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| Sarah McCulloch  | Date 16th August 2012Enquiries to Kenny OliverOur Ref: KO/FOI Direct Line 01463 717123Email Kenny.oliver@nhs.net  |

Dear Ms McCulloch

**Freedom of Information Act Request Ref 2093**

Thank you for your recent request for information, dated 22 June 2012 in connection with autistic spectrum disorder. Your questions and our responses are 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;**

NHS Highland do not record these figures however the National Autistic Society [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk) may be able to help with this. Not all adults with ASD will use services so these figures may not be accurate.

**2. How many children;**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **2012** |
| **Age** | **No** | **Age** | **No** | **Age** | **No** | **Age** | **No** |
| 0-5 | 16 | 0-5 | 48 | 0-5 | 46 | 0-5 | 10 |
| 6-11 | 38 | 6-11 | 60 | 6-11 | 40 | 5-11 | 17 |
| 12-15 | 13 | 12-15 | 15 | 12-15 | 14 | 12-15 | 2 |
| 16-18 | 4 | 16-18 | 7 | 16-18 | 6 | 16-18 | 3 |

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

a) There is a diagnostic service available to adults from age 16+ and who have left school, who are showing features of the condition. This is the "Highland Adults Autistic Assessment, Diagnostic and Advisory Service (HAAADAS) and covers Highland with the exception of Argyll & Bute or the Northern and Western Isles.

b) The diagnostic service for children and young people in Highland is set up in locality teams across Highland. Key team members are Speech and Language Therapist, Community Paediatrician and Educational Psychologist or someone from education who can describe the child's learning and any additional support needs identified in the school setting. The team may also work closely with staff from Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or Social work depending on the background to the referral. If the locality team are clear about whether the child presents as having an ASD, the assessment will be concluded at that point .

If the locality team feel further specialist assessment is needed, they will involve the Pines team .

This may be that they have a consultation with the Pines team to review the case and identify how to move forward. It may be that a piece of work is recommended to be completed jointly with the Pines team or that the Pines team will lead on the next stage of the assessment and carry out an Autism Diagnostic Interview and Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule. The overall aim is for the assessment process to be managed by the locality team and to work as necessary through a staged approach to reach a conclusion.

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

HAADAS as mentioned before which consists of 3 diagnosticians for the geographical area described in question 2. There is the Autism Network to discuss and progress strategic planning. There are independent support groups which inform planning as well as offering the provision of independent support. The National Autistic Society has a base in Inverness and Autism Initiatives will be coming to cover Highland soon, a manager has been appointed and outreach workers will be appointed in the near future.

In terms of services for children , there are many agencies who work in an integrated way to support children and families, eg Speech and Language Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Dietician, SW -ASD practioners and support workers, Autism Outreach Education Service, Psychologists - Educational and Clinical, Child and Mental Health Services, National Autistic Society and CHIP

* We provide direct intervention /therapy and training advice and consultation.
* Various parent programmes are available post diagnosis eg EarlyBird and Cygnet in addition to our own Pines Foundation training workshops.
* Use of the Child's Plan to ensure sharing of concerns and coordinated working takes place is developing.
* The Pines offers a library and drop in sessions/ coffee mornings for parents/carers
* Staff are working together to provide a range of formal and informal support strategies for young people and their families.

Support may include strategies re

* Communication and environmental change
* Sensory Issues
* Behaviour Management
* Diet and eating
* Stess /anxiety
* Explaining autism and diagnosis to young people themselves.
* Teaching and learning styles in schools
* Play and social interaction.

These are just some examples, and the needs will vary on an individual basis and over time as young people live with the condition.

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

High-UHB.HADAS@nhs.net

jeanpierre.sieckzarek@nhs.net (chairperson of the Autism Network)

nas@nas.org.uk

scotland@nas.org.uk

[www.autism.org.uk/scotland](http://www.autism.org.uk/scotland)

**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.**

The adult could make a standard appointment with their GP who would then contact HAAADAS for formal referral. Additionally referrals can be taken directly from the person if they don't use their GP.

I hope this information is helpful. If you are unhappy with my response, I am very happy to discuss this with you further. Alternatively you have the right to ask for a review through making a formal complaint, about the way in which I have dealt with your request for information, by writing to the Chief Executive, c/o The Complaints Team, NHS Highland, PO BOX 5713 Inverness, IV1 9AQ or via email at nhshighland.complaints@nhs.net . If you remain dissatisfied following the investigation of your complaint, then you have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner within 6 months of the date of receiving a response to your complaint.

Yours sincerely,

**Kenny Oliver**

**Acting Board Secretary**