



The Scottish Strategy for Autism

Easy Read



John Cornock
(Self Portrait, pen, 2011)



Rachel Hook
(Portrait of Mandi, coloured pencil, 2011)



Fiona Birrell
(Portrait of Shona, pen, 2011)



Scott Cation
(Portrait of Alister, felt tip pen, 2011)



John Ellsworth
(Self Portrait, coloured pencil, 2011)



Kubus Joss
(Portrait of Stuart, coloured pencil, 2011)



Rachel Hook
(cover image - abstract painting, 2010)

The artists featured on the cover all attend Scottish Autism's Art Opportunities service. Art Opportunities is a day service for adults with autism specialising in arts and crafts based activities, from painting and drawing to textiles and glass work. They include the abstract painting by Rachel Hook which was painted for Young Talent 2010, an exhibition of artwork created by young people with disabilities.

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The Scottish Government, Edinburgh 2011

Foreword

Autism is a national priority. It is important to develop a plan in Scotland so we have quality services.

In September 2010, the Scottish Government consulted with people to make this plan. The final plan is to be delivered in partnership with COSLA (COSLA is the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and it represents all councils in Scotland.)

Action is needed both nationally and locally. Autism is a unique condition which affects children and adults. People need to be supported by a range of services such as social care, education, housing and employment.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Matheson".

Michael Matheson
Minister for Public Health



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas A. Yates".

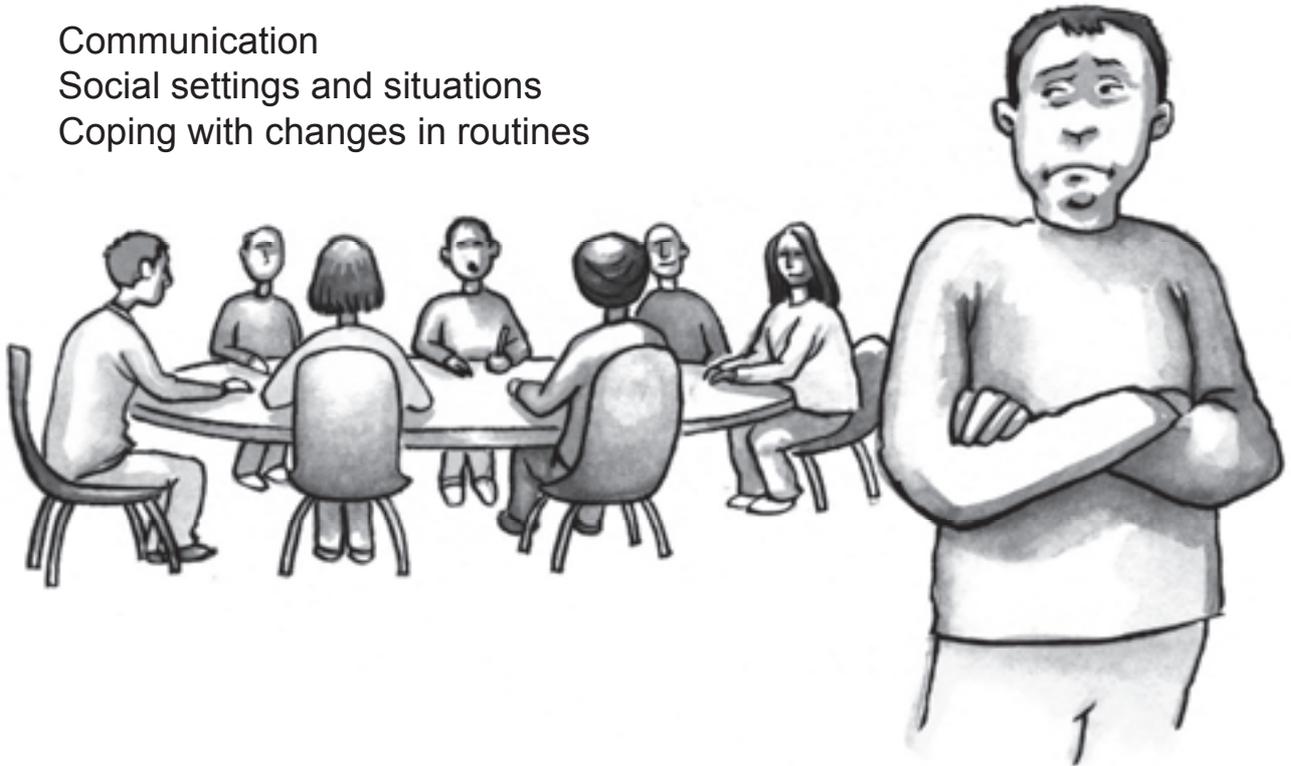
Councillor Douglas Yates
COSLA

What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong condition. It can also be called Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC). Autism affects people differently. Some people can need a lot of support. Some people can be more independent.

People mainly have problems in three areas:

- Communication
- Social settings and situations
- Coping with changes in routines



What is the Autism Strategy for?

A strategy is a plan. We want to develop a ten year plan for people with autism.

We need to find out who has autism and assess what they need. We need to do this to improve services.

The Scottish Government have spoken to people with autism and their families to hear their concerns and ask what changes are needed. The recommendations from this plan will affect the way public services are delivered.

Our vision

Our vision is that people with autism are respected, accepted and valued by their communities. They should have confidence in services to treat them fairly.



Our values

- **Dignity:** people should be given the care and support they need in a way to help them live independently
- **Privacy:** people should be supported to have choice and control
- **Choice:** care and support should be personalised
- **Safety:** people should be supported to feel safe and secure
- **Realising potential:** people should have the opportunity to achieve all they can
- **Equality and diversity:** people should have equal access to information, assessment and services



Our Aims and goals

This is what we want to achieve over the next ten years.
This will help us make sure we have addressed all recommendations

In two years

- We want people to have access to services that meet needs and which understand autism.
- We want short term barriers to be removed.
- We want families and individuals to have access to support.
- We want services providers, councils and the NHS to follow guidelines.

In five years

- We want access to transition and future planning services.
- We want good practice in education, health and social care. This should be accepted by all councils and health boards.
- We want to raise awareness of autism in services.

In ten years

- We want all parts of the government to work in partnership with other organisations.
- We want budgets to be used to meet individual need.
- We want people to have access to assessments throughout life.
- We want people to have access to the correct levels of support throughout life.



Our aims and recommendations

We have 26 recommendations. They are key to achieving our vision. They are all to improve services and access to services for people on the autism spectrum.

1. A reference group is to be set up on a long-term basis. It should report to Government ministers and COSLA. COSLA is the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities and it represents all councils in Scotland.
2. The reference group works with public bodies such as the NHS and councils to put guidelines into practice.

3. The reference group should look at how to have the guidelines put into practice all over Scotland. This could be done by working with the social work department.
4. The reference group meet with people from organisations that regulate services. They should keep up to date with changes.
5. The economic costs of autism should be looked at. This could help plan action needed.
6. The reference group should review guidance by carrying out an assessment.
7. The reference group should examine and compare outcomes. People should have the best quality of life.
8. The reference group with service providers will identify the main things about services that give people the best quality of life.
9. An event should be held to evaluate and recognise good practice.
10. Services should be available that are flexible to peoples needs.
11. Thought needs to be given to the needs of people with autism. Some people may be more able.
12. Research should be evaluated. More research should be done if needed. This information should be available to people.
13. Services users and carers should be involved in the local planning processes.
14. People with autism should be represented. Their needs should be thought about.
15. Reports on the work of Scottish Autism Services Network are evaluated.
16. The reference group help contribute to a review of guidelines
17. The reference group has a training sub-group which now needs a new structure. They should be given more power and include someone from the Scottish Consortium for Learning Disability. They can assess what is provided. Trainers can find ways to improve what is on offer.

18. Good practice transition guidance should be developed. This could support people when changes occur in their life.
19. The approach for finding out if someone has autism or managing their condition should be based on evidence.
20. The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons should be contacted. This may allow professionals to receive information electronically.
21. Waiting lists should be assessed. This would show the delays people are having accessing services.
22. Waiting lists should be addressed. This would meet higher levels of demand.
23. The reference group should look at how the process for adults and children are different. This could help inform practice.
24. A directory of individuals and teams assessing autism should be reviewed and updated.
25. They will look at the way of assessing people for autism, improve it if necessary and let everyone know.
26. The supported employment framework should be looked at regarding employment and employability for people with autism.



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Family Advice and Information Resource

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