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

**Update on additional assessments**
We are continuing to work with Staffordshire-based charity Caudwell Children Autism Service and specialist provider Psicon to offer additional capacity – prioritising those families who have been waiting the longest or who have the greatest clinical need in terms of offering an assessment.

As a reminder, this involves obtaining consent from families wishing to take up this offer to transfer any records we have. Once this consent is acquired we hand over this information in a secure way to the provider, who will then contact the family to discuss next steps.

This work has commenced and patients have been transferred to Caudwell and Psicon for assessments, with positive feedback being received from families who have accepted this offer.

It is important to stress that, whilst the providers are delivering an assessment in a slightly different way, both are compliant with NICE guidelines and are subject to the same quality standards and monitoring.

It is also important to stress that families who receive a diagnosis from either provider will continue to have full access to our autism service’s workshops, resources, the duty worker and other tailored interventions where clinically indicated.

**Recruitment**
We are continuing to recruit into the team and are advertising for a number of roles, including a further Speech and Language Therapist hours, Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) Practitioner and Therapy Assistant Practitioner.

Parents/ carers of a child who is in receipt of an autism diagnosis and who would like to be involved on an interview panel are asked to call the team on 0300 303 0691 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm) or email cypautismservice@mpft.nhs.uk – your feedback will support the service for families going forward.

**Workshops**
You will recall that we recently held an online survey seeking your views on what days/ times you would wish workshops to be held, and the topics you would want to see. Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond and the headlines are as follows:
Q1. What times would suit you best for parent workshops?
The most popular days/ times were (in order of most preferred):
- Weekdays – 9.30am-11am
- Weekdays – 11am-2.30pm
- Saturday/Sunday – 11am-2.30pm

Q2. What time would be most preferable for workshops with young people?
The most popular days/ times were (in order of most preferred):
- Saturday/Sunday – 9.30am-12.30pm
- Saturday/Sunday – 1pm-3.30pm
- Weekdays – 4pm-6pm

Q3: Are school holidays convenient for workshops with young people?
- Yes – 83.3%
- No – 16.7%

The final question sought suggestions of topics you would like to see the team focus on for future workshops. The team have arranged the following interactive online workshops in response to feedback from the survey for families to take part in from their homes.

Places are limited for these sessions, so you are therefore recommended to call the team on 0300 303 0691 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm) to book your place as soon as possible – thank you.

These sessions will be hosted by the team using Microsoft Teams. Once you have called the team to book your place, you will be sent 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.

‘Surviving Covid’
Friday 10 July, 9.30am-11am
This session is available to parents/ carers and will be targeted around experiences and challenges during COVID-19 and also as we come out of the current lockdown position.

‘Introduction to Autism’
Thursday 16 July, 9.30am-11am (with a 15 minute comfort break); or Friday 17 July, 9.30am-11am (with a 15 minute comfort break)
This session is available to parents/ carers and will be a follow up to the online Introduction to Autism webinar available on the service web page by clicking here (under ‘Workshops’). We request parents/ carers complete the webinar prior to attending the interactive session, which will cover the three main areas of communication, rigidity and social interactions.
‘Introduction to Sensory Processing’ – Part 1 (NB: parents/ carers must attend both sessions)
Thursday 6 August, 10am-12pm (with a 15 minute comfort break)
This two-part sensory interactive session is available to parents/ carers and will cover an understanding of the eight human senses and sensory integration, how they enable children to engage in activities of daily life, as well as covering the sensory difficulties that some children with autism experience impacting on their emotional and behavioural responses in school, home, community and friendships.

‘Introduction to Sensory Strategies’ – Part 2 (NB: parents/ carers must attend both sessions)
Thursday 20 August, 10am-12pm (with a 15 minute comfort break)
This second element of the sensory interactive session is available to parents/ carers where we will work with you to understand your own child’s sensory responses, ‘being a sensory detective’ and help you develop strategies to create routines and environments that enable your child to engage in meaningful and purposeful daily life at home and in school.

Other resources
The team have developed a range of resources to support children and families (available 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
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.

- 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)
Children and Young People’s Autism Service (South Staffordshire) update

22 June 2020

- 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 number to call for people living in South Staffordshire is 0300 555 5001 (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