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

**Latest news**
The Trust is committed to continuing to provide as full a service as possible during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak and would ask that individuals and families follow national stay at home guidance and also ensure you are social distancing while outdoors. You can find out more at [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus).

We continue to process outcomes for children and young people whose assessment pathway was completed prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. Families are being contacted to discuss the outcome and a report will be forwarded to the referrer, parent or carer, GP and school where appropriate.

Please note that assessments and interventions will be provided either by telephone or remotely until further notice and we will continue to contact families to notify them of appointments.

The team are also continuing to arrange appointments for specific elements of the assessment that can be completed via telephone or online.

The duty worker remains available to speak to families at this time while urgent support will continue to be available by calling 0300 303 0691 (9am-5pm, Monday to Friday) or emailing [cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk).

The team would welcome consent from those families who are happy to receive SMS text reminders or information via email to help reduce demand on the postal service and to ensure telephone or online appointments are received in a timely manner. Please provide written consent via email to [cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk](mailto:cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk) where possible, or call 0300 303 0691.

We mentioned in last week’s update that, in adherence with national guidelines during the COVID-19 outbreak our face-to-face workshops had been suspended until further notice. We have been working to set up online workshops to support families and hope to have further details of dates and times for these workshops as soon as possible.

In the meantime, we continue to welcome views on what workshops you would like the service to provide, and the most appropriate times for these workshops to take place. Please [click on this link](mailto:click on this link) to complete a survey.
Resources
The team are continuing to develop a range of emotional health resources, videos and workbooks that can support families, children and young people whilst direct contact is not possible. These resources will also continue to be a valuable tool for families in the future.

The NHS and Public Health England have developed a number of national posters and leaflets to provide information during the COVID-19 outbreak. One of these is a helpful children’s factsheet that has been produced by Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust, which we’ve linked to via the Trust’s Coronavirus (COVID-19) webpages at www.mpft.nhs.uk/service-users-carers/coronavirus-information/coronavirus-resources.

There you will find national posters promoting handwashing in both easy read and large print formats. Public Health England has also issued guidance for parents and carers on supporting children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing during the Coronavirus outbreak. Again, you can find a link to this guidance on the above weblink. We hope you find these useful.

Assessments and interventions
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. Please note that, for the foreseeable future these appointments will be offered via telephone or remotely, where possible.

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 on request by emailing the team at cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk. 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.

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

**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
- Resources
- Voice for Change session feedback.

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