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 18 July 2012

Dear McCulloch

**Our Reference: 1146/2012**

I am writing to confirm that the Trust has now completed its search for the information you requested. The information you requested is as follows:

1. How many adults you have with a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder (any, although if there are separate statistics for Asperger's, HFA, LFA, they would be appreciated) in your area;

There is no single source of information on the numbers of adults diagnosed with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) living in Gloucestershire. NHS Gloucestershire is currently undertaking a needs assessment on ASC (due to be published end of July 2012) which includes the most up-to-date local data and intelligence that we have. We are working on the assumption that the revised national prevalence rate of 1.1% applies to Gloucestershire (for planning purposes). This would equate to approximately 5,500 adults.

2. How many children;

We do not hold this information. National epidemiology suggests that autism occurs in 1% of children (NICE 2011- Autism, Recognition, referral and diagnosis of children and young people).

3. What diagnostic services are available to a) adults and b) children;

1. Adults are currently diagnosed by Consultant Psychiatrists who work in 2gether NHS Foundation Trust. Individuals can be referred for this assessment by their GP.
2. Children are diagnosed by Paediatricians and Psychiatrists with the collaboration of other professionals in health and education.

4. What agencies or teams you have that work with autistic people, provide support/services, strategise, etc.

Within health services children with autism should be able to access all health services according to individual needs including paediatrics, learning disability services, health visitors, school nurses allied health professionals and mental health services.

There are currently no specialist standalone services for adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions.

Adults can access the following help and support:

**Employment**

Every Jobcentre Plus office has a Disability Employment Advisor with whom adults with ASC can discuss their employment needs and get support. In addition Jobcentre Plus have recently started an initiative called Forwards Work Clubs which can provide additional support. This initiative is in the early stages but there are clubs available in Cheltenham, Stroud and Gloucester (with more opening soon).

Jobcentre Plus in conjunction with the MP for Gloucester and 2gether NHS Foundation Trust recently ran a disability jobs fair (11/11/11). One of the purposes of this was to educate employers as to the benefits of employing people with disabilities (inducing ASC). As a result of this they have produced an educational DVD for use with employers. In addition Jobcentre Plus staff who work directly with employers are in the process of promoting the benefits of becoming a Mindful employer.

**Social Care**

Individuals who have been diagnosed with ASC can be referred to Adult Social Services for an assessment of their needs under the NHS and Community Care Act. Individuals who are deemed as having eligible needs can receive a range of services and should be offered the opportunity to have a personal budget (either managed by themselves, a third party or by the Local Authority) to purchase services to meet their needs and deliver on agreed outcomes.

**Primary Care Mental Health Services**

Whilst these services are not specifically for individuals with ASC, they are as likely to have a common mental disorder and therefore should be able to access these services.

The Primary Mental Health Service is available via all GP practices registered with NHS Gloucestershire. They provide access to brief assessment, advice and signposting and onward referral.

**Let’s Talk (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies)**

Individuals with ASC can be referred by their GP to the above service that provides a range of psycho-educational materials, psychological therapies, within a stepped care model (matching level of need to level of service).

**Specialist Mental Health Services**

Individuals with ASC who also have a mental health problem can access local specialist mental health services so long as they meet the referral criteria.

5. An email address/website for each of these agencies or teams where possible.

As stated previously there are no specific standalone services therefore it is not possible to provide this information.

6. What the typical process should be for an adult in your area first asking their GP for an assessment for autistic spectrum disorder to receiving a diagnosis/support.

Diagnostic Service and Care Pathway

We are in the process of developing diagnostic services for people with ASC. Currently request for assessments are made by GPs and commissioned via the specialist trust on a case by case basis. This assessment will usually be undertaken by a specialist clinicians with expertise in ASC.

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If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, you should write to.

Freepost: RRYY-KSGT-AGBR

Guide & PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service)

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The Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely

**Information Governance Team**