



AwtistiaethCymru.org

Tîm Awtistiaeth Cenedlaethol  
National Autism Team

AutismWales.org

# Supplementary Annual Report 2021/22

"There is a definite increase in the understanding and acceptance of autism across the school. We have such positive feedback from families of pupils..."

"Thanks to the resources and videos by The National Autism Team... they really helped me to settle into the college environment quickly."

"It was wonderful to work with you and learn so much about the Autistic community."

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# Introduction

Our thanks to Welsh Government for the continued core funding to support the successful implementation of the WG ASD Refreshed Strategic Action Plan, associated Delivery Plan and the Code of Practice for autism.

The National Autism Team's (NAT) Annual Report for 2021/22 provides a supplementary report to the substantive document produced in 2018/19. As you will see it has been a very busy and productive year. Once again the work is set against the background of the pandemic however, the move online offered huge opportunities to connect with wider audiences and be proactive as needs emerged. A wide range of online events and training has been developed and delivered which were accessible to more people and helped us to continue to build excellent resources on our website. The website remains one of our key offers to the autistic community and professionals across Wales.

In addition, virtual working has enabled us to further develop our coproduction. We established effective and diverse autistic adult advisory groups to help shape and inform our work. Thank you to all those who have been involved – your input has been invaluable. Working together with the autistic community, professionals and other colleagues has ensured that whatever we do is useful and makes a difference to the lives of autistic people and their families in Wales.

Our work is varied and robust and our annual report outlines key elements that show the broad depth of our work. We hope you find the report informative and of interest. There remains much to be done for autistic people and their families but there is also much to be celebrated.

*- The National Autism Team*

# Chapter 1: Collaborative Working

## Working with the autistic community

Co-production is central to the ethos of the National Autism Team. Autistic people are at the core of our working groups, and help shape and inform our work, resources, training, and events.

Autistic UK Wales have been commissioned to proof-read all documents and training produced by the National Autism Team, to ensure that they are fit for purpose, accessible and effective for the autistic community. Autistic UK Wales have also worked closely with the National Autism Team in the development of advisory groups of autistic people, to ensure that we are engaging with the autistic community in an accessible and meaningful way.

As a principle we value the contribution of the autistic people who work with us and recognise the time, energy, expertise and commitment they give to our projects.

## Community of Practice

The National Autism Team have continued to facilitate Community of Practice training events for practitioners working with autistic people. In the past year, four Community of Practice sessions have been held. Each session includes an autistic speaker reflecting on their experience with the topic, and the perspective of a practitioner working in the field. The topics and speakers of these events this year were as follows:

- **Autism and Gender** – Wenn Lawson and Nick Lewis ([Umbrella Cymru](#))
- **Autism and Eating Disorders** – Emma Reardon ([Autism Wellbeing](#)), Emma Durman ([Autside](#)) and Paola Falcoski
- **Autism and Family Dynamics** – [Tony Attwood](#)
- **Autism and Dual and Differential Diagnosis** – Tony Attwood

Recordings of the sessions can be accessed on the Autism Wales website [here](#).



(Screenshot of Community of Practice video - [autismwales.org](#))



## Loneliness and Isolation funding

The National Autism Team have recently received a 3-year grant from Welsh Government to fund work around loneliness and isolation in the autistic community. Working with Third Sector partners, the grant is funding the development and delivery of targeted support for those experiencing loneliness and isolation in the community.

Current partners are Parents Voices in Wales, who are focusing on supporting parents and partners of neurodivergent people, and Autism Wellbeing and Autistic UK, who are developing and delivering support for autistic adults. The first year of funding has been used to carry out scoping exercises and the projects are in the early stages of development.

## Autism Leads network

The National Autism Team work closely with the 29 Autism Leads in local authorities across Wales and have continued to facilitate the quarterly National Autism Leads network meetings virtually. The Autism Leads played an essential role in disseminating information from the National Autism Team locally and informing national policy and guidance through local networks and engagement in a grass-roots approach.



## Awareness Raising

The National Autism Team continued to promote the importance of increasing understanding of autism by presenting at a variety of events including:

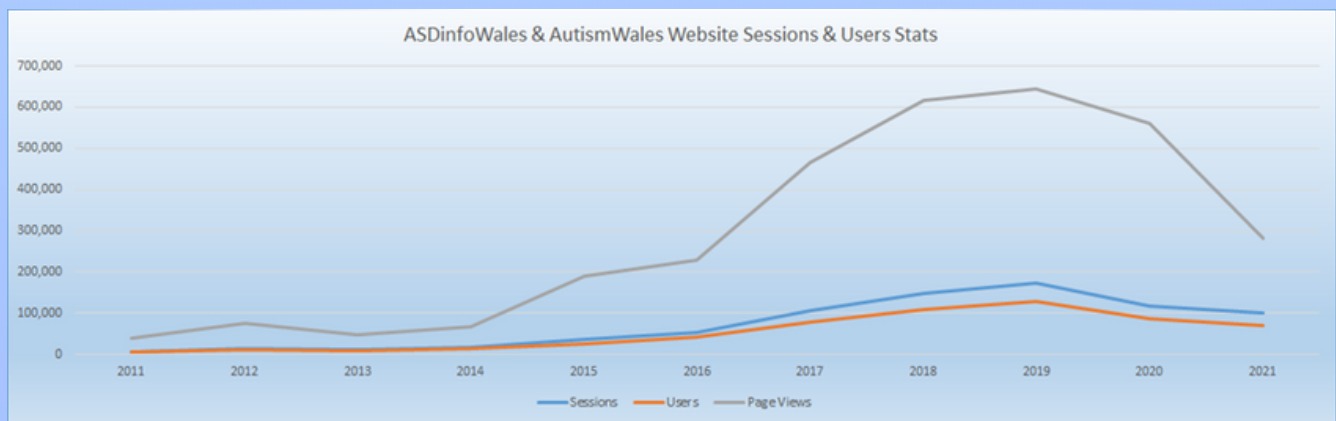
- ADSS Summer School
- Together for Children and Young People workstream (T4CYP)
- Youth Cymru
- Autistic UK
- Mental Health Matters
- Bridgend College virtual open day
- Anti-poverty network

# Chapter 2: Communications

## Website and User Stats

**AutismWales.org** is managed by the National Autism Team. The website is kept up to date and acts as a hub for all national autism developments. It is one of the resources which helps the Team achieve their aim to improve the lives of autistic people in Wales.

During 2021/22, the AutismWales website saw an increase of **80,316** users and a total of **331,489** page views. The average of new visitors to the website also increased by **27%**.



(Website sessions and user stats graph)

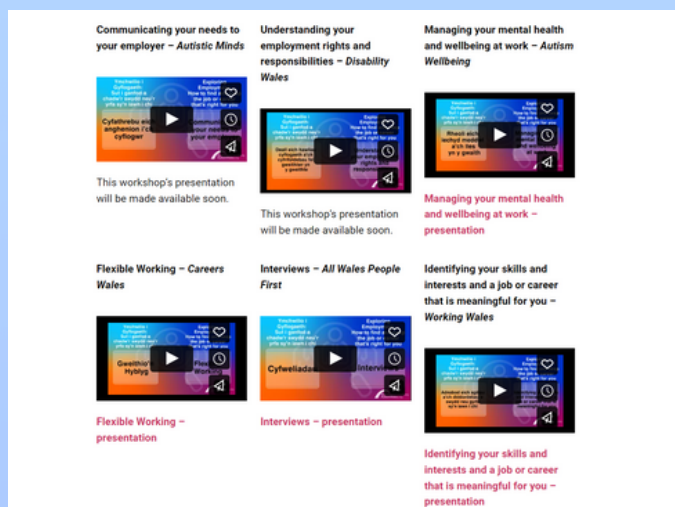
## 'Exploring Employment' event

On December 3rd, 2021, the National Autism Team held a free virtual employment event called *Exploring Employment: How to find and keep the job or career that's right for you*. The event was for autistic people of working age. The event was co-produced with an advisory group of 13 autistic people, who expressed interest in being involved in the development of the event through the Employment Event survey (read the results of the survey [here](#)). The advisory group made all key decisions about the event, including the topics of the workshops, the workshop facilitators, the format of the event and the name of the event.



(Social media post advertising 'Exploring Employment' event)

The event was also developed with a strategic planning group, which included representatives from Welsh Government and higher education institutions, local authorities, Third-sector organisations, and supported employment schemes across Wales.



(Screenshot of workshop recordings - AutismWales.org)

The workshop topics covered in the event were:

- Communicating your needs to your employer ([Autistic Minds](#))
- Understanding your employment rights and responsibilities ([Disability Wales](#))
- Managing your mental health and wellbeing at work ([Autism Wellbeing](#))
- Flexible working ([Careers Wales](#))
- Interviews ([All Wales People First](#))
- Identifying your skills and interests and a job or career that is meaningful for you ([Working Wales](#))

Over 100 autistic people signed up for the event and have been added to our mailing lists, facilitating relationships between the autistic community and the National Autism Team. Recordings from the event can be found [here](#).

The National Autism Team worked with Cowshed Communications Ltd. to promote the event. Cowshed created a case study video with Ewan Richards, who was a member of the advisory group, about his experiences in employment and working with the team to develop the event. Watch the case study video [here](#).



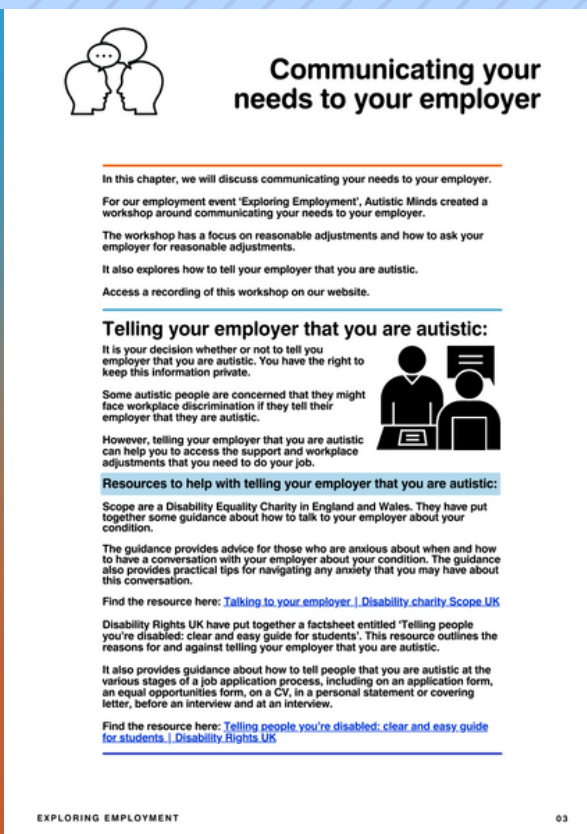
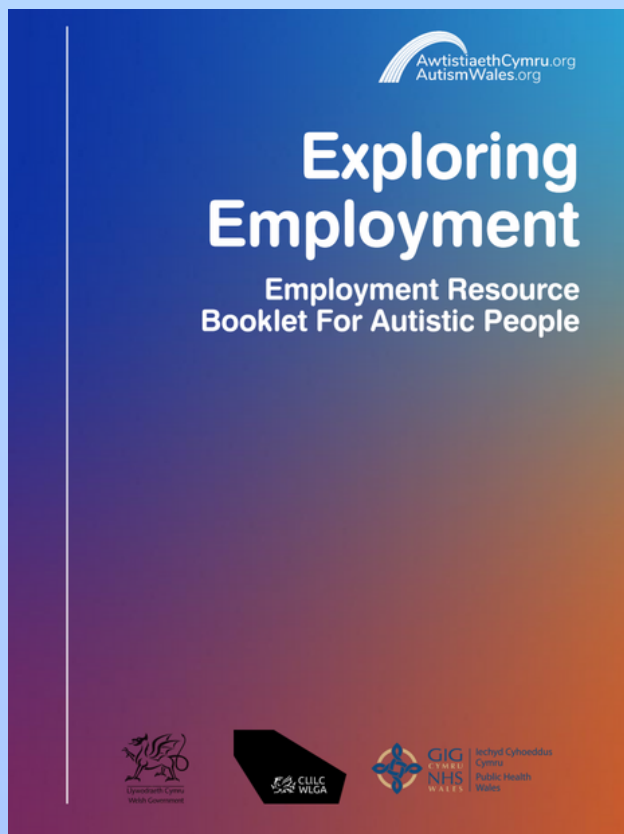
(Ewan Richards headshot from advisory group interview)

## Employment Resource Booklet

The National Autism Team produced an extensive resource booklet to supplement and support the information provided at the employment event. Many of the resources featured in this booklet were identified as helpful by the employment event advisory group of autistic people in their own experiences of employment.

Access the resource booklet [here](#).

Access the resource booklet with a plain background [here](#).



(Front cover and page 3 from 'Exploring Employment' resource booklet)

## Hazel Lim Digital Case Study

The National Autism Team produced a Digital Case Study interview with Hazel Lim from Chinese Autism Support. Hazel is the founder of the Chinese Autism Support Group, a platform created in partnership with the Chinese In Wales Association in Swansea, where Hazel is now based. She also has an MSc in Autism and Related Conditions and is the mother of an autistic son.



(Hazel Lim, screenshot from interview)

In the interview, Hazel talks with the National Autism Team about how autism is experienced in the Chinese community and how understanding her son's diagnosis set her on the path to providing support for other parents/carers in the Chinese community. She also talks about how professionals can adapt their practice to ensure services are accessible for autistic people and their families within the Chinese community.

The video is available with English, Welsh and Chinese subtitles.

Access the video [here](#).



## World Autism Acceptance Week

World Autism Acceptance Week is a key event for increasing awareness, understanding and acceptance of autism and is celebrated in the last week of March. Like last year, World Autism Acceptance Week 2022 was celebrated virtually. The team intensified their already proactive social media presence on Facebook and Twitter, rolled out in response to Covid-19, and shared multiple bilingual posts a day linking to resources surrounding autism awareness and acceptance on the Autism Wales website.

## Can You See Me? Early Years campaign

The National Autism Team worked closely with Cowshed Communications Ltd. to develop the *Can You See Me? Early Years* social media campaign. The campaign promoted the Learning About Autism Early Years scheme, encouraging early years settings to complete the scheme and use the resources available on the Autism Wales website. The campaign coincided with World Autism Acceptance Week. As part of the campaign, Cowshed produced two case study videos to demonstrate how using the resources can improve practice.

View the case study videos with Little Tigers Daycare in Rogit, Monmouth and Snap Cymru Playgroup, Pembrokeshire, [here](#).



(Screenshot from Little Tigers case study video)



(Screenshot from Snap Cymru Playgroup case study video)

## Easy Read documents

The National Autism Team commissioned Learning Disability Wales to translate key document into Easy Read to ensure that they are accessible to autistic people who have a co-occurring learning disability. The following Easy Read documents have been uploaded to the Autism Wales website:

- 'A description of the Autism Aware certification, which can be viewed [here](#).
- 'An introduction to Autism', which can be viewed [here](#).

## What's next?

### *Health and Wellbeing section:*

The National Autism Team are developing a Health and Wellbeing section for the Autism Wales website. This will be a dedicated space providing accessible information about a range of topics relating to health and wellbeing, including mental health, physical health, co-occurring conditions, healthy relationships and more. The Health and Wellbeing section will feature recorded videos and audio clips with healthcare professionals and experts working across Wales, as well as a range of external links to help signpost users to useful resources around the topics covered in the section.

The Health and Wellbeing section will be coproduced with an advisory group of representatives from the autistic community, to ensure that it is accessible and helpful for autistic people. It will also be coproduced with professionals and experts across Wales to ensure that the information provided is reliable and up to date.

The first advisory group meeting has been held with the autistic community and a list of topics has been shortlisted. The Team will be consulting with the group over the next year and developing content which responds to the needs of the autistic community.

### *Children and Young Person's Zone:*

The National Autism Team are developing a Children and Young Person's Zone for the Autism Wales website. This part of the website will act as a one-stop web page that provides a fun, interactive and safe space for both autistic and non-autistic children. It will include age specific resources for children and young people, with sub-sections for early years aged, primary school aged, secondary school aged, and university, further education, and work-based learning aged young people. Initial scoping work has been carried out for the section, and the Team are in the process of coordinating an advisory group to co-produce the section with. This section will be co-produced with autistic young people and parent/carers to ensure that the information provided is accessible and useful. The section will also be coproduced with professionals and youth organisations to ensure that information provided is reliable and up to date, and that useful existing resources are utilised and signposted to.

### *Information sharing events:*

Following on from a successful co-produced employment event, the National Autism Team will be organising a series of smaller, virtual information sharing events for autistic people. These events will be co-produced with an advisory group of autistic people who will make key decisions about the content and format of the events. The advisory group have been consulted to gather initial ideas about potential topics, and these include healthy relationships, finances, employment, and ageing. These events will showcase and platform autistic and neurodivergent speakers and the Team hopes that the events will be empowering for autistic people.



## **New Post – ‘National Autism Development Officer’**

In November 2021, Kirsty Jones joined the National Autism Team as the ‘National Autism Development Officer’. The role was created to support the implementation of the Code of Practice for the Delivery of Autism Services. Kirsty liaises with stakeholders across Wales to support them with the implementation of the Code of Practice, this includes the development and sharing of training resources to upskill their workforces, and also ensuring that the autistic community are aware of and empowered by the code.

## **Regional Partnership Boards**

The National Autism Team have met with representatives from Regional Partnership Boards across Wales, who have a responsibility to implement the Code and measure and report on the impact. The National Autism Development Officer has been a key link for Regional Partnership Boards, to support the development of the local infrastructure required under the Code.

In Gwent, Kirsty has attended the Gwent autism strategic meeting. In West Wales, Kirsty has met with RPB programme manager and attended the regional autism strategic meeting. In West Glamorgan, Kirsty has met with the key person leading the autism agenda and attended the regional autism strategy group meeting. In Cwm Taf Morgannwg, Kirsty has met with some key members of the RPB. In Cardiff and the Vale, Kirsty has met with the key person leading autism agenda in RPB and is due to attend the regional group meeting. In Powys, Kirsty has met with members of the RPB and attended the autism regional strategy group. In North Wales, Kirsty has met with the person leading on the autism agenda and has attended the IAS meeting.

## **Local authorities**

Kirsty has been engaging with the Autism Leads across the 22 local authorities, to support them to communicate key messages to professionals working within their local authority. This has been done through individual meetings and at the National Autism Leads meeting and Regional Autism Leads meetings.

## Local Health Boards

The National Autism Team are meeting with colleagues across local health boards to support them in meeting their requirements under the Code. Kirsty Jones has met with IAS Leads in the 7 Local Health Board areas, and several Neurodevelopmental team managers.

## Updated Training Framework

The Code of Practice for the Delivery of Autism Services was implemented in September 2021. The Code sits beneath the Social Services and Wellbeing Wales Act and NHS Act and places clear statutory duties on both Local Authorities and Health Boards/NHS Trusts.

Underpinning the code is the importance of having an effective, trained, and knowledgeable workforce that can deliver the duties on behalf of the organisations. There is a strong emphasis on training and awareness raising of autism particularly in Section 3 of the Code of Practice:

"It is essential that all understand how they can adapt roles and practice to improve services and support for autistic people. This needs to start with recognition of the value of information and training to raise awareness, to change attitudes and beliefs about autism and to improve practice. Local authorities, local health boards and NHS trusts must ensure that those working in health and social care have specific autism awareness training."

**Code of Practice for the Delivery of Autism Services, 2021**

In order to support Local Authorities and Health Boards to fulfil this duty under the Code, the National Autism Team set up a multi-disciplinary working group to look at the training and workforce implications of the Code. The group scoped current training and qualification provision and identified areas that need to be developed. The National Autism Team worked closely with the group to review and revise their 2017 national training framework, in response to the new requirements of the Code.

Whilst the training framework has been updated in part to support Local Authorities and Health Boards to fulfil their duties under the Code, it is not exclusively for professionals working in these areas, and also provides key resources to help to upskill professionals working across all sectors, including the Third Sector and Education.

The training framework has four levels:

### Level 1 Understanding Autism

I want to improve the lives of autistic people and their families in Wales by gaining a greater understanding of autism.

### Level 2 Autism skilled

I work directly with people some of whom may be autistic. I want to be able to adapt my practice to better meet the needs of the people I work with.



### Level 3 Autism enhanced

I work directly with autistic people.

### Level 4 Autism expertise

I work directly with autistic people with co-occurring conditions and/or complex needs.

Read the updated training framework [here](#).

Read the associated role guidance [here](#).

## Updated Training Framework

The National Autism Team have met with regional workforce and development leads in both Local Authorities and Health Boards across all regions of Wales, to support them in upskilling their staff to meet the requirements under the Code. The National Autism Team have developed and commissioned bespoke training for workforces across Wales. The Community of Practice series (mentioned in [Chapter 2](#) and [Chapter 4](#)) has been a key tool in facilitating this.

**Please see chapter 4 for more information on the training and workforce development sessions that have been run this year.**

The links made with workforce and development leads have been key in ensuring that this training reaches the relevant staff across Wales.

## What's next?

### *E-learning:*

The National Autism Team are currently developing a series of e-learning modules to upskill people in their understanding of autism. The e-learning modules will align to the training framework and each module will be associated with the relevant level. The modules will be developed through Articulate Rise. The modules will be SCORM compliant so that they can sit on local authority and local health board learning platforms. The modules will also be accessible on the Autism Wales website so that those who are unable to access these platforms can also access the training.

The first e-learning module being developed is called 'Understanding Autism' and is designed to give a general level of understanding of autism and the needs of autistic people. It is in large part an adaption of the What is Autism? film and will be reviewed by professionals across Wales. This module has been coproduced. As mentioned previously, the National Autism Team have met with workforce and development leads, who will be ensuring that the module is uploaded to their internal learning platforms.

The next modules to be developed are 'Effective Communication' and 'Assessments'. These modules will be co-produced with the autistic community and professionals working across Wales. Other modules will be developed in response to the needs of the workforce.

### ***Code of Practice Podcast:***

The National Autism Team will be developing a podcast which focuses on the Code of Practice. The podcast will be co-produced with and feature Cadno Coch and Willow Holloway from Autistic UK. The intended audience of the podcast is the autistic community. It will be used to raise awareness of the Code and make autistic people and their families aware of their rights under the Code. It will explore how the Code was developed, explain clearly what the Code says and provide examples of how autistic people and their families can use the Code in their everyday life to advocate for their rights. A supplementary written document will be produced to accompany the podcast, which outlines how the Code can be used in various situations. Further podcasts will be developed involving a range of people in the autistic community.

# Chapter 4: Training and Workforce Development

The National Autism Team are committed to improving understanding of autism across Wales. A vital way in which this is done is through providing opportunities for training and workforce development.

## Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Personal Independence Payment (PIP) advisors

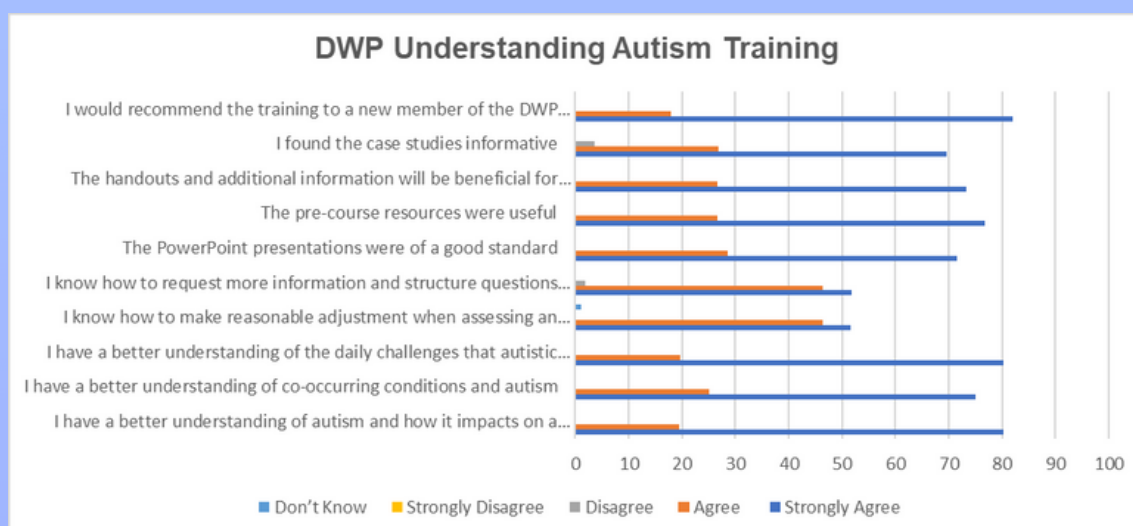
The National Autism Team were approached by the DWP PIP assessment team in August 2020 to discuss the development of a bespoke training package for their Decision Makers, in response to several cases involving autistic claimants resulting in tribunal cases. Following the success of the training pilot, roll out was extended to Tier 1 assessors. Training was delivered to **206** assessors in total across June and July 2021.



(DWP PIP logo)

Each participant received pre-course materials and Resource Toolkit that will enable them to question assessors when autistic claimants have been turned down/ queries arise.

Feedback from the sessions was collected through Evaluation Forms and collated in the graph below:



(Graph showing feedback comments from DWP Understanding Autism training)

## One attendee commented:

"Thank you for a very interesting and informative training session. I think all DWP PIP should receive this training. It really gives an insight into the difficulties people with Autism have daily. I will definitely look at these cases in a different way when making a PIP decision."

## Capita

Building on the work undertaken with the DWP, the National Autism Team delivered a bespoke training session for Capita. Commencing with one of their teams based in Wales, with the vision to expand and develop further sessions in 2022.



(Capita logo)

The first 'pilot' session took place 18th August 2021 with a total of **15** in attendance. Review and further consultation have taken place with the vision to extend this training.

The National Autism Team received some extremely positive qualitative feedback on this session:

"The training was very informative, and I learnt a lot from the session. I do have experience with Autism, but this opened my eyes to several challenges that I may have not considered due to such different presentations and the challenges around diagnosis."

"Excellent session, very insightful and definitely improved my understanding and the restrictions associated. This knowledge will support the effective assessment of any claimant with a diagnosis of Autism."

"This was an amazing training session. This would be welcomed by all DA's who have had no exposure to Autism and do not fully understand why it is a spectrum and why 2 people do not present the same. Overall, this was brilliant and I can't wait for it to be rolled out to the DA's."

## Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) Cymru

The National Autism Team provided virtual Understanding Autism Training autism for Cafcass Cymru. The training took place on 14th June and in total **32** staff members were trained.



(Cafcass Cymru logo)

The National Autism Team received some extremely positive qualitative feedback on this session:



"It was varied, paced and accessible. Thank you very much."

"Thank you very much for yesterday's training. I was very impressed, again, with the high standard of your work!"

"Thanks very much for your very interesting and informative training."

## Care Inspectorate Wales

The National Autism Team delivered understanding autism training and bespoke department specific training to professionals from Care Inspectorate Wales. Multiple sessions were held from December 2021 to February 2022, and approximately **150** staff members attended the training.



(Care Inspectorate Wales logo)

The National Autism Team received some extremely positive qualitative feedback on this session:

"The presenters were very knowledgeable and presented the session so well making it easy to interpret and relate to our work."

"Very appreciative of the session, delivered with great knowledge and empathy."

"I was thinking this was going to be a basic-level information sharing. Pleasantly surprised about content of the day. Care workers really need this level of understanding: they always seem to get 'basic' or 'awareness' only. Can you influence what SCW do in their modules, as really needed."

## PDA Society

The National Autism Team commissioned the Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) Society to deliver specialist PDA training. Specialist training was delivered to two groups: Health professionals and Social Care professionals.



(PDA Society logo)

### *Health professionals:*

Training for health professionals included those from specialist CAMHS and neurodevelopmental services. Training sessions have taken place on 22nd March and 31st March, with a further session scheduled for 5th April. **75** health professionals attended the training sessions.

The National Autism Team have received some positive qualitative feedback so far:

"Thank you. You have demystified PDA and made me think about many young people who may have similar challenges and I will find all the resources very helpful."

"This is an excellent course and would recommend to colleagues."

"Thank you for your time and honesty in sharing very personal experiences, you are both clearly very passionate about raising awareness and understanding of PDA."

### ***Social care professionals:***

Training for social care professionals included those from Team around the Family (TAF), Families First (FF), youth workers and social work assistants. Two two-part training sessions have taken place so far on 1st and 2nd March and Wednesday 16th and 23rd March, with further sessions planned for 12th and 19th April and 21st and 18th April, **146** attended the training sessions.

The National Autism Team have received some very positive qualitative feedback so far:

"I have really enjoyed this course and it has inspired me to read more about PDA and the impact it has on children, their education, and the family. This is very useful information that I can use in my role as Independent Carer Assessor."

"So interesting and engaging. Feel like I have much more confidence now to work with young people who have PDA."

"This training was delivered in two easily digestible portions. Perfect for me, and anyone else who struggles to focus for long periods of time. The trainers were very knowledgeable, very passionate about their subject and very good at illustrating key points so they didn't get lost in a swamp of information. Really well done."

## **Emergency Services Training**

### ***North Wales police:***

The National Autism Team delivered a series of awareness sessions, building on the work undertaken in 2020-2021.

The National Autism Team have received some positive feedback from these sessions:

"Thank you so much for your tireless efforts and support during the training. It was wonderful to work with you and learn so much about the Autistic community."

‘Since 2018 the National Autism Team have delivered autism awareness training to approximately 650 front line police officers and staff as part of North Wales Police’s two-day Mental Health Training. The training was delivered in person initially and then virtually during and following the pandemic. This means that North Wales Police front line officers have gained an autism awareness certificate for their attendance and commitment to the scheme.’

### **South Wales police:**

The National Autism Team delivered a “Train the Trainer” session for **12** South Wales Police trainers in February 2022 to support them to increase their understanding of autism and commence roll out and delivery of Autism Awareness Training. This will be an ongoing piece of work with South Wales Police

The National Autism Team have received some positive feedback from this training:

“Brilliant session, very detailed and interesting.”

“The information you’ve provided is invaluable as I know very little about autism.”

“Very insightful, thank you.”

## **Community of Practice**

The National Autism Team facilitate the Community of Practice event series. The Community of Practice was set up in 2017 to replace the Adult Diagnostic Network. Initially its focus was on upskilling the Integrated Autism Services as they were just being established, however it was agreed that the Community of Practice would be opened up to a much wider membership in the long term.

In July 2021 the Community of Practice restarted as a virtual offer in line with the pandemic recommendations. This offered the opportunity to open the COP to a wider membership in line with the proposal submitted in 2017-18. This has been a vital tool for providing professionals across Wales with an opportunity for workforce development, allowing them to upskill their understanding of autism and improve practice.

There have been four Community of Practice events held in the last year.

- **Autism and Gender** – Wenn Lawson and Nick Lewis (Umbrella Cymru)
- **Autism and Eating Disorders** – Emma Reardon (Autism Wellbeing), Emma Durman (Outside) and Paola Falcoski
- **Autism and Family Dynamics** – Tony Attwood
- **Autism and Dual and Differential Diagnosis** – Tony Attwood

Recordings of the sessions can be accessed on the Autism Wales website [here](#).

The take up and feedback from the wider audience has been very positive, with **373** professionals in attendance, feedback from the sessions is included below:

"Excellent session - many thanks for so much for a wealth of information. So much to think about."

"Amazing session, I have learnt so much, and so engaging and insightful...thank you."

"As a support worker this has been a brilliant session, thank you."

"What a wonderful session this morning – such thought-provoking detail."

"Thanks for the opportunity to join this."

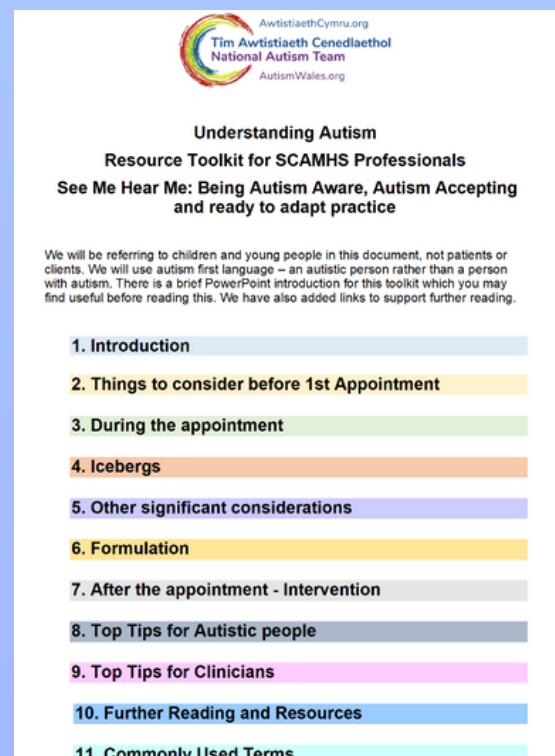
"Fantastic and very thought provoking thank you."

"Absolutely brilliant session - so helpful. Many thanks."

## CAMHS resource booklet

The National Autism Team have co-produced a **resource booklet** for Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) practitioners. The resource booklet was produced after discussions with colleagues from Specialist CAMHS in Hywel Dda about developing resources around neurodiversity. The resource booklet contains information about autism and neurodiversity and the reasonable adjustments that Specialist CAMHS practitioners can make to ensure that their services are accessible for autistic people. The toolkit is equally relevant for anyone working with neurodiverse children, young people and their families in health, education and social care, in helping to understand, explain and support wellbeing and practical outcomes.

The resource booklet is to be piloted in Hywel Dda Specialist CAMHS. The National Autism Team and the SP CAMHS resource working group, which includes professionals working in autism across Wales, are currently looking at ways to roll out training associated with the booklet in an accessible way. The National Autism Team are looking to co-produce an e-learning module, based around the information provided in the booklet, for Specialist CAMHS practitioners to complete.



(Front cover of CAMHS resource booklet)



# Autism Aware Organisations

The Autism Aware Certification Scheme, available on AutismWales.org, provides general training about what autism is. From 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022, **26** organisations were awarded the certificate.

- The Outdoor Partnership
- Sgiliau Wales
- ALS Training
- Pembrokeshire College - B-wbl Consortium
- Apprenticeship Group Wales
- PeoplePlus Cymru
- Itec Training Solutions Ltd
- Amazon Films
- Cambrian Training
- Fishguard Leisure Centre
- Babcock Training Ltd
- Torfaen Dolphins
- Blades Gents Barbers
- Sirius Skills
- Flying Start Wrexham
- Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
- 38.6 Solutions
- Project Management Team – Wrexham
- Wrexham CBC - Day & Employment Team
- The Fit Group CIC
- Partnerships for Progress - Ty Seren
- YMCA Barry
- GLLM – Additional Learning Needs Team
- Milford Haven Leisure Centre
- Torfaen School Catering
- Arbennig - Keys Group Ltd

## ***Autism Aware Information Sessions.***

Sessions were delivered for Transport Wales and Dwr Cymru to raise awareness, acceptance and understanding of autism, with the view to support autistic customers. Sessions were recorded and made available on internal learning platforms to facilitate staff learning. The National Autism Team have received some positive feedback from the sessions:

“Thank you again for taking the time to share your resources with us it was a great session, really informative.”

“Thank you so much, you delivered an incredible talk we really appreciate it.”

“Our autism awareness online webinar that the NAT ran for Transport for Wales as part of our EDI strategy to create learning opportunities and awareness was fantastic and greatly received. From the moment I engaged with the NAT they were clear, accommodating and friendly. The workshop was positively received by everyone who attended and received great engagement on the webinar and I was sent lots of positive feedback after the session about how informative the session was.”

## What's next?

### ***Royal College of Psychiatry ND Special Interest Group joint Community of Practice on Autism and Mental Health:***

In April, the National Autism Team will be hosting a joint virtual Community of Practice with the Royal College of Psychiatry ND Special Interest Group. The Community of Practice event will focus on Autism and Mental Health. Kirsten Barnicot and Jennie Parker, researchers from City University of London, will be explaining and reflecting on their Words That Carry On funded research project into the overlaps in autism and personality disorder diagnoses for Autistic women. Simon Moseley, Principal Clinical Psychologist for North Wales IAS, will share his reflections of clinical practice in assessments and interventions in Autism, considering differential and co-occurring presentations. There will also be an opportunity for Q&A with an expert panel.

### ***Cathie Long Fabricated or Induced Illness Community of Practice:***

In June, the National Autism Team will be hosting a Community of Practice on Autism and Fabricated or Induced Illness. The event will be led by guest speakers Cathie Long and Rachel Gavin, who are award winning independent social workers. Cathie Long and Rachel Gavin will present the new Practice Guide for Fabricated or Induced Illness, using real life examples to highlight how adapting our professional practice can make an immense difference to the lives of families who need understanding and the right support.

# Chapter 5: Integrated Autism Service

## IAS Covid-19 response

During the Covid-19 pandemic, several of the IASs adapted their courses and support services so that they could be delivered to autistic people and their families remotely e.g., a virtual post diagnostic support course and virtual support hubs. These proved to be extremely popular and ensured that many people could continue to be effectively supported throughout the pandemic.



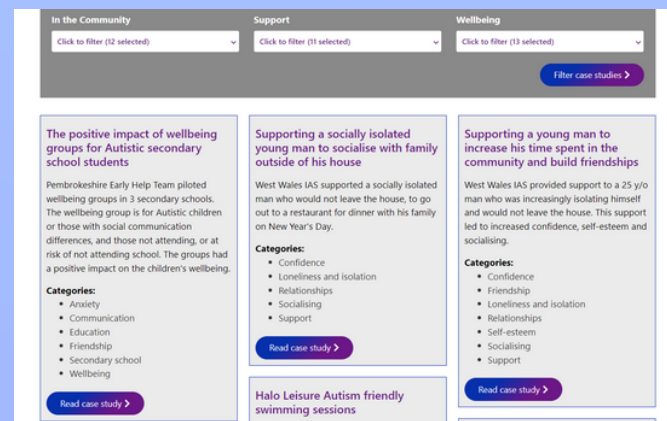
In 2021/22 many of the Integrated Autism Services have begun offering face to face support and diagnostic assessment to clients, in line with Welsh Government Covid-19 guidelines and regulations. Many are offering a hybrid model, with face-to-face or virtual assessment and support being offered based on the client's needs and preferences.

## Case Study Compendium

In March 2022, the National Autism Team launched its Case Study Compendium. The best practice Case Study compendium showcases the range of effective work being carried out across Wales by professionals working in autism. Each case study features the voices of Autistic people and/or the parent/carers of Autistic people, reflecting on how the support and interventions put in place have had a positive impact on their lives.

The Case Study Compendium is a vital tool for promoting the positive work being carried out by the seven integrated Autism Services across Wales.

Read the case studies [here](#).



(Screenshot of Case Study Compendium homepage)

## Data highlights

Data is inputted by all IASs on a quarterly basis and sent through Emyr, Data Cymru's secure file exchange site, based on three categories Adult Data, Parent Carer Data and Professional Data. To enrich the data, further data is captured through the Outcomes Star an outcomes measurement tool and qualitative data through case studies.

The following data highlights were observed across the IASs in 2021/22 and show that referrals to the services continues to increase. For more detailed information please see the full data report appendix.



- **10,449** interactions were made with adults
- **4,262** referrals to the service were made for adults with **50%** of these self-referrals
- **70%** of referrals for adults requesting autism diagnostic assessments and **30%** were requesting support
- **1,009** adults received a diagnostic assessment
- **796** adults received a positive diagnosis of autism
- **1,823** interactions were made with parents/ carers
- **429** referrals to the service were made for parents/ carers with **84%** of these self-referrals
- **69%** of referrals were for parent/ carers of autistic adults and **16%** were for parent/ carers of autistic children
- **6,416** interactions were made with professionals
- **3,261** new contacts with professionals
- **548** of contacts were from health professionals, **17%** were professionals from local authorities and **11%** were professionals from the voluntary sector

For the full 2021/22 IAS data report, see [Appendix 1](#).

## ADOS AD-IR Training

In May, June, October 2021 & February 2022, the National Autism Team funded ADOS AD-IR 'Beginning with an A' training for clinical professionals working in the Integrated Autism Services and wider Mental Health and Learning Disability services. ADI-R (Autism Diagnostic Interview - Revised) is considered to be one of the gold standard clinical diagnostic instruments for assessing autism in children and adults. In total, **35** professionals were trained. Additional courses have been commissioned and will run in July and September 2022.



## What's next?

### *IAS Practice Exchange:*

The National Autism Team are currently developing a new event series called the IAS Practice Exchange. The IAS Practice Exchange will provide a space for professionals working across the seven Integrated Autism Services to come together to share practice and discuss current work on various topics. The first IAS Practice Exchange event will be held virtually in June, and the event will focus on 'group work and how to measure group work effectively'. The topics for the future IAS Practice Exchange events will be determined by professionals working within the IAS.

### *Disco Training:*

The National Autism Team have commissioned DISCO training for 15 professionals working across the Integrated Autism Services. The Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders (DISCO), is one of the tools used by clinicians to diagnose autism. The training will take place in July and October 2022.

# Chapter 6: Learning about Autism

The Learning about Autism programmes adopts a whole setting or school approach to improve awareness and understanding of the needs of autistic children. The training is designed to stimulate discussions and increase understanding with all staff and pupils across the school/setting. The following data shows the take-up of the programmes across Wales.

## The Early Years Programme

Since its launch at the end of September 2017, **2,954** staff have undertaken the early years training programme and **112** Early Year Settings have received their Learning about Autism award. **16** of these were during 2021/22.



In March 2021, the National Autism Team worked closely with Cowshed Ltd., a marketing company based in Cardiff, to produce an integrated campaign to promote the Learning about Autism scheme and resources. As part of the campaign, Cowshed produced two 'hero' case study videos with two early years settings. Little Tigers Daycare in Rogit, Monmouthshire and Snap Cymru Playgroup in Pembrokeshire, reflected on how completing the scheme has helped them to better support autistic children in their care. Watch the case study videos [here](#).

Cowshed also produced a 'how to' video for early years settings, which explains the process of how to complete and apply for the Learning about Autism award. The 'how to' video can be watched [here](#).

The following quote was received by a setting who completed the programme in 2021/22:

"Staff have used the training to look at their provision and have created small safe spaces, lots of cosy nooks and reduced 'visual noise' by adapting our displays and using more natural themes."

– **Little Scholars Nursery, Wrexham**

Find out more about the Early Years scheme [here](#).

## The Primary Schools Programme

The primary school Learning about Autism programme was launched in March 2016. Since its launch, **245** schools across Wales have achieved their Learning about Autism award. During 2021/22 a further **32** schools achieved their Learning about Autism award.



Over the past year, Learning about Autism training has been undertaken by **1,932** Teaching staff (**9,634** in total) and **2,486** Learning support Staff (**10,483** in total). Furthermore, **7,191** children have completed the Autism Superheroes scheme (**49,992** in total).

The following quote was received by a primary school who completed the programme in 2021/22 and shared how they will adapt their day-to-day practice.

“... I really think that it’s opened up the issue and made it something that we are allowed to discuss. Each class in the school has a child who is autistic or is on the pathway so it’s so important that they understand what they can do to support those learners and the three points that are raised in the cartoon are simple and easy to understand. It has opened the door to discussion and something the teachers can now dip into when discussing learning strategies, growth mindset, diversity etc in school.”

– **Hafod Primary School, Pontypridd**

Find out more about the Primary School scheme [here](#).

## The Secondary Schools Programme



Since its launch at the beginning of September 2017, **5,992** staff have undertaken the secondary school Learning about Autism training programme, and **24,144** pupils have received the Sgilti lesson and taken their pledge. A further **3** secondary schools across Wales have received their Learning about Autism award this past year, resulting in **23** schools in total having completed the scheme since its launch.

In addition, other support staff such as governors, catering and administration staff across settings and schools have achieved their Autism Aware certificates as part of the Learning about Autism programmes.

“There is a definite increase in the understanding and acceptance of autism across the school. ...We have such positive feedback from families of pupils who have recently left our school.”

– **Bryntirion Comprehensive School, Bridgend**

Find out more about the Secondary School scheme [here](#).

## Further Education

The National Autism Team have a number of training resources for staff working in Further Education and Work Based Learning settings. The National Autism Team also have resources for students who are in a Further Education and Work Based Learning setting.

In 2020, the National Autism Team produced a Further Education training video. Ewan Richards was part of this video whilst he was at Coleg Sir Gar. Ewan has now graduated from university with a First-Class Honours degree, and has reflected on his experience in being involved in the video:

“I’m Ewan and I’m 22 years old. I’m currently a university postgraduate student and work at a local theatre. I have recently graduated with a First Class Bachelor of Science Degree in Applied Computing at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Whilst I was studying at Coleg Sir Gar, I featured in the National Autism Team’s Further Education video.

My experience at university has been very positive. I have access to a range of support at the university such as study skills, assistive technology training, time management, and improvement with my academic writing. This support, with thanks to the University, has pointed me in the right direction. The support I’ve had has assisted me to develop my confidence and communication skills. I have been accepted, and warmly welcomed, into the university community and I have been involved in a range of university opportunities, such as being asked to be on a feedback focus group and being a Student Ambassador.

I feel that the Further Education scheme has massively helped me, especially with the transition from school to college. This is something I initially found very daunting, but thanks to the resources and videos by The National Autism Team, alongside the support from the college, it really helped me to settle into the college environment quickly.

I’m currently studying an MSc in Software Engineering at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David. Once I graduate from UWTSD, I would love to become a website developer for either an entertainment venue or educational establishment.”

– **Ewan Richards**

Find out more about the Further Education scheme [here](#).

Find out more about the Work Based Learning scheme [here](#).





# Integrated Autism Service 2021/22 Data Report

## 1. Executive Summary

The year 2021/22 has continued to be a difficult year for many and the impact of the pandemic has continued to affect many public services including all seven Integrated Autism Services (IAS) in Wales. All seven IASs have continued to show resilience and innovation by amending policies and procedures to provide a service to those seeking diagnostic assessment and support in difficult circumstances. This report shows key high-level data from all seven IASs across Wales and reflects the hard work and dedication of staff to ensure that the impact of the pandemic was kept to a minimum.

The following data headlines were observed.

- **10,449** interactions were made with adults
- **4,262** referrals to the service were made for adults with **50%** of these self-referrals
- **70%** of referrals for adults requesting autism diagnostic assessments and **30%** were requesting support
- **1,009** adults received a diagnostic assessment
- **796** adults received a positive diagnosis of autism
- **1,823** interactions were made with parents/ carers
- **429** referrals to the service were made for parents/ carers with **84%** of these self-referrals
- **69%** of referrals were for parent/ carers of autistic adults and **16%** were for parent/ carers of autistic children
- **6,416** interactions were made with professionals
- **3,261** new contacts with professionals
- **58%** of contacts were from health professionals, **17%** were professionals from local authorities and **11%** were professionals from the voluntary sector

## 2. Introduction

There are seven Integrated Autism Services (IASs) across Wales, all funded by Welsh Government as part of its commitment to the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan for ASD ([Autistic Spectrum Disorder- Updated Delivery Plan 2018-21](#)). The first one launched in July 2017 and the last one to be operational came on stream in April 2019. The National Autism Team which is hosted by the Welsh Local Government Association together with Public Health Wales has been committed from the outset, together with the IAS Leads and the Community of Practice for Adult Diagnosis to ensure that the impact of the new Integrated Autism Service be measured.

The data presented in this report is captured through a database managed by Data Cymru. Data is inputted by all IASs on a quarterly basis and sent through Emyr, Data Cymru's secure file exchange site, based on three categories Adult Data, Parent Carer Data and Professional Data. To enrich the data, further data is capture through the Outcomes Star an outcomes measurement tool and qualitative data through case studies.

### 3. Adult Data

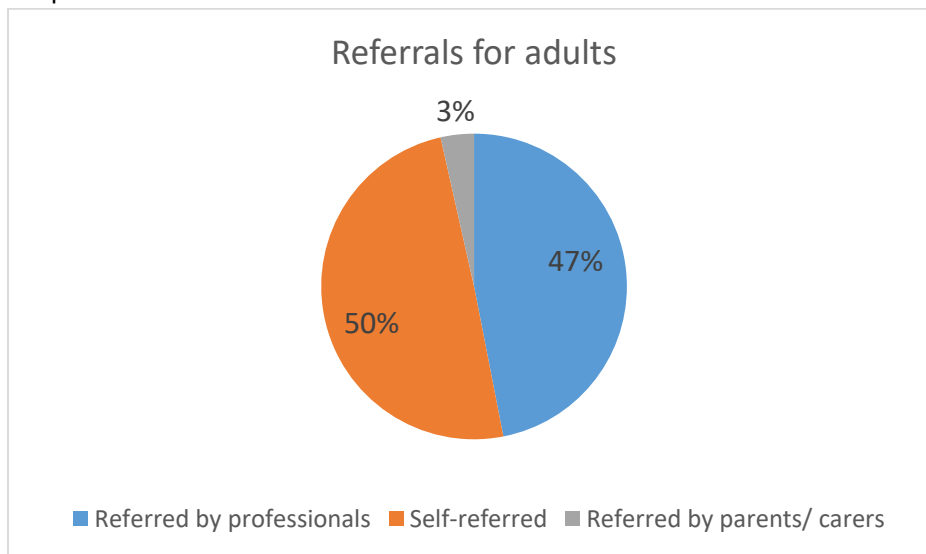
For adults who are unable to access advice or support from statutory services due to eligibility exclusion, and where the provision is not available elsewhere, the IAS provides diagnostic assessment and post diagnostic information and support for autistic adults. Below is data related to this provided by the IASs in 2021/22.

Below are the number of interactions and referrals relating to adults. Interactions can include informal discussions through e-mail, phone calls or face to face. These may or may not result in a formal referral to the service and may include signposting to other more suitable services. Referrals refer to formal requests for services from the IAS.

Table 3.1: The number of interactions and referrals for adults to the IASs

Interactions with adults	<b>10,449</b>
Referrals for adults	<b>4,262</b>
Referred by professionals	2,000
Self-referred	2,112
Referred by parents/ carers	150

Graph 3.1: The break-down of referrals for adults

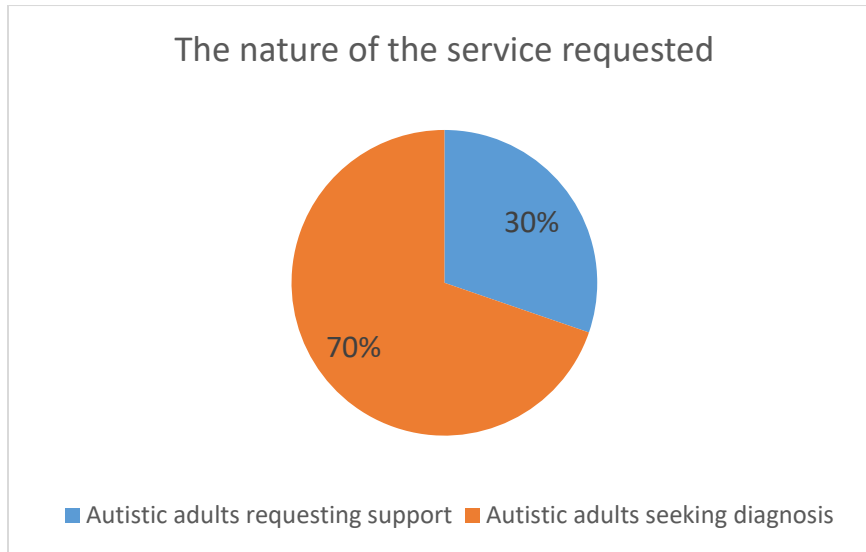


Referral requests can be split into two categories, individuals already with a diagnosis of autism but seeking support and adults seeking a diagnostic assessment. Below is a table and graph showing the nature of the referrals to the IASs.

Table 3.2: The nature of referrals for adults

Service Users	
Autistic adults requesting support	1,290
Autistic adults seeking diagnosis	2,972

Graph 3.2: The nature of services requested by autistic adults

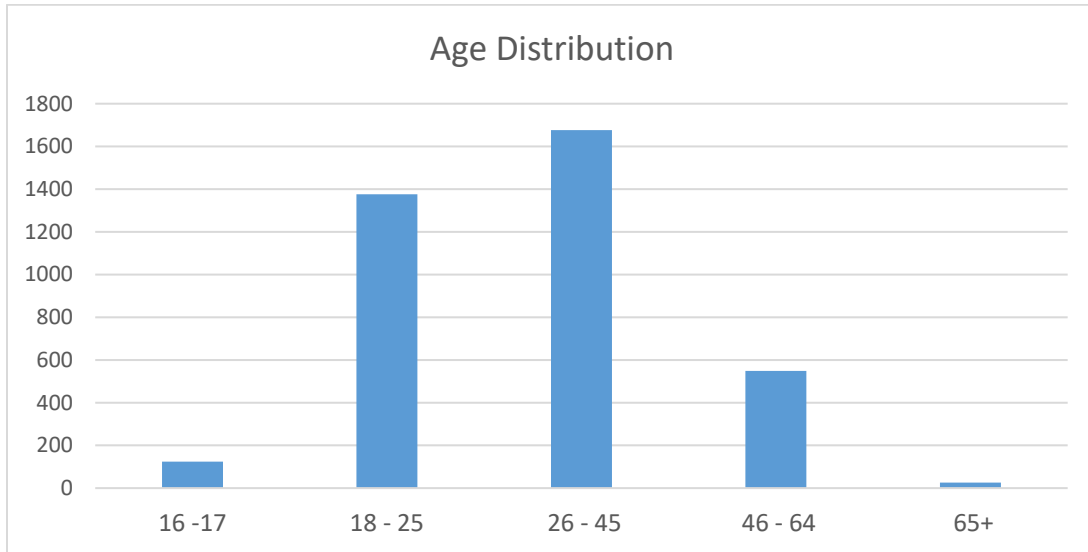


The age distribution of adults accessing the service is depicted in the following table and graph. The 'prefer not to say' option represents those for whom it would not be appropriate to automatically collect this data. This may include people seen in drop-in sessions or enquiry referrals.

Table 3.3: The age distribution of adults accessing services

Age Distribution	
16 -17	124
18 - 25	1,376
26 - 45	1,676
46 - 64	549
65+	26
Prefer not to say	502

Graph 3.3: The age distribution of adults accessing services

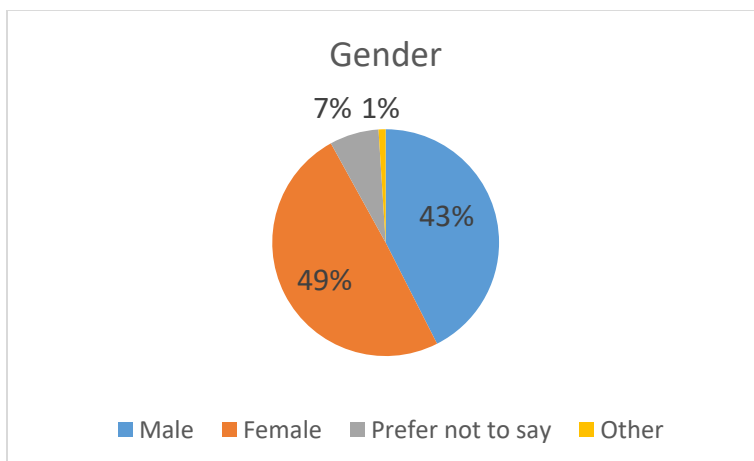


The gender of adults accessing the service is depicted in the following table and graph. The 'Other' section includes people who identify as alternative genders or for whom the data was not easily collated or identify.

Table 3.4: The gender of adults accessing services

Gender	
Male	1,812
Female	2,108
Prefer not to say	299
Other	43

Graph 3.4: The gender of adults accessing services



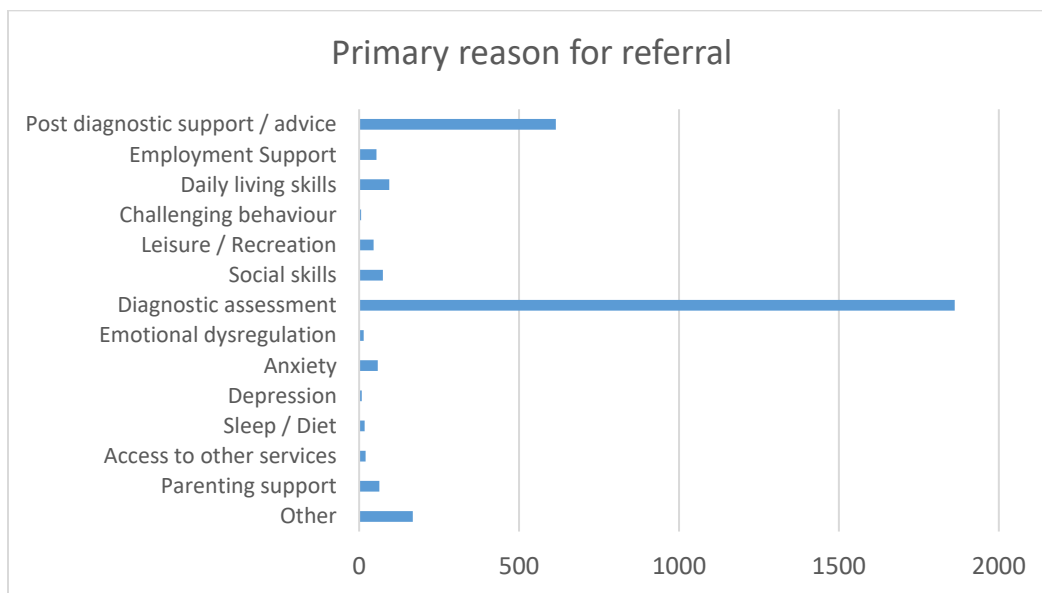


The table and graph below depict the primary reason that adults are referred into the service. This may change through initial discussions with the service but gives an idea of some of the difficulties that are identified by adults accessing the service.

Table 3.5: The initial primary reason for referral into the service

Primary reason for referral	
Post diagnostic support / advice	587
Employment support	27
Daily living skills	82
Challenging behaviour	13
Leisure / recreation	36
Social skills	47
Diagnostic assessment	2,972
Emotional dysregulation	44
Anxiety	79
Depression	13
Sleep / diet	40
Access to other services	20
Parenting support	3
Other	297

Graph 3.5: The primary reason for referral into the service

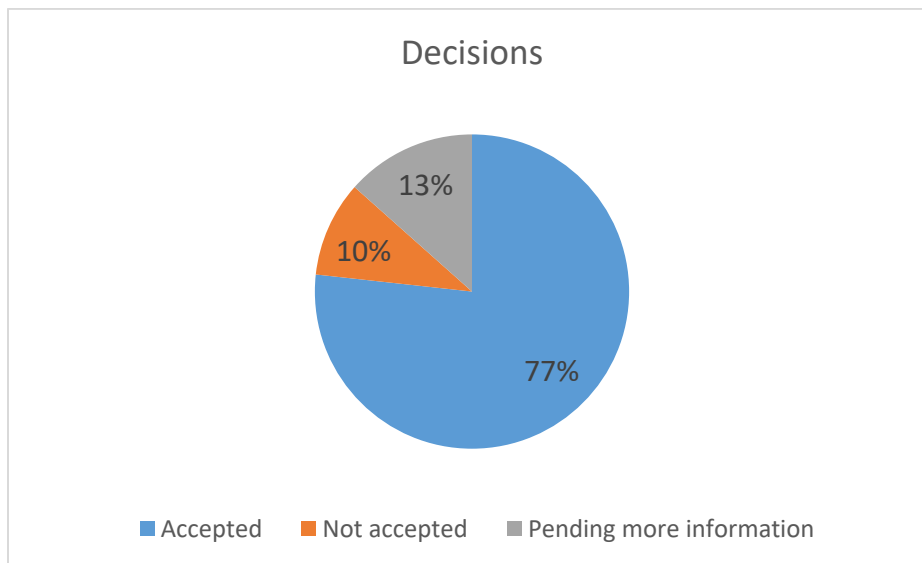


Below is the outcome of referrals into the service. This information helps the services identify patterns in referrals that cannot be accepted and those needing further information.

Table 3.6: The outcome of referrals into the service

Referral Outcomes	
Decisions	
Accepted	2,668
Not accepted	342
Pending more information	467

Graph 3.6: The outcome of referrals into the service

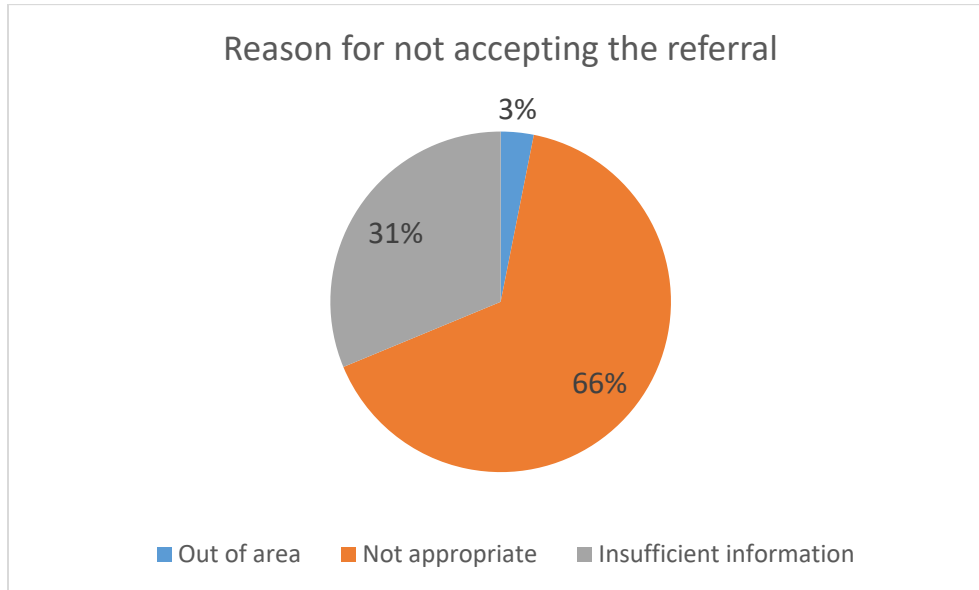


Below is the breakdown of referrals not accepted into services. There are several reasons that referrals may not be appropriate, including someone who is receiving support from other services such as learning disability services or mental health services, or not appropriate due to age.

Table 3.7: The reasons for not accepting referrals into the service

Reason for not accepting the referral	
Out of area	11
Not appropriate	231
Insufficient information	110

Graph 3.7: The reasons for not accepting referrals into the service

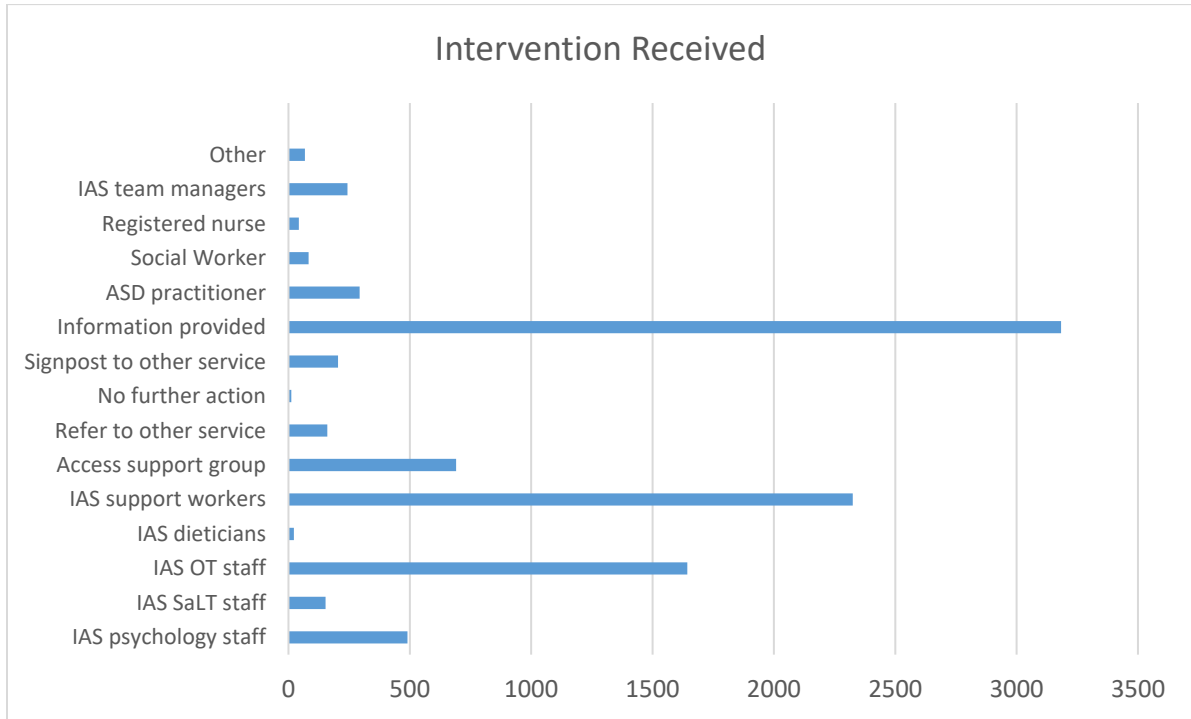


The table and graph below depict the interventions received by adults accessing the service. This gives an idea of what kind of services autistic adults need.

Table 3.8: The interventions received by adults within the service

Intervention Received	
Diagnostic assessment	1,203
IAS psychology staff	490
IAS Speech and Language Therapy staff	153
IAS Occupational Therapy staff	1,643
IAS dieticians	22
IAS support workers	2,325
Access support group	691
Refer to other service	160
No further action	12
Signpost to other service	204
Information provided	3,183
ASD practitioner	293
Social Worker	83
Registered nurse	43
IAS team managers	243
Other	68

Graph 3.8: The interventions received by adults within the service



The timeliness of support and diagnostic assessment are shown in weeks in the table below. The data is based on quarter 4 of 2021/22 only as it shows a more accurate picture of the current situation.

Table 3.9: The timeliness of support and diagnostic assessment as well as positive diagnosis data for adults

Timeliness of support	
Average weeks from point of referral received to accepted	2.0
Average weeks from referral accepted to start of intervention	8.0
Timeliness of diagnostic assessment	
Average weeks from point of referral received to accepted	3.6
Average weeks from referral accepted to start of intervention	102.4
Average weeks from initial appointment to diagnosis / outcome	2.6



The table below shows the number of diagnostic assessments carried out by the IASs and the number that led to a positive diagnosis.

Table 3.10: Diagnostic assessments

Diagnostic Assessment	
Number of autistic individuals who received an assessment	<b>1,009</b>
Number of assessments that lead to a positive diagnosis	796

The table below not additional information about the services, including the number of group sessions held, formal complaints and compliments received.

Table 3.11: Additional information about the services

Additional Information	
Number of support group sessions held	371
Number of formal complaints received	15
Number of compliments received	325

## 4. Parent/ Carer Data

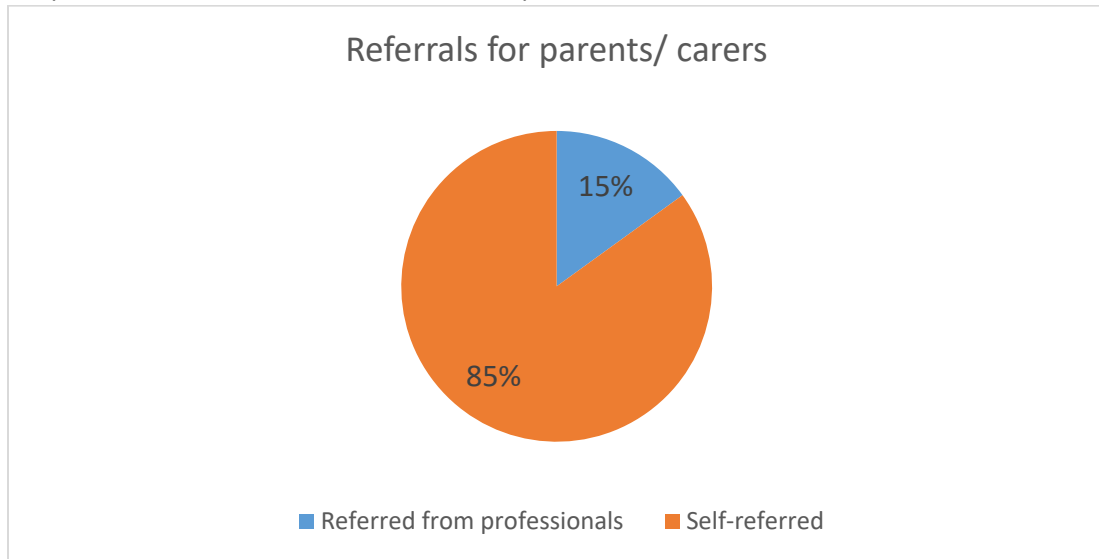
Whilst not working directly with children and young people, the service works in partnership with other organisations to support parents and carers. Below is data related to this provided by the IASs in 2021/22.

Below are the number of interactions and referrals relating to parents and carers. Interactions can include informal discussions through e-mail, phone calls or face to face. These may or may not result in a formal referral to the service and may include signposting to other more suitable services. Referrals refer to formal requests for services from the IAS.

Table 4.1: The number of interactions and referrals for parents and carers to the IASs

Interactions with parents/ carers	<b>1,823</b>
Referrals for parents/ carers	<b>429</b>
Referred from professionals	64
Self-referred	362

Graph 4.1: The break-down of referrals for parents and carers

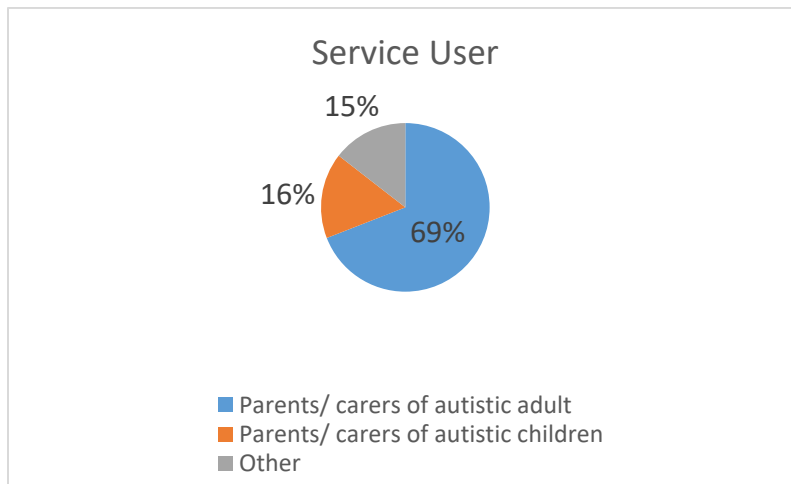


The table and graph below show whether service users are parents and carers of autistic adults or children. The 'other' category includes parents/carers who care for both those over and under 18 and instances where the data was unavailable.

Table 4.2: The nature of services accessed by parent and carers

Service User	
Parents/ carers of autistic adult	286
Parents/ carers of autistic children	68
Other	60

Graph 4.2: The nature of services accessed by parent and carers

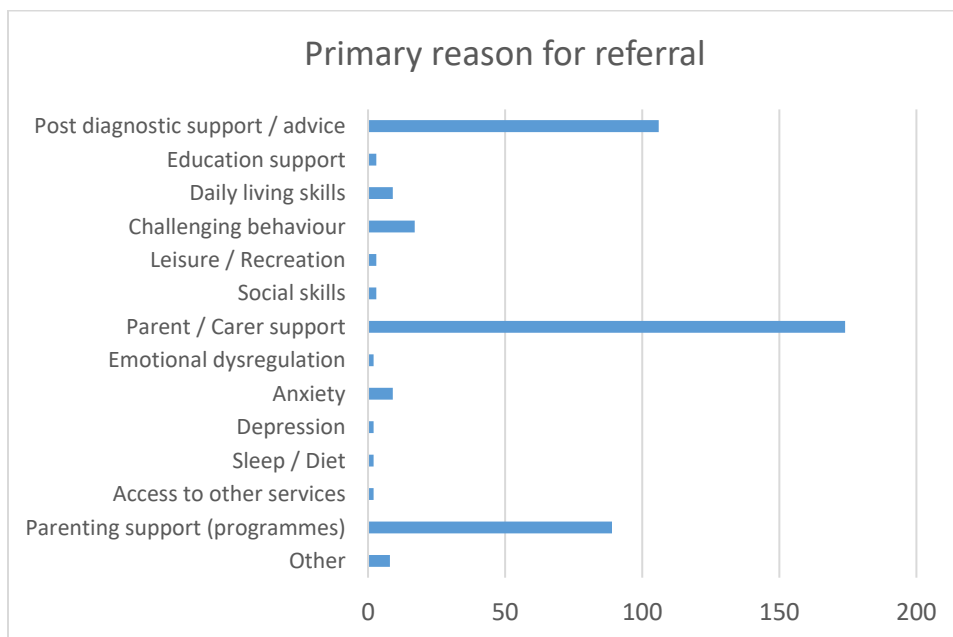


The table and graph below depict the primary reason that parent/ carers are referred into the service. This may change through initial discussions with the service but gives an idea of the support that parent/ carers are seeking.

Table 4.3: The initial primary reason for referral into the service

Primary Reason for referral	
Post diagnostic support / advice	34
Education support	4
Daily living skills	6
Challenging behaviour	19
Leisure / Recreation	0
Social skills	10
Parent / Carer support	165
Emotional dysregulation	0
Anxiety	2
Depression	0
Sleep / Diet	0
Access to other services	1
Parenting support (programmes)	5
Other	23

Table 4.3: The initial primary reason for referral into the service

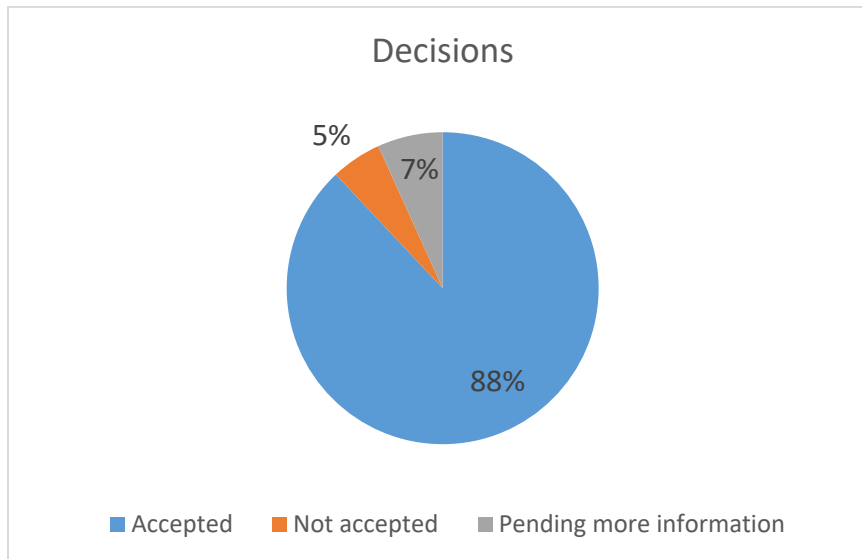


Below is the outcome of referrals into the service. This information helps the services identify patterns in referrals that cannot be accepted and those needing further information.

Table 4.4: The outcome of referrals into the service

Referral Outcomes	
Decisions	
Accepted	286
Not accepted	17
Pending more information	22

Graph 4.4: The outcome of referrals into the service

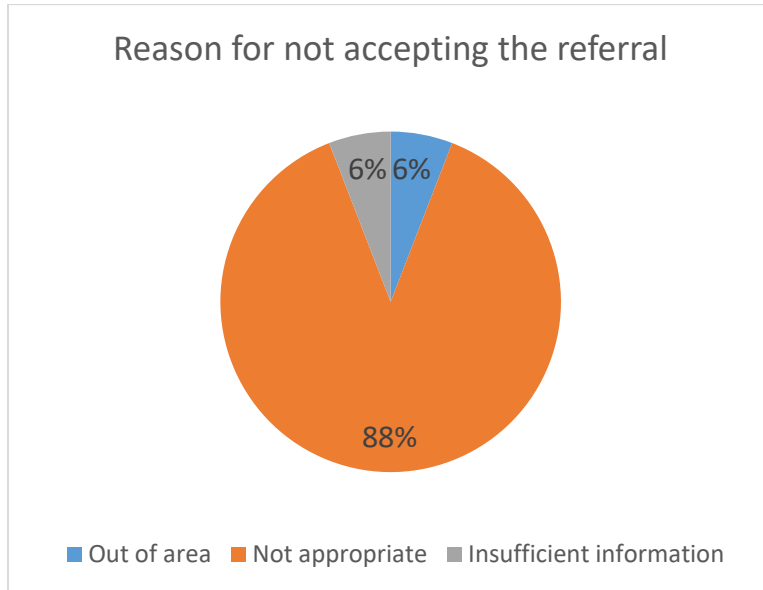


Below is the breakdown of referrals not accepted into services. There are several reasons that referrals may not be appropriate, including those who are receiving support from other services.

Table 4.5: The reasons for not accepting referrals into the service

Reason for not accepting the referral	
Out of area	0
Not appropriate	30
Insufficient information	1

Graph 4.5: The reasons for not accepting referrals into the service



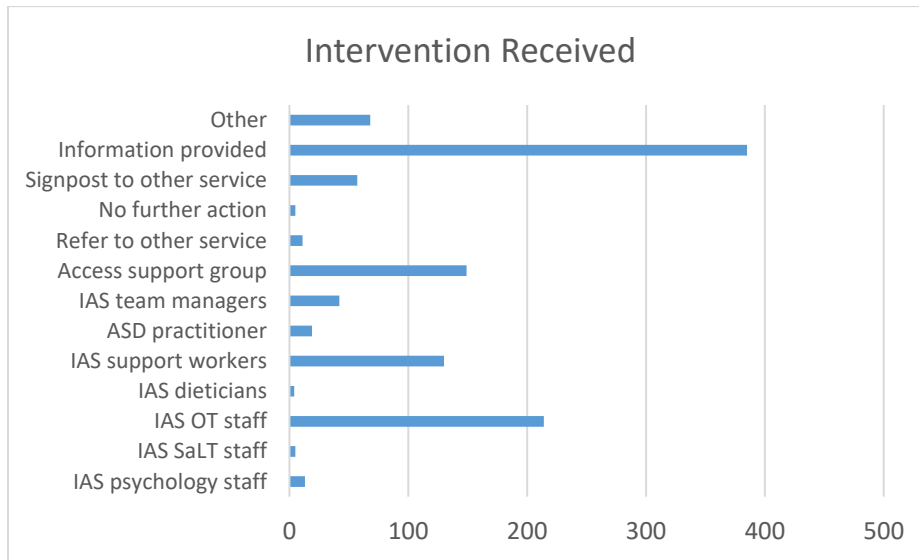
The table and graph below depict the interventions received by parent/ carers accessing the service. This gives an idea of what kind of services parent/ carers need.

Table 4.6: The interventions received by parents and carers from the service

Intervention Received	
IAS psychology staff	13
IAS SaLT staff	5
IAS OT staff	214
IAS dieticians	4
IAS support workers	130
ASD practitioner	19
IAS team managers	42
Access support group	149
Refer to other service	11
No further action	5
Signpost to other service	57
Information provided	385
Other	68



Graph 4.6: The interventions received by parents and carers from the service



The timeliness of support for parent/ carers is shown in weeks in the table below. The data is based on quarter 4 of 2021/22 only as it shows a more accurate picture of the current situation. The table also includes additional information of the number of group sessions held and the number of formal complaints and compliments received over the 2021/22 year.

Table 4.5: The timeliness of support and additional information for parents and carers

Timeliness of support	
Average weeks from point of referral received to accepted	2.2
Average weeks from referral accepted to start of intervention	3.4
Additional Information	
Number of support group sessions held	118
Number of formal complaints received	3
Number of compliments received	148

## 5. Professionals Data

An important aspect of the IASs role is to work with and educate professionals from a variety of different services in order to support autistic people and their families. There is an identified training need among professionals and in particular health and social care staff and the IAS provides an element of this. The data below is related to the work carried with professionals by the IASs in 2021/22.

Below are the number of interactions and new contacts by professionals to the service. Interactions can include informal discussions through e-mail, phone calls or face to face. These may or may not result in a formal referral to work with the service and may include signposting to other more suitable services. Contacts with professionals refer to more formal work with the service.

Table 5.1: The number of interactions and new contacts with professionals

Interactions with professionals	<b>6,416</b>
New contact with professionals	3,261

The table and graph below depict the primary reason that professionals contact the service.

Table 5.2: The initial primary reason for contact with the service

Primary reason for contact	
Referral for an adult diagnosis	904
Request joint work/ consultation for a client	726
Request support to work with a client(s)	409
Request for training	197
Other general enquiry	989
Referral for parent/ carer support	36

Graph 5.2: The primary reason for contact with the service

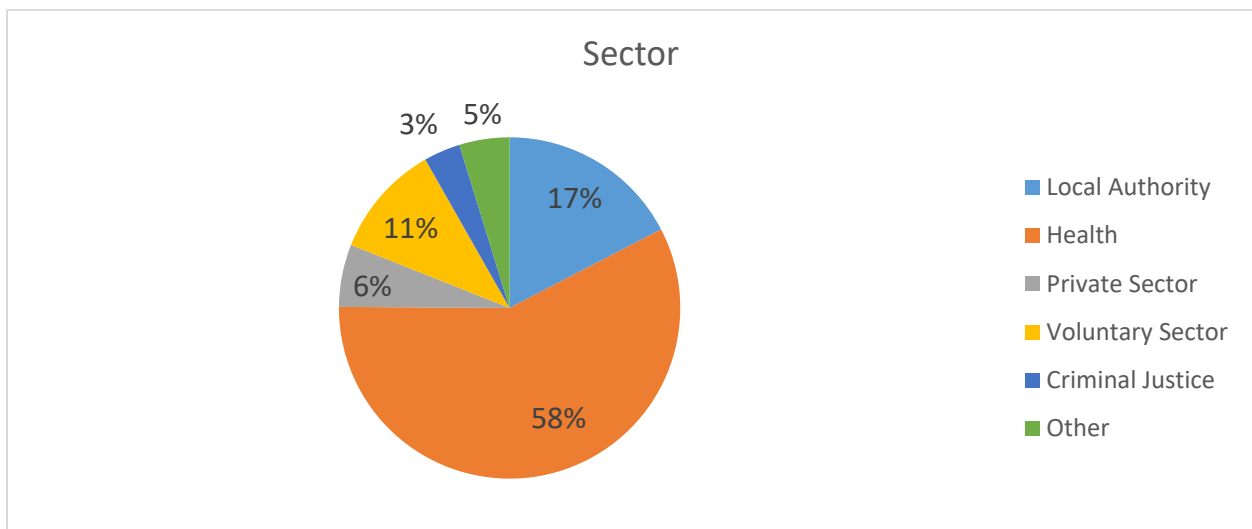


The following table and graph show the sector which professionals contacting the services are from. The 'other' category may include professionals working in the civil services such as DWP employees or the information may not be available to include.

Table 5.3: The sector professionals contacting the service are from

Sector	
Local Authority	567
Health	1,882
Private Sector	193
Voluntary / Third Sector	351
Criminal Justice	113
Other	155

Graph 5.3: The sector professionals contacting the service are from



## 6. Conclusion

It is important to reiterate that the effects of the pandemic continue to have an impact on the IASs. The data demonstrates that the IASs continue to receive a high number of referrals and have worked with an increasing number of people.

For services provided to adults 50% of referrals were self-referrals from adults themselves. Seventy percent of the referrals were for diagnostic assessment and 30% for support. Most of the age distribution of autistic adults accessing the service is between 18-45. The most frequently accessed interventions were support providing information, from IAS support workers, IAS Occupational Therapists, and diagnostic assessment. It can also be noted that there was an **82%** increase in referrals to the service for adults in 2021/22 in comparison with 2020/21 figures. In addition, there was a **52%** increase in diagnostic assessments undertaken in 2021/22 in comparison to 2020/21.

For services provided to parent/ carers 84% of referrals were self-referrals. Sixty nine percent of the referrals were from parent and carers of adults and 16% were from parent and carers of children. The primary reason for referrals were for parent/ carer support, post diagnostic support/ advice, parenting support programmes and behaviours that challenge. The most frequently accessed interventions were providing information, accessing support groups, IAS Occupational Therapist, and support from IAS support workers. It can also be noted that there was a 32% increase in referrals to the service from parent/ carers in 2021/22 in comparison with 2020/21 figures.

The data shows that a significant part of the services' work is engaging with professionals. The primary reason for referrals were general enquiries, referrals for diagnostic assessment, request joint work/ consultation with client and request support to work with a client. In addition, 58% were professionals from the health board, 17% were from local authorities and 11% from the voluntary sector. It can also be noted that there was a 30% increase in contacts with the service from professionals in 2021/22 in comparison with 2020/21 figures.