Children and Young People’s Autism Service (south Staffordshire)

Welcome to the weekly update about the Children and Young People’s Autism Service in south Staffordshire.

Feedback from Voice for Change engagement session
In last week’s update, we highlighted the Voice for Change session we attended where we received feedback and spoke with parents about a range of areas linked to autism and service provision.

We gave a commitment at that session and in the previous update that we would respond to the questions and comments raised over the coming weeks. You can view responses to a selection of these questions and comments by opening the ‘Voice for Change Feedback’ section on the service web page at www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service. Further responses will follow next week.

One of the issues raised at the session concerned the transfer of records for those with a working autism diagnosis. We’ve been working with the previous provider and commissioners to request a transfer of working diagnosis files and are pleased to confirm these files are due to be transferred to us from the previous provider by today (31 January).

The next steps will be for the service to write to these families to confirm we have received their working diagnosis file from the previous provider and to provide them with details of how they can access the service and of the workshops we are running as these families will have access to intervention and the duty worker.

The service will review these working diagnosis files – please be aware this is likely to take some time, but we will ensure to keep families updated on progress. May we please confirm that children with a diagnosis of autism and those with a working diagnosis will have access to intervention, whilst those awaiting assessment without a working diagnosis will not.

There will remain a cohort of young people who may have been diagnosed by the previous provider and have previously accessed interventions, but were not classed as ‘open’ at the point of transfer. It is important to stress that we will not have these records. In these cases we ask that families complete a self-referral form (available by emailing the service directly at cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk).

Referring to the service
Any professional, including education and health, can make an autism referral for a child or young person where they have concerns around the child’s social communication, interaction and rigidity of thought and behaviour.
Specific examples of how these issues manifest are required in order to process the referral. You are welcome to supply additional verifying information from school where a professional other than from a school is making the referral, which the referrer can attach to their referral. Any professional is welcome to contact the service should they wish to discuss a potential referral by calling 0300 303 0691 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday) or emailing cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk.

The revised assessment referral form can be found on the service web page at www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service.

**Recruitment**

We are keen for parents to be involved in the service and welcome parents expressing an interest in becoming part of interview panels for future recruitment posts within the service. Should you be interested then please contact Louise Crompton by email at involvement@mpft.nhs.uk or call 01785 221377.

A new Speech and Language Therapist will be joining the team next week and new Assistant Psychologists are due to start later in February and early March. This will increase the support available for interventions and workshops across south Staffordshire and we are also actively recruiting other clinical specialists to bolster the team.

**Assessments and interventions**

We are forwarding completed assessment outcome reports to families and professionals. Families whose children are now receiving a full or working diagnosis report will be offered the option of a follow-up appointment to discuss the report and any questions or concerns families may have.

Families whose child has a diagnosis continue to have ‘open access’ to the autism service and the process remains the same as with the previous provider, wherein a self referral is required for a new episode of care or support for intervention.

For those in receipt of a diagnosis, or working diagnosis a self-referral form is available by contacting the team who can forward a copy via email. Completion of this form enables families to provide information in their own words around the presenting needs of their child and informs the team of the most appropriate support required.

**Workshops**

We are committed to providing workshops across south Staffordshire that families feel will support them as effectively as possible. As mentioned in last week’s update, we are keen to listen to your views on what workshops you would like the service to provide, and the most appropriate times for these workshops to take place.
We have created a short survey that seeks your views on this – please take a moment and [click this link](#) to complete this survey; thank you.

Our Sleep workshop is for parents only and provides advice around sleep hygiene, sleep management and strategies. The session will be delivered by a registered Learning Disability Nurse who has additional specialist training in sleep. He has worked across Learning Disability, Community Paediatrics and CAMHS teams with regards to sleep difficulties and has experience in working with a wide cohort of children and young people, including those diagnosed with autism. He is also a qualified sleep counsellor for children with additional needs, has completed training with the Children’s Sleep Charity in Scotland and also completed an MSc in Behavioural Sleep Medicine, which included specialist populations and children.

The main focus of any sleep work is to understand sleep, difficulties and non-pharmacological strategies to improve sleep, although information will also be provided on medication.

The following two sessions have been arranged:

- **Friday 14 February** from 9.30am-12.30pm at Rugeley Community Centre, Burnthill Lane, Rugeley, WS15 2HS
- **Thursday 27 February** from 9.30am-12.30pm at Glascote Library, 80 Caledonian, Glascote, Tamworth, B77 2ED.

Our Understanding sensory processing in children with autism – parent/carer workshop will cover basic theory of sensory processing and help with identifying sensory behaviours in children with autism, thinking about strategies parents can use and developing understanding to help improve functioning in activities of everyday life. It takes place on:

- **Thursday 19 March** from 10am-12.30pm at East Staffs Children Centre, Waterloo Street, Burton-on-Trent, DE14 2NJ.

**To book a place on any of our workshops** please contact the team by email at [cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk) or telephone 0300 303 0691.

**Contacting the service**

- Telephone: 0300 303 0691 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday; excluding Bank Holidays)
- Email: [cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto: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](http://www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service). The service web page features:
Stakeholder update

31 January 2020

- 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.

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.

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