

This Memorandum of Understanding is made

December 2018 to December 2019

Memorandum of Understanding

Between the

**Welsh Local Government Association, Local Government House,
Drake Walk, Brigantine Place, Cardiff, CF10 4LG**

and

**Public Health Wales NHS Trust, 2 Capital Quarter,
Tyndall Street, Cardiff, CF10 4BZ**



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Public Health
Wales

This Memorandum of Understanding is a statement of the working relationship and partnership between Public Health Wales and the Welsh Local Government Association in relation to our work with autistic people, parents and carers of autistic people and professionals. It sets out how both organisations will work together and with their membership and partners.

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Public Health Wales and the Welsh Local Government Association
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Introduction

The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and Public Health Wales (PHW) agreed a Memorandum of Understanding in order to promote partnership and co-operation between the two statutory sectors of local government and health.

The WLGA represents the interests of the unitary authorities in Wales, having the role to promote better local government and to support authorities in the development of policies and priorities which will improve public services and democracy.

The WLGA represents all 22 unitary councils in Wales and the three fire and rescue authorities and the three national park authorities are associate members.

PHW is the national public health agency in Wales and exists to protect and improve health and wellbeing and reduce health inequalities for people in Wales. It is part of the NHS and reports to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Services in the Welsh Government. PHW provides advice, expertise and specialist services to Welsh Government (working across departments), the seven health boards, two NHS Trusts, 22 local authorities, other agencies and to the population of Wales.

PHW, health boards and local authorities work closely together to promote public health in their areas and jointly identify and set the local strategic agenda in partnership with communities, housing, education, police, fire and rescue and the voluntary sector.

The WLGA and PHW will work together to reduce the health inequalities and improve the health, wellbeing and outcomes for autistic people.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Memorandum is to:

- Set out the collaborative working arrangements between the WLGA and PHW.
- Provide a framework for developing an agreed programme of work supporting the Refreshed Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan (2015) ¹ and associated Delivery Plan (2016-2020) and the Together for Children and Young People Neurodevelopment Diagnostic Assessment Workstream and Pathway. ²

2. Governance

The strategic direction and oversight of the National ASD Development team and the oversight of the MOU between Public Health Wales and the WLGA will be provided by the National ASD Management Group between WLGA and PHW. Terms of reference for which will be drafted and considered by the Management Group.

¹ <https://www.asdinfo.wales.co.uk/refreshed-autism-spectrum-disorder-strategic-action-plan>

² <https://www.asdinfo.wales.co.uk/children-diagnostic-pathway>

3. Policy Context

Our work will be guided by national policy, including:

- Well-being Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- A Healthier Wales – Our plan for Health and Social Care 2018
- Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- Refreshed Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan 2016
- Refreshed Autistic Spectrum Disorder Strategic Action Plan Delivery Plan 2016-2020 (2016)
- Together for Mental Health 2012
- Together for Mental Health Delivery Plan 2016-19
- Prudent Healthcare

And in the context of the Public Health Approach

"The Public Health Approach aims to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people. It involves a four-step process that is rooted in scientific method.' (Violence Prevention Alliance, World Health Organisation, 2017)

Step 1: Define and Monitor the Problem – Systematically collecting data to determine the "who", "what", "where", "when" and "how."

Step 2: Identify risk and protective factors – using research to determine the causes and correlates of issues, the factors that increase or decrease risk, and the factors that could be modified through interventions.

Step 3: Develop and test prevention strategies – finding out what works by

designing, implementing and evaluating interventions

Step 4: Implementation – monitoring impact on risk factors and target outcomes and evaluating cost effectiveness.

4. How We Work Together

Autism affects approximately 1 in 100 people in Wales and the UK. The aim of the Refreshed Strategic Action Plan is for children, young people and autistic adults and their families and carers to have their needs understood, and to be supported to achieve their well-being outcomes.

The key priority areas of the Refreshed Strategic Action Plan are:

- Assessment and diagnosis
- Meeting support needs
- Awareness raising, information and training

The National ASD Development Team is hosted by the WLGA in partnership with Public Health Wales and its primary function is to support the delivery of the ASD Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan in conjunction with key stakeholders. The ultimate purpose of the team is to improve the lives of autistic people in Wales. The team will provide the vehicle to deliver the MOU.

The Neurodevelopment Diagnostic Assessment Pathway outlines the All Wales high level neurodevelopmental assessment pathway. The pathway is aimed at children presenting with symptoms and impairment in functioning that is indicative of a neurodevelopmental disorder.

The pathway and associated guidance ³ has been developed by the National

Neurodevelopment Steering Group with the aim of developing a consistent approach to assessment, diagnosis and feedback to children and families across Wales. It will be implemented by the health board neurodevelopmental teams. There is benefit in the National ASD Development team, hosted by the WLGA and PHW working closely together for the benefit of children and young people, autistic adults and parents and carers to contribute to better population health and reduced health inequalities.

We recognise that both the WLGA, as a representative body, and PHW are striving to improve the lives and health of the most deprived and vulnerable communities in Wales, including the community of people affected by neurodevelopmental disorders, including autism. Collaborative working between the two organisations, which are already joint partners of the National ASD Development Team, will identify where joint projects will have the greatest impact on our population and reduce inequalities. We will therefore identify common problems and develop joint solutions from the wider health perspective of both public health and local government, including social care and wellbeing, education, housing, leisure, employment and regeneration as needed. There will be an emphasis on prevention and early intervention. We will look for ways in which we can work together to solve problems.

4.1 Partnership Working

We recognise that by working together, we can accomplish more. We will explore opportunities to align priorities, develop and share language and a common approach in order to achieve common outcomes.

We will work together to identify how project work can be sustainable, e.g. through becoming "business as usual", communicating our findings to partners, other decision-makers and to the public. We will aim to ensure that any improvements can be implemented at scale.

We will seek to work with other agencies to promote a broader partnership approach to improve our effectiveness and develop a holistic approach to tackling issues affecting our communities.

4.2 Prevention and early intervention

By focusing our efforts on helping families to give children the best start in life, we can reduce the impact of poverty on poor health outcomes and allow children to reach their full potential. We also recognise the importance of autistic individuals optimising their independence and leading fulfilled lives.

4.3 Empowering the autistic community

We recognise that both organisations are working to empower individuals and communities, including the autistic community in order to identify their concerns and work with them to help find holistic solutions to their problems.

4.4 Ensuring an evidence based approach

Building on the Refreshed Strategic Plan for ASD, we will continue to develop an evidence based approach to prevention and early intervention, employing the best evidence available to inform our joint actions, drawing on learning locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

5. Work Themes

The WLGA, specifically the National ASD Development Team and PHW neurodevelopmental national steering group will bring their strategic priorities into one document with the purpose of identifying joint actions that will add value through a collaborative approach, and can be used to achieve the priorities of both organisations.

The WLGA and PHW will work together on specific areas of mutual benefit and collaborative added value, including:

- a) Joint work concerning Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA)
- b) Collaborative work with Children in Wales identifying the
 - (i) diagnostic process
 - (ii) transition for CYP up to the age of 25, reference IAS and NDD services
- c) "Hospital passport" (communication tool) feed into the national approach to ensure autism is captured in the work
- d) Survey for parents/carers concerning the guide for parents/carers including film (Survey Monkey tool on existing guide)
- e) Refreshed information guide for children and families diagnosed with autism
- f) Joint Autism Cymru conference with third sector stakeholders
- g) Second opinion protocol for ASD (building on NDD example)
- h) CAMHS Education network scope the need for training
- i) Private diagnosis protocol for ASD (building on NDD example under development)

The joint work programme will include facilitating the delivery of the

commitments in the Refreshed ASD Strategic Action Plan Delivery Plan (2016-2020), the National ASD Development Team work plan ⁴ and the Neurodevelopmental Service Improvement National Steering Group Work Plan.

The WLGA and PHW will work through existing groups such as the Adult Diagnostic Community of Practise Group (facilitated by the National ASD Development Team jointly with Welsh Government), the National (Wales) IAS Leads Group (facilitated by the National ASD Development Team) and the National Neurodevelopment Steering Group and will establish task and finish groups for specific pieces of work as required.

6. Principles

The WLGA and PHW will work together based on the following key principles:

- To demonstrate mutual respect of each organisation and their membership's circumstances, perspectives and priorities
- To engage in meaningful communication and liaison between each other on behalf of the two respective sectors of local government and health
- To manage expectations and to set realistic and proportionate responses to any emerging challenges, priorities or proposals for joint activity
- To agree manageable timescales for any necessary changes in the work or in the culture of relationships planned as a result of this partnership
- To share relevant information and good practice as a means of

⁴ <https://www.asdinfo.wales.co.uk/national-asd-development-team>

enhancing the effectiveness of each other's operations which will be to the overall benefit of communities in Wales and the autistic community in particular.

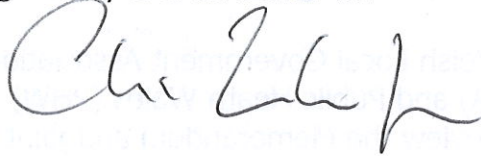
7. Resource

A series of joint actions have been developed by the WLGA and PHW and is being progressed with partners (outlined in paragraph 6 above).

8. Monitoring and Review

The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and Public Health Wales (PHW) shall review the Memorandum and joint work programme annually, and will publish any updates or amendments to this memorandum by agreement, in their annual reports, or other suitable documentation.

Agreed by and on behalf of:



Dr Chris Llewelyn, Chief Executive, Welsh Local Government Association

Date:



Dr Tracey Cooper, Chief Executive, Public Health Wales Trust

Date:

11/12/15