



Easy
Read

Our plan to support autistic people of all ages



Hertfordshire and
West Essex Integrated
Care Partnership



Herts Mental Health,
Learning Disability and
Neurodiversity Health
and Care Partnership



Hertfordshire

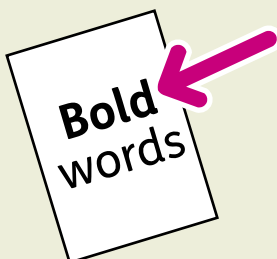
Easy Read



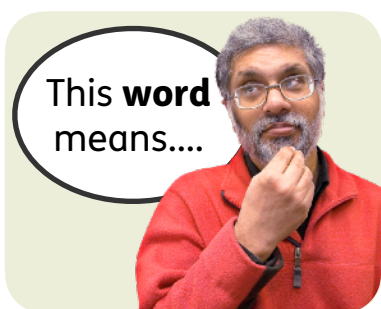
This is an Easy Read version of some information. It may not include all of the information but it will tell you about the important parts.



This Easy Read booklet uses easier words and pictures. Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are in **bold** - this means the writing is thicker and darker. These are important words in the booklet.



Sometimes if a bold word is hard to understand, we will explain what it means.



[Blue and underlined](#) words show links to websites and email addresses. You can click on these links on a computer.

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You can fill in a quick survey to say what you think about this Easy Read booklet:
info.easy-read-online.co.uk/easy-read-feedback-survey

About this booklet



This booklet is from Hertfordshire County Council and NHS organisations in Hertfordshire.



We have worked with autistic people in Hertfordshire to write a **strategy** to make the lives of autistic people better.

A **strategy** is a plan of things to do over a period of time.



This booklet will tell you more about our strategy.

About the strategy

We want to make sure that autistic people have the same chances in life as everyone else, to:



- Go to school, college and university.



- Get a good job.



- Have good health and **wellbeing**.

Wellbeing means feeling happy and healthy in your body and mind.



Autistic people helped us write this strategy to make sure it meets their needs.

What we want to happen



As part of the strategy, we thought about what we wanted living in Hertfordshire to be like for autistic people.

This is called our **vision**.



Our vision is for autistic people to get good support when they need it.



This will help them live the life they want.



We also want them to be understood and supported by the people around them.



We also agreed on **principles**, which are how we will work with autistic people.

We will:



- Make sure we work together with autistic people when we do our work, or plan and change our services.



- Understand and value the strengths and experiences of autistic people.



- Make sure organisations work together to support autistic people, and their families and carers, in the way that they need.



Sometimes services need to make **reasonable adjustments** when they work with autistic people.

Reasonable adjustments are changes that places and services can make so that disabled people can take part like everybody else.

So we will also:



- Make sure services understand how to work with autistic people, and what reasonable adjustments they might need to make.



- Make sure we include autistic people when we train staff about reasonable adjustments.

Our plan



We have agreed on 6 **priorities** in our plan.

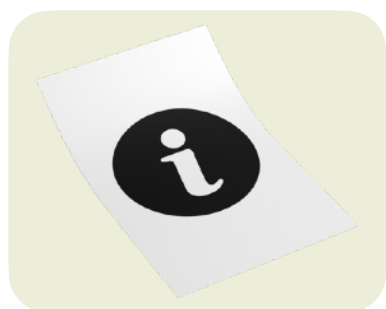
Priorities are the most important things we want to do.

Priority 1



Priority 1 is to make sure that autistic people can find out they are autistic as quickly as possible, and support them at all times.

We want to:



- Make sure that adults and children have all the information they need about finding out if they are autistic.



- Stop people waiting a long time to find out if they are autistic.

We also want to:



- Make sure people are told about other services if they find out they are not autistic, or do not want to find out.



- Make sure that healthcare staff, schools and colleges can help people find out if they are autistic.

To support people who are finding out if they are autistic, we will:



- Change how we find out that children and young people are autistic so that they do not have to wait a long time.



- Check that our tests to find out if people are autistic are the same as the rest of England.

To support people who are finding out if they are autistic, we will also:



- Make sure we support children and young people who are finding out if they are autistic.



- Keep supporting parents of autistic children.



- Keep supporting people of all ages where they live.

Priority 2



Priority 2 is to make sure that autistic people can get help for their **mental health** in the way that they need.

Mental health is the way you think, feel and behave.

We want:



- Staff to understand the services autistic people can get to stop mental health problems from getting too big.



- To make sure everyone understands who is responsible for looking after each autistic person's mental health.



- Autistic people who go into hospital for their mental health to be there for as little time as possible, and to understand what will happen when they get out of hospital.



- Autistic people to have someone to speak for them if they need it.

To support the mental health of autistic people, we will:



- Make sure they can get the services they need for their mental health.



- Make sure we know about all the autistic people in Hertfordshire and the support they need.



- Make sure they get the support they need if they go into hospital.



- Make it easier to agree on who is responsible for an autistic person's hospital treatment.



- Ask them about their experiences if they have been in hospital for their mental health.



We will also keep autistic people in mind when we write our plan about stopping **suicide**.

Suicide is when you kill yourself on purpose because you are finding life too difficult.

Priority 3



Priority 3 is to make sure autistic people and their families get support where they live.

We want:



- Autistic people to be able to take part in activities in their local area.



- Different support groups for autistic people, like online and for families and people of different ages.

We also want:



- Autistic people and their families to have good information about activities and support in their area.

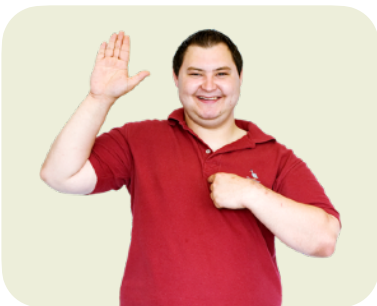


- Families to get the support they need.

To support autistic people and their families where they live, we will:



- Work with other organisations to make sure that autistic people can use their services.



- Support people to live more independently.



- Work with them to find out what support they want.

To support autistic people and their families where they live, we will also:



- Make sure our services make reasonable adjustments to include autistic people.



- Think about what support autistic people need as they get older.

Priority 4



Priority 4 is to make sure autistic people can do well at school, college, work or training.

We know that:



- Autistic children do not always get the support they need at school.



- Autistic people sometimes find it difficult to get and keep a job that suits them.

We want:



- Everyone to be able to go to school, learn new skills or get a good job.



- Families of young children to be able to get the support they need.



- Staff who work with autistic children to have the support they need.



- Autistic adults to get support and learn skills to get good jobs.



- Employers to know how to support autistic people at work.

To support autistic people at school or work, we will:



- Keep supporting families of autistic children as they start school.



- Support families through school and going to university or college.



- Give school staff the skills they need to support autistic children and help them stay in school.



- Look at how we can help services and employers support autistic people at work.

Priority 5



Priority 5 is to make sure autistic people can get the care they need to stay healthy.



We know that autistic people die at a younger age than other people.



This is sometimes because they find it difficult to get the healthcare they need.



Autistic people can have yearly health checks.



We also look into the deaths of autistic people each year.

We want:



- Autistic people to be able to get support to keep their bodies healthy.



- Healthcare services to make reasonable adjustments for autistic people when they need them.



- To make sure that healthcare services do not think that all the medical problems an autistic person has are because they are autistic.



- To learn from the deaths of autistic people and give better care.

To make sure autistic people get good healthcare, we will:



- Work with other organisations and groups to make healthcare better for autistic people.



- Give information to autistic people about reasonable adjustments and how to ask for them.



- Look at ways to make it easier for autistic people to get the healthcare they need, like hospital passports.

Hospital passports explain what health and care support a person needs in hospital.



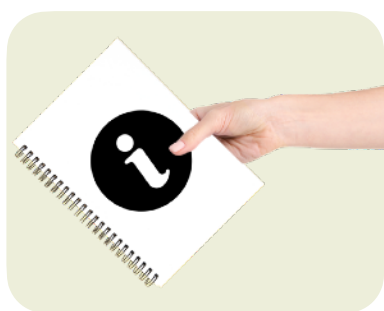
- Help autistic people have a better experience when they go to their doctor.

Priority 6



Priority 6 is to make sure autistic people can get the support and services they need to have a good life.

We want:



- To make sure people get good information about where to go for support.



- Autistic people to get any support they need from people who understand what they need, and help them live their own life.



- People who find out they are autistic when they are children to move to adult services easily.

To make sure we support autistic people who need it, we will:



- Look at people's experience of moving from children's to adult services to see what we need to change.



- Make sure autistic people can use their money to get the services they want.



- Make sure parents and carers can have a break from looking after autistic people, if they need one.



- Make sure our services give all autistic people what they need.



- Think about what services older autistic people might need.

What might make it difficult



We have also thought about 6 ways that doing our strategy might be difficult.



1. Autistic people are all different and have different experiences and needs, so we have to make sure we give services that are right for each person.



2. We need to make sure all different services work together to support autistic people and their families.



3. We need to make sure that people can find out that they are autistic quickly, so they can get the services they need.



4. We need to keep helping autistic people and their families where they live, so they do not end up with bigger problems.



5. We need to make sure that autistic people get help for other health conditions, and that staff do not think all their problems are because they are autistic.



6. We need to support autistic people with other mental health conditions to live good lives.

Find out more



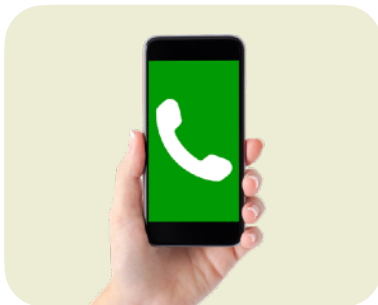
You can read the full report on our website:

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/doc/adult/stratplans/hertfordshire-all-age-autism-strategy-2025-2030.pdf

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