Welcome to the latest update from the Children and Young People’s Autism Service in South Staffordshire.

We remain committed to continuing to provide as full a service as possible during Covid-19 and would ask that you continue to follow national guidance in relation to staying alert and practicing social distancing. You can find out more at www.nhs.uk/coronavirus.

Latest on assessments
Appointments with families to commence assessments and receive further interventions are continuing.

A total of 50 assessments were commenced by the service in July, with a further 55 patients who agreed to be transferred to Psicon and Caudwell Children having commenced their assessments in the same month.

As previously mentioned, the additional capacity being provided by Psicon and Caudwell Children is prioritising families who have been waiting the longest or who have the greatest clinical need in terms of offering an assessment. Families who have received a diagnosis from either Psicon or Caudwell Children continue to have full access to our autism service’s workshops, resources, the duty worker and other tailored interventions where clinically indicated.

Appointments for September are being arranged and families who are due to be seen next will be contacted shortly with an appointment date.

During the past few weeks we have offered a number of appointments with families/ carers which were not attended. We recognise it is the summer holidays and may have been short notice for some of these appointments. As you will no doubt appreciate, we are keen that every appointment is filled, so if you are unable to attend please let us know as soon as you are able so we can offer the appointment to another patient.

Any family currently awaiting an assessment appointment and are happy to receive a late notification are asked to email the team at cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk with their details so that we can get in touch should an appointment become available at short notice.

Recruitment
A number of parents/ carers of children in receipt of an autism diagnosis have previously volunteered to be on interview panels and we very much welcome parent/ carer involvement in future panels. If you wish to get involved, please contact the service on 0300 303 0691 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm) or email cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk.
Workshops

The service has held a number of interactive online workshops over the past couple of weeks, including a two-part ‘Introduction to Sensory Processing’ session. A total of 17 families had booked onto this session, but in the end only 10 attended.

We would ask that if anyone who has booked onto a session is unable to attend that you please contact the service to let us know.

Our virtual ‘Introduction to Autism - Next Steps’ workshop on 21 September is fully booked, but we are adding names to the waiting list, so please do get in touch we can offer your place to another family.

We do have places still for the following two upcoming workshops:

‘Feel Good’
Thursday 27 August, 9.30am-11am
This interactive session is available to children and young people aged 9+ and aims to help participants recognise their positive qualities, build self-esteem and confidence and feel good about themselves.

‘Surviving Covid’
Friday 11 September, 12pm-2pm
An interactive workshop for parents/carers focused around the experiences and challenges during Covid–19 and the changing lockdown position.

Please call the team on 0300 303 0691 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm) to book your place for one or more of the following upcoming online workshops.

The sessions will be hosted by the team using Microsoft Teams. Once you have called the team to book your place, you will receive a web link to access the appropriate session (NB: You do not need to have Microsoft Teams installed on your computer to join this meeting. Click ‘watch on the web instead’ to view via your web browser).

Other resources

A range of resources are available to support children and families via the service web page at www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service.

A duty professional is available on 0300 303 0691 Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm to offer help and support to families.
Contacting the service

- Telephone: 0300 303 0691 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday; excluding Bank Holidays)
- Email: cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk

More information about the service can be found via MPFT’s website at www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service. The service web page features:

- Referral information (NB: Referrals into the service can only be made by a professional who has met with the child and family)
- Frequently asked questions that provide more information both to current and new users of the service
- Information should urgent help be required
- Contact details for a number of other useful services and organisations
- Workshop information
- Previous weekly updates
- Voice for Change session feedback
- Resources
- Videos

If you need urgent help between the hours of 9am-5pm from Monday to Friday, you can contact the Single Point of Access directly on 0300 303 0691, or call First Response (social care and health) on 0800 1313 126.

If you need urgent help out of hours (evenings, weekends or bank holidays) please contact:

- NHS 111, who have access to on-call mental health professionals; or the First Response Emergency Duty Team on 0345 604 2886
- In the event of a medical emergency please go straight to A&E.

The Trust’s 24/7 urgent NHS mental health service provides telephone support, advice and triage for all ages. The Freephone number to call for people living in South Staffordshire is 0808 196 3002 (NB: this telephone line cannot provide advice on Coronavirus symptoms).

Should a parent/carer have a specific question relating to the care of their child, we ask that they email cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk.

The Trust’s Customer Services Team is also available for advice and support and provides information on NHS and social care services. They can be contacted by:

- Email: palsandexperience@mpft.nhs.uk
- Telephone: 01785 783026
A website form is also available by clicking here.