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.

**NHS England/NHS Improvement (NHSE/I) report**
An independent review of commissioning arrangements for children and young people’s autism services in South Staffordshire has been published by NHSE/I.

The report is available to view at [https://sesandspccg.nhs.uk/about/our-governing-body/governing-body-papers/2020/1120-enclosure-12-autism-independent-review](https://sesandspccg.nhs.uk/about/our-governing-body/governing-body-papers/2020/1120-enclosure-12-autism-independent-review)

The Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in South Staffordshire and MPFT have welcomed the publication of the review. The CCGs discussed the report at their Governing Body meeting on Thursday (27 August) and you can view a recording of this meeting via the CCGs’ website by clicking here.

Children with autism and their families have not always received the support they need through these services, which is why we have been working hard to drive improvements and correct problems.

As the services originally were set up prior to the establishment of the CCGs and MPFT, our priority now is to ensure the package of support is safe and effective, which is why an action plan has been developed to ensure all recommendations in the report are thoroughly implemented.

**Latest on assessments**
Appointments with families to commence assessments and receive further interventions are continuing. This includes additional appointments being provided by Caudwell Children and Psicon prioritising families who have been waiting the longest or who have the greatest clinical need. Families who are due to be seen next are being contacted with an appointment date.

As we reported in the last update, a number of appointments have been offered to families/carers which were not attended. 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 for **new assessments only** 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**

We are delighted that Claire Baugh (*pictured*) has joined us this week as an Occupational Therapist. Claire left her role as a teaching assistant to pursue a career in Occupational Therapy, completing her training at Coventry University. She has previously worked for Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and has a great deal of knowledge and experience in delivering both 1:1 and group sessions to support families.

We continue to welcome parents/carers of children in receipt of an autism diagnosis to be on future interview 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 held a ‘Feel Good’ workshop on Thursday (27 August) aimed at children and young people aged 9+ to help participants recognise their positive qualities, build self-esteem and confidence and feel good about themselves. Thanks to everyone who attended this session; we hope you found it useful.

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 let us know if you can’t attend and we can offer your place to another family.

We have places for the following workshops:

**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.

**Sleep workshop (two-part workshop)**

**Tuesday 22 September, 10am-12pm (session one)**

**Tuesday 29 September, 10am-11am (session two)**
The workshop is for parents only and provides advice around sleep management and strategies. The second session will review strategies and answer any questions that may have arisen from the first workshop.

**Managing behaviours that challenge**  
**Friday 9 October, 10am-11.30am**  
This workshop will explore how and why different behaviours challenge, review behaviours and the messages behind them, and understand how to respond and the approaches to managing behaviours that challenge.

**Sensory processing (two-part workshop)**  
**Thursday 3 December, 10am-12.30pm (session one)**  
**Thursday 10 December, 10am-12.30pm (session two)**  
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.

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 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](http://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