



Merseyside

Information Governance Department
NHS Merseyside
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Our Ref: FOI/1213/102

Date: 17 January 2013

Sarah McCulloch

sarahmcculloch@gmail.com

Dear Ms McCulloch

Re: Freedom of Information Request

Further to your recent Freedom of Information request regarding regarding autistic spectrum disorder

NHS Merseyside cluster consists of NHS Liverpool PCT, NHS Halton & St Helens PCT, NHS Knowsley PCT and NHS Sefton PCT. The information provided relates to NHS Merseyside.

Request:

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?

Hard to give an answer on this as there is not a consistent diagnostic data that I could refer, equally autistic spectrum disorder is not fully recognised in the general population therefore and data would be an under representation of actual numbers in a given community. The principal source of data would therefore be with Public Health in terms of projected incidence within the local population.

Public Health Answer -

Autism isn't covered under the GP contract and so there aren't any readily available prevalence figures on this as far as we are aware. To do this properly we would need to ask General Practices if we could run an audit on their systems – not feasible for the purposes of this.

The NHS Information suggests the prevalence of autistic spectrum disorders is around 1% among adults, with a similar prevalence among children. This is based on a survey carried out in 2007. Crudely speaking, this would equate to around 4,660 people in Liverpool, 3,770 of whom would be 18 and over. These are very rough figures and a large dose of caution should be used here.

2. How many children?

Please see attached

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

a) Adults

There are 2 specific Diagnostic services. Merseycare Autism Services provides assessment and may recommend treatment options for the population of Liverpool, Sefton and Knowsley. 5 Boroughs service offer a diagnostic service for Halton and St Helens.

b) Children

Please see attached

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

Merseycare Autism Service (Merseycare) and 5 Boroughs NHS Trust

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

Mersey Care NHS Trust - www.merseycare.nhs.uk
5 Boroughs Partnership NHS Foundation Trust - www.5boroughspartnership.nhs.uk

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?

GP should refer to local service provider to complete that assessment.

Should you require any further information, clarification regarding this response or do not feel that your request has been answered as you would expect, please contact us to discuss.

We also wish to take this opportunity to inform you that a formal complaints and internal review process is available, which will be managed by a FOI Appeals Officer, Head of Corporate Governance. This can be formally requested and must be done within a reasonable period of time (3 calendar months) from the date this response was issued.

Where you are not satisfied with the response to a request for information that falls within the Environmental Information Regulations you should make a representation for a review to the Head of Corporate Governance, NHS Merseyside, within 40 days of receipt of the response.

If you are not satisfied with our review under the Freedom of Information Act or the Environmental Information Regulations you may apply directly to the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) for a review of your appeal decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted our complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at;

ICO, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF
www.ico.gov.uk

Should you need any further clarification or assistance please do not hesitate to contact me quoting the above reference.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debbie Fairclough', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Debbie Fairclough
Head of Governance – NHS Merseyside