

# The Greater Manchester Autism Consortium

Website update –October 2007

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the annual Autism GM website update about developments within the Greater Manchester Consortium.

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The following is a summary of developments that have taken place within the 10 Greater Manchester local authorities within the past 12 months. The information has been provided by members of each of the development groups in the area and is by no means exhaustive.

### **1. Autism Services Development Groups**

The Multi-agency Autism Services Development Groups are regularly meeting in **Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford and Wigan**. Apart from **Oldham, Rochdale** and **Bury**, all the other authorities have separate groups for children and adults now. **Tameside, Trafford** and **Stockport** have not been having regular development group meetings but there are plans underway for development activity to resume soon in all these areas.

### **2. Identification, Assessment and Diagnosis**

In **Manchester** the adult Autism Services Development Group is looking at a care pathway for adults with ASD who do not meet eligibility criteria for learning disability service or mental health services. This will include looking at a diagnostic pathway.

There is currently a proposal for a Greater Manchester Diagnostic Service for adults with Asperger Syndrome. This has been drafted by Dr Dougal Hare from Manchester University and Mari Saeki, NAS. Copies are available from the Family Services Development Project (FSDP).

There are currently working groups on ASD Diagnostic Care Pathways in **Bolton, Manchester, Oldham, Stockport, Trafford** and **Wigan**. A number of the groups have been sharing information and ideas with each other through the FSDP project officers.

**Tameside** has been piloting a multi-agency care pathway and have recently had this externally evaluated.

### **3. Early Intervention and workshops for parents**

**Bolton and Wigan** are still offering the NAS Early Bird programme to parents of pre-school children who receive a diagnosis of ASD. **Salford** has also agreed funding to join the Early Bird programme which will run from Springwood School.

**Bury, Manchester, Oldham** and **Rochdale** are regular running post-diagnostic workshops for parents of children who have had a recent diagnosis.

In **Stockport** a charity called the Joshua Short Foundation supported and funded a set of post-diagnostic workshops. This was very successful and there are plans for more workshops in the coming year. The foundation was able to fund child care for the children with ASDs and their siblings as well as to pay local professionals to deliver the workshops. This meant that there was something for the whole family and this was much appreciated by the participants of the workshops.

The NAS *help!* team offer free post-diagnostic workshops for parents of children with ASDs who have had a recent diagnosis. The North West team was established in April 2006 and in the past year has delivered several programmes within Greater Manchester including;

- A 20 hour help! programme in **Wigan** in October 2006
- A 20 hour help! programme in **Manchester** in June 2007
- A one-day help! programme in **Bolton** in July 2007

In addition, the NAS help!2 team has delivered the following Seminars within Greater Manchester in the past year:

- Writing Social Stories-**Trafford**, September 2006
- Making and Using Visual Supports- **Trafford**, September 2006
- Managing Anger in 11-16 year olds with Asperger Syndrome- **Stockport** , February and April 2007
- Supporting Siblings- **Stockport**, February and April 2007
- Sensory World- **Salford**, July 2007
- Anti- Bullying- **Salford**, July 2007

The FSDP ran a workshop in **Tameside** on Person Centred Planning and ASD for parents and professionals in March 2007. The event was supported by Julie Lunt from Helen Sanderson Associates as well as by Janet Muscutt a Senior Educational Psychologist from **Salford**. Both speakers gave their time for free.

In October we ran another Person Centred Planning and ASD event in **Salford** for parents of children and adults. Janet Muscutt was involved again as well as Neil Redford and his team who are the Person Centred Planning team in Salford.

#### **4. Education**

In the past year **Trafford** has established a post of ASD consultant which is similar to the ASD advisory services in **Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale** and **Salford**.

**Manchester** and **Wigan** now also have outreach services running from the ASD specialist schools.

**Salford** has developed a new Primary ASD resource which is starting from September 2007.

**Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Salford, Stockport and Trafford** all have special schools with discrete ASD classes.

**Oldham** and **Bury** also run informal parent drop-ins for parents of children with ASD.

In **Bury** the group has been engaging with Bury College to improve transitions and increase awareness for those with an ASD. In **Manchester** the transition sub- group has been in contact with the Learning Skills Council about provision within the city for students with ASDs.

## **5. Leisure and Short Breaks**

The ASD youth groups in **Bolton, Bury, Oldham, Rochdale and Salford** are all going from strength to strength.

The befriending schemes in **Bury and Oldham** are also still going well.

The MAP team in **Manchester** now have a regular ASD youth group in Fallowfield.

The **Stockport** Trampolining group now meets several times a week and remains very popular.

Springwood school in **Salford** now also have a trampolining group run by parents in the school.

**Bury, Manchester and Trafford** have trained some foster carers to work with children with ASD so they can offer breaks to those children.

**Oldham's** Short break service for people with learning disabilities has successfully undergone Autism Accreditation with the NAS.

ASGMA- *Aspirations* have had a difficult year attaining funding but there are still a large number of activities and groups held in their Stretford Base for people with Asperger Syndrome who are 10 years plus. They are also involved in a number of groups within Greater Manchester.

Leisure for Autism has had 5 play schemes running in Manchester, Stockport, Salford, Trafford and Wigan this summer.

Meridian, a short break service run by Together Trust has moved bases in the past year and also expanded its service to include an outreach service.

Leisure and Short Breaks still remains a priority for all the ASDGs.

## **6. Transition**

**Salford** is focusing on the transition between children's services and adult services for training around Person Centred Planning. They are also working to include Person Centred 14 plus reviews into the borough.

**Bury, Manchester and Tameside** are also introducing the Person Centred 14 plus reviews in various settings.

A Connexions employee working across **Manchester, Tameside and Salford** is hoping to go on training to train others to deliver Person Centred 14 plus reviews. Funding has been agreed for this.

Several authorities run transition information events now for parents of children who want to find out what is available for their children in adult services.

The project has updated its document AS INFORM and this will be available shortly on the autismgm website. In the meantime it is available from the project.

## **7. Employment Support and Student Support**

Demand for the NAS's employment support service, Prospects, continues to grow although attaining funding for this remains a challenge.

Projects now offers student support one day a week in Manchester University and half a day a week in Salford University.

Increasingly all the Greater Manchester Supported Employment services are working with people with ASDs. Some people with ASD cannot gain access to these services though because the services only work with those eligible for services from social services and many people with ASD fall outside of this eligibility criteria.

Two services in particular have been mentioned to the project as working well with adults with ASD. **Stockport's** supported Employment service Pure Innovations and **Bury's** Employment Support Service BEST.

### ***8. Housing Options***

**Salford** is working on an ASD specific service for 3 adults with ASD. They are also hoping to implement a model of support that will enable those who can live independently with less support, get help from the staff who work in the ASD Specific house.

**Bury** is in the process of tendering for support for a group of individuals with ASD and **Wigan** have also recently been through the process of tendering for a service to a group of adults with ASD.

### ***9. Parent Support Groups and the Parent Resource Network***

Groups in **Bolton, Manchester, Oldham, Tameside, Stockport** and **Trafford** are still meeting regularly.

There is a new group in **Rochdale** run by two parents.

ASGMA's parent support group for parents of children and adults with Asperger's Syndrome still meet monthly.

There are now 4 parents on the Greater Manchester Parent Resource Network.

### ***10. Autism Accreditation***

**Oldham** has now got accreditation for all its supported tenancies, day services and short breaks service.

**Bolton** and **Salford** are still working on their accreditation.

### ***11. Training***

The Greater Manchester Consortium Training Strategy group is currently devising a 6 session Sibling workshop. It is hoped that this can be piloted in a number of the areas in the coming months.

There continues to be a large number of training events around Greater Manchester provided by a number of providers and or services. Lists of training are available in the Autism GM newsletters posted on this website.

A school in **Tameside** took part in a pilot for a 6 week social skills course called "Keeping Safe" provided by the NAS's Social programmes team. The course teaches young people with ASD aged 11- 16 how to avoid risky situations and also to inform them about the criminal justice system. The funders for this pilot the Co-op have now funded two more courses for Greater Manchester to be delivered within this financial year.

## **GENERAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Francine Brower remains the NAS Regional Coordinator for the North. She is now line managing a number of new posts as well as both Regional Officers (North West and North East) and the Greater Manchester project.

Clare Hughes is currently on maternity leave and her post is covered by Gaynor Dale who is on secondment from Bolton Social Services until early 2008.

The North West help! team, Dave Scowcroft and Suzie Franklin, are now managed by Francine under the recent regionalisation of the NAS's "National Services" which consist of Help, Social Programmes and Befriending.

## **CONVENTIONS AND CONFERENCES**

There was another well attended Consortium Convention in April 2007. The theme was "Supportive Communities" and examples of creative and person centred work was show cased.

As stated earlier, the project ran two Person Centred Planning and ASD. One in **Tameside** in March and one in **Salford** in October. The NAS Regional team for the North is running an event in November in **Manchester** on good practice in commissioning following up the publication of the "Autism Commissioning Standards' Document" in May 2006.

## **AUTISMGM NEWSLETTER AND WEBSITE**

There have been 3 newsletters this year. In November 2006 we recruited a new Information Officer for the project, John Davies. In addition we have a young man with ASD who contributes a regular column, "Ben's Banter". The website is currently in the process of being updated to ensure that it is more user-friendly and reflects what is going on within the consortium. This is possible thanks to a volunteer with Asperger Syndrome who maintains and updates the website.

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October 2007