

## What this guidance means for adults with autism

This guidance sets a clear direction for how health and social care services should implement the autism strategy, *Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives*. The points here summarise what the guidance means for adults with autism, and what they can expect from NHS bodies and local authorities. This will enable adults with autism, their families and carers, and autism representative groups to hold services to account and assess whether changes are taking place.

As well as the guidance, the government has also identified 7 quality outcomes and 3 service ambitions that will help evaluate progress towards the vision set out in *Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives*. These go beyond health and social care, covering also employment, housing and overall satisfaction with public services. Above all, they make it clear that each local area is expected to assess the needs of adults with autism locally, so it can make informed and transparent decisions about service provision for adults with autism.

It is important to recognise that while each local area has to take forward these actions, change will take time and each local area will progress at its own pace.

Our priority is that there is a clear progression, and that adults with autism, their families and carers – as well as service providers themselves – understand the direction of travel and the outcomes identified.

The government will review progress, and can update the guidance if progress is too slow or certain aspects are not being fulfilled.

### Adults with autism, their families and carers can expect that:

- staff working in health and social care have had some autism awareness training
- staff in roles which have a direct impact on access to services for adults with autism – such as GPs, community care assessors and commissioners/service planners – have received specialist autism training
- staff working in health and social care are able to identify potential signs of autism and understand how to make reasonable adjustments in their behaviour, communication and services for adults with autism
- their local authority has a named lead professional responsible for the development of diagnostic and assessment services for adults with autism in their area
- there is a clear pathway to diagnosis in their local area

- if an adult is diagnosed with autism, they will be offered a community care assessment, regardless of their IQ, and their carers will be informed of their right to a carer's assessment
- if an adult is diagnosed with autism, they will be given access to information about autism and details of potential sources of support such as local voluntary groups and national representative groups
- there is a local commissioning plan for services for adults with autism, based on locally gathered data about the numbers and needs of adults with autism in the area
- the views of adults with autism and their carers are taken into account in the development of services locally
- if they need care services, they will be able to make choices about the services they receive, and are able to use a personal budget to pay for the services they want (if they are eligible for a personal budget)
- no decision about them is made without them.

**In addition, young people with autism can expect that:**

- they will receive transition support as they move from into adulthood
- they and their parents/carers will be informed of their right to a community care assessment for adult services, and their carers will be informed of their right to a carer's assessment
- they are involved in transition planning and support and that no decision about them is made without them.