich	✓	-	-
Julie Innes	Police Engagement	Norfolk Constabulary	✓	-	-
Karen Dures	Autism Strategic Business Lead	Norfolk County Council	✓	-	-
Laura Edwards	Autistic Person		✓	-	-
Lee Gibbons	Partnership Board Co-ordinator	NAP	✓	-	-
Lucy Adcock	Business Support	ASD Helping Hands	✓	-	-
Maria Karretti	Clinical and Care Speciality Advisor autism and LD	ICB	-	-	✓
Mark Knights	Parent/Carer	Family Voice Norfolk	✓	-	-
Richard Peat	Careers Adviser		-	-	✓
Sophie Little		Carers Voice	-	-	✓

Stephen Durrance	Autistic Person		✓	-	-
Susan Capps-Jenner	Autistic Person		-	-	✓
Tracey Walton	Autism Commissioning Manager	Norfolk County Council	✓	-	-
Trevor Key	Co-Chair	NAP	✓	-	-
Viv Donaldson	Operational Service Lead LD CAMHS & NDD Services	NCHC	-	✓	-

Presenter	Organisation and Role	Agenda Item	Agenda Title
Melissa-Marfleet	Parent/Carer	3	Strategy Progress Update

Guest	Organisation and Role

Action Log

Date Added	Action	Due by	Owner	Date Completed
	Contact the NHS England regional team to explain why they are unable to include someone without a formal diagnosis in the LeDeR review and share this with the Board.	Ongoing	Andrew O'Connell	
	Andrew O'connell to forward the 2023 LeDeR review when published. Expected November 2024	Completed	Andrew O'Connell	25/03/2024
25/03/2025	Lee Gibbons to arrange an agenda item for ABL to attend next meeting	Ongoing	Lee Gibbons	
25/03/2025	<p>CA to explore what right to choose adult autism assessment data for Norfolk can be provided for the next meeting.</p> <p>CA Action: Organise a meeting between the co-chairs/ Joanna Smith & Caron Ager regarding Community Mental Health support</p> <p>Update:</p> <p>CA provided an update on the Right to Choose assessments, having received updated data for the full year, covering April to December.</p> <p>The data was presented in three different charts which include both adults and children and young people (CYP) autism assessments.</p>	Ongoing	Caron Ager	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The top chart shows data for adults and children and young people. • The middle chart focuses on adults only. • The bottom chart shows data for children only. <p>Key Findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A huge increase in Right to Choose assessments for children, rising from 7 in January to 99 in November. • The number of adult assessments remained relatively static, with 24 assessments in January, and it stayed consistent throughout the year. <p>Additional Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The increase in assessments was predominantly in children and young people, while adults saw stable but high numbers every month. • This data shows completed assessments, not those waiting for assessments. The data is based on invoicing received after the assessment is completed, so it tracks who has chosen the Right to Choose pathway, rather than those currently waiting. <p>Next Steps: CA will continue to provide this data regularly to track trends in Right to Choose assessments.</p>			
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	<p>Question: The cost of assessments seems to have increased. For example, in April 2024, there were 74 assessments, and the cost was listed as £85,000. Is that correct?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, that's correct. The cost varies because there are no standard tariffs, and different providers charge different amounts, making it hard to predict the exact cost.</p>			
	<p>Question: Was there something unusual in March that caused the low numbers?</p> <p>Answer: We believe it could be related to invoicing. In March, invoices might have been delayed due to the end of the tax year.</p>			
	<p>Question: Could the board members receive graphics and data comparing the "Right to Choose" pathway with other diagnostic pathways?</p> <p>Answer: CA is going to look into how we can gather and analyse this data.</p>			
	<p>Question: How can we find out about your findings?</p> <p>Answer: CA attends most of these meetings, or they are unable to, someone else will be present to share the findings with you.</p>			



	CA Action: To report back on the possibility of lower conversion rates using the right to choose as opposed to NHS assessments and how we can monitor this			
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Meeting Minutes

Agenda Item	Pre-Meeting Support	Action and Due Date
	15 minutes was given to pre meeting support for those who required it.	

Agenda Item	Welcome, Introduction & Approval of minutes and action log	Action and Due Date
1.1	<p>Welcome and introductions made. Communication prompts posted to the Teams Chat window, and their use explained. No reasonable adjustments were requested. Members reported no declaration of interest.</p> <p>Minutes and action log approved by the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board (NAPB)</p> <p>Code of Conduct to be monitored by Lee Gibbons</p>	
1.2	Members were notified that an automatic transcript of the meeting would take place to ensure accuracy of minutes. There were no objections	

Agenda Item	Diagnostics and Support Working Group	Action and Due Date
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to changes in the commissioning landscape and the introduction of a new provider, a review of the remit for the Diagnostics and Support Working Groups is being planned. While the focus will remain on diagnostics and support, there is a discussion about potentially including other areas such as mental health and ADHD in the working group. A piece of work will be done to assess this and a discussion will be held with interested parties. The findings will be brought back to the board. A terms of reference for the group will be created once the scope and remit are clear. 	

Agenda Item	Diagnosis Waits Updates	Action and Due Date
3.1	<p>Adult Autism Diagnosis and Support Criteria</p> <p>Eligibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People need to be registered with a Norfolk GP, they must be adults aged 18 plus, without a learning disability or an existing autism diagnosis, and they do offer an adult autism assessment with pre and post support. <p>Pre-Diagnostic Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information is available on their website, and a telephone conversation is offered. <p>Post-Diagnostic Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to three post-diagnostic support sessions are available. 	
3.2	<p>Adult Autism Diagnosis and Support February 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 36 people referred to the service • 28 people added to the waiting list for an assessment • 1228 people waiting at end of February 2025 <p>It was noted that February had a low referral rate compared to other months, the reason for this is unknown.</p> <p>Waiting List Statistics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45 people waiting over 200 weeks • 684 people waiting over 104 weeks and up to 200 weeks • 367 people waiting over 52 weeks and up to 104 weeks • 132 people waiting below 18 weeks 	

<p>3.3</p>	<p>New Service Model Overview</p> <p>Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The aim is to achieve the same or more diagnostic assessments within the existing financial framework while improving the experience for those waiting for an assessment. <p>Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A specific question on adult autism diagnosis was added to the Norfolk All Age Autism Strategy, resulting in 138 responses. 117 people (84%) expressed that adult autism diagnosis was important to them. • Engaged with individuals who suspect they are autistic, autistic individuals, parents, carers, clinicians, and the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board. <p>Key Features of the New Model</p> <p>Identification & Referral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition from paper-based to electronic screening tools, with paper alternatives available for those who need them. <p>Screening & triage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For individuals with significant challenges requiring interventions, to improve communication, behaviour, and well-being. • These individuals will be added to the waiting list. <p>Pre-Assessment Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes symptom screening, validation, and a reasonable adjustment letter with essential autism-related information. • A Navigation Service will provide support during this stage. 	
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	<p>Autism Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A shift from a simple diagnosis to a formulation assessment which outlines the support needed post-diagnosis, focusing on the challenges individuals face and the appropriate support for their needs. <p>Post-Assessment Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diagnostic report with clinical recommendations and a link to the Norfolk Autism Partnership resources, such as the Norfolk Autism Directory and the "What's On" guide. 	
3.4	<p>Navigation and Assessment Service</p> <p>Purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service is commissioned to offer 240 assessments per year, which is more than the current service provides. • It will offer post screening, validation of symptoms associated with autism and reasonable adjustment letter • It aims to target those who are most at risk and vulnerable for an assessment • The focus is on formulation assessments, which make evidence-based recommendations for ongoing support, rather than simply diagnosing autism. <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable people to wait well – helping individuals manage and cope during the wait for an autism assessment. • Offering needs-led coaching – to resolve current day-to-day problems and challenges. • Peer Support – Connecting individuals with other autistic adults and support groups to fostering a positive self-identity and sense of community. • Support for informal networks – Working with families and support systems to understand difficulties and providing strategies for help. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridging to existing services – Connecting people with services across Norfolk and addressing any barriers preventing access to support. 	
3.5	<p>Next steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ABL Health has been awarded the contract for the autism service in Norfolk. TW is currently supporting NCHC in transitioning the autism service to ABL Health. This transition will be completed by June 1st, 2025. ABL Health has approached the NAPB to engage with autistic people and their parent carers in designing the new service model, ready to be delivered from June 1st. The new service model will be delivered from 1 June 2025, commissioned by the Integrated Care Board. As of June 1st, TW will no longer be the lead Commissioner. CA will take over this responsibility. The new approach must not override a person's right to request an assessment. 	<p>LG: Extend an invite to ABL Health to the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board (from the 1st June) and to the Diagnosis and Support Working Group</p>
3.6	<p>Question: why is the new provider limited to 240 assessments?</p> <p>Answer: We asked for a minimum of 240 assessments per year due to the funding envelope.</p>	
3.7	<p>Question: Are any plans to set specific timeframes for each stage of the autism assessment process?</p> <p>Answer: when ABL Health attends the Diagnosis and Support Working Group, they can work together with autistic individuals to co-design realistic timeframes for the process.</p>	
3.8	<p>Question: Would the diagram showing the assessment process be made available to people undergoing the process?</p> <p>Answer: ABL Health could continue to improve the diagram and possibly add timeframe, but it could be made available</p>	

3.9	<p>Question: How will the formulation aspect of the autism assessment differ from the current process; how will mental health services collaborate with the new provider?</p> <p>Answer: The new assessments will include support recommendations not currently in reports. TW offered to help connect mental health services with ABL Health.</p>	TW: To link Mental Health services with ABL Health to discuss the formulation aspect of the diagnosis
3.10	<p>Question: What support pathway/s are available to people who do not receive an autism diagnosis?</p> <p>Answer: Individuals who do not receive an autism diagnosis are discharged back to their GP for further support</p>	

Agenda Item	Break	Action and Due Date
4.1	A ten-minute break was held	

Agenda Item	Autistica Report: Not a Priority	Action and Due Date
5.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It was encouraged that everyone read the document, as it compiles a vast amount of useful information in one place. 	

Agenda Item	Strategy Progress Update	Action and Due Date
6.1	<p>Update following the last Board meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TW and KD added the progress updates in the agreed format and emailed them to the Autism Strategy Oversight Group on 20 February. Children's Services put forward a senior manager with responsibilities for Education who will attend the May Board meeting. TW and KD met with the Police. They are creating a governance structure to agree and monitor their actions in line with the priorities of the strategy. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TW and KD met with the Crown Prosecution Service with actions in progress. A meeting has been offered to the Witness Care service. 	
6.2	<p>Strategy Oversight Group</p> <p>The Strategy Oversight Group met on 3 March. They</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewed the strengthened education actions • reviewed the format of the plan and made further recommendations • queried how new actions will be added to the plan • identified areas of good practice, and completed actions • reviewed the BRAG ratings and proposed changes • agreed actions that have not progressed as expected to share with the Board • agreed actions that have progressed well to share with the Board 	
6.3	<p>Draft Year One Plan Progress Update - New Format</p> <p>Focus on Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The column titled “What is important to people” was deleted and made this a header for each section. This keeps the detail that is taken from the strategy together and makes the table focused on Year One actions. <p>Clearer Timeframes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What we will do” was changed to “What we will do in Year One.” • “Progress update” was changed to “Progress update to 31 December 2024.” • “Next steps” was changed to “Next steps to 31 March 2025.” 	

	<p>Activities within Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions with multiple activities have been separated, with each activity now having its own BRAG rating, and space for progress and next steps. • Some activities currently have no update, marked as red, and will be requested for updates in the next reporting cycle. <p>TW and KD updated the Year One Plan into the agreed format and sent it to the NAPB for circulation on 12 March.</p>	
6.4	<p>Year One Plan – Areas of Good Progress</p> <p>The Strategy Oversight Group identified the following areas of good progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NAPB has made good progress on many of its actions. • The Local Supported Employment programme is on track to exceed the national target for supporting autistic people into paid employment. • All three prisons have made good progress in implementing one-page profiles for prisoners. <p>Question for the Board: As a Board, how would we like to recognise this work?</p> <p>Suggestions, including quarterly updates for positive feedback, were made; however, more time is needed to reach a final decision.</p>	
6.5	<p>Year One Plan – Areas of Concern</p> <p>The Strategy Oversight Group highlighted two key areas of concern:</p> <p>There has been a lack of updates and concerns about the ability to deliver on actions to improve mental health support.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health commissioners provided updates, but as they were not relevant to the actions, these were not included. • The new action owners are the Learning Disabilities and Autism team within the ICB. However, this team does not have commissioning responsibility for mental health support, raising concerns about their ability to influence the necessary changes for these actions. <p>The transition from school to college is no longer included in the work under the Local Area Inclusion Plan. The focus has shifted to early years transitions instead.</p>	
6.6	<p>Routes for Escalation</p> <p>Issue 1: Mental Health Actions for Year One. Options available:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the issue with Integrated Care Board members of the Partnership Board. 2. Raise the concern at the Integrated Care Board Learning Disability and Autism Programme Board, explaining the issue and requesting escalation. 3. Write a letter from the Norfolk Autism Partnership Board (NAPB) to the Integrated Care Board, raising concerns that the actions have been transferred to a team without responsibility for mental health support. <p>Outcome: NAPB Steering group to decide if and how to approach the Integrated Care Board regarding lack of / inappropriate input from Mental Health Services</p> <p>Issue 2: Transition from School to College. Options available:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Raise the issue with the action owner as part of the next progress request to seek solutions. 	<p>NAPB Steering group to decide if and how to approach the Integrated Care Board regarding lack of / inappropriate input from Mental Health Services</p>

	<p>2. Discuss the matter with partners at the Partnership Board level.</p> <p>3. Write to Norfolk County Council Children's Services to inquire when and if this issue will be addressed in future plans.</p> <p>Outcome: Wait until a representative from Children's Services is part of the NAPB.</p>	
6.7	<p>New actions</p> <p>Need for a Process to communicate new actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight new actions to the Oversight Group and Board. • Share with the general public at year-end that these new actions were not included in the published plan but have been achieved. <p>Proposed Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations will inform TW and KD about any new actions. • We will discuss the actions, including their activities and measures, ensuring alignment with the strategy's priorities. • Once agreed upon, the wording will be finalised, and the action will be added to the document that was previously sent out to the group. • These new actions will be highlighted to the Strategy Oversight Group and the Board, but progress will not be tracked until the next reporting period. • At the end of the year, a "You Said, We Did" report will be published on the NAPB website to share progress and outcomes with the general public. <p>Question for the Board: Does the Board agree with this approach, or is there any other way to do this?</p> <p>Answer: The board agreed with this approach</p>	

6.8	<p>Regular reporting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every three months, the Board agreed to report to the Integrated Care Board Learning Disability and Autism Programme Board. We are asked to report on progress and areas of concern. • Only the ICB and NCC attend these meetings <p>Question for the Board: Is the NAPB happy to share:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole plan with all progress updates, celebrating success and raising concerns? • Only the ICB and NCC progress updates, celebrating success and raising concerns? <p>Outcome: There is value in sharing the whole plan and its actions, However, we need to ensure that we do not flag concerns about other partner organisations that aren't present to represent themselves.</p>	
6.9	<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Write to Action Owners for Progress Updates</p> <p>When: 28 March 2025, Return by: 11 April 2025, Who: TW and KD</p> <p>What: Action owners will be asked to provide an update to 31 March 2025 and outline next steps to 31 May 2025.</p> <p>Report to the Learning Disability and Autism Programme Board</p> <p>When: 24 April 2024. Who: Tracey, Karen, and Adrian</p> <p>What: Share good practice and highlight areas of concern for escalation.</p>	

	<p>Autism Strategy Oversight Group</p> <p>When: Monday 12 May 2025, 1 pm to 3 pm. Who: All members of this group</p> <p>What: Monitor progress based on updates from partners.</p> <p>Norfolk Autism Partnership Board</p> <p>When: Tuesday 27 May 2025. Who: All members of the partnership board</p> <p>What: Review the progress update and agree on any actions.</p>	
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Agenda Item	Autism Acceptance Week – Now That’s What I Call Autism! 2025	Action and Due Date
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date & Time: 2nd April 2025, 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM at the Forum • Theme: Celebration of autistic identity, creativity, and community • Online Portal: Goes live on 31st March 2025 <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 Autistic Creators at our Makers Market • 15 Support Organisations • 4 Autistic performers • 7 Autistic Speakers for our Panels • 7 autistic volunteers to help run the day 	
7.2	<p>Panellists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panel 1: Intersectionality: The Overlapping Identities of Autistic People • Panel 2: The Power of Special Interests: Passion as a Strength • Panel 3: Thriving as an Autistic Person: Strengths and Realities <p>Performances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My World, My Brain (short film) • Singer • Guitarist and Singer 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand up comedian • Spoken Word Artist <p>The Gallery / Interactive zone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Corner- Highlighting books from autistic writers (with support from Norfolk Library Service) • Art with Artism – a still life workshop based on improving wellbeing • Just one thing display – an art installation Live • Affirmation Wall – a positive word affirming display 	
7.3	<p>Event Accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full list of accessible features for the event can be found on the NAPB website <p>Breakout / Quiet Rooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two quiet rooms will be available one near the auditorium and one located in the Millennium Library <p>Board Member Support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board members are encouraged to visit the event, engage with autistic individuals who have contributed their time, and celebrate the creativity and diversity that autistic people bring to the community. 	

Agenda Item	Any other business?	Action and Due Date
8.1	<p>Question: Is the NAPB participating in Autism Acceptance Week?</p> <p>Answer: Yes, we are hosting an event at the Forum called NOW That's What I Call Autism! 2025.</p>	

Agenda Item	Close of meeting	Action and Due Date
9.1	Co-Chairs thank all participants for coming and notified every one of the next meeting date.	

Future Meeting Dates

- Tuesday 27th May 2025 13:00 -15:00
- Tuesday 29th July 2025 13:00 – 15:00
- Tuesday 30th September 2025 13:00-15:00
- Tuesday 25th November 2025 13:00 – 15:00

A Glossary of commonly used terms can now be found online at: www.norfolkautismpartnership.org.uk/glossary/

Board Minutes Agreed on the: dd/mm/yyyy