



Dimensions of Health and Wellbeing - Children and Young People Accessible version launched December 2023

Successes to celebrate.

The Dimensions of Health and Wellbeing is owned and led by our community. As part of our review of the Dimensions we used a neurodiversity affirming approach - using positive reaffirming language, e.g. 'skills' not 'deficits', 'support needs' not 'weaknesses'. Celebrating the strengths and diversity of our community.

This was achieved through collaboration and coproduction - clinicians, professionals and Experts by Experience (EBEs) working together to deconstruct the old Dimensions language, to instead use the language of choice for the community, celebrating ability not disability, enabling, empowering and ensuring inclusion and belonging.

Why did we change the Children and Young People Dimensions?

Autism is currently understood by a profile of differences across several domains compared to the non-autistic population (such as differences in social communication style, perception and sensory experience). These differences can vary significantly in terms of how they affect an autistic person's functioning across their lifespan and may lead to individual and fluctuating support needs and disability.

It is important to highlight/consider that a person is disabled not solely by their individual differences but often exacerbated by environmental demands. This means that individuals have varied and fluctuating differences and support needs, which can impact on the workplace, education setting and everyday functioning.

The priority for us was to move away from the person being seen as the problem or being referred to as needing to be cured/fixed. We wanted to incorporate strengths rather than a list of problems. The person's profile can still help to identify support needs and can guide people who support them to consider if onward referrals to specialist services are needed, at this point completing referral forms and exploring service criteria may guide further decision making. It is then the for the specialist services to gather more specific clinical information to determine the correct assessment, support and/or intervention.

Completing the Dimensions with someone can help to generate conversations and will pull out their unique experiences.

What did we change?

Old Dimension	New Dimensions	Explanation
Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transitions and Managing Change 	We changed flexibility to be wider and include transitions. We understand that neurodivergent people may struggle with change, however with the right support this is easier for them. Again, we do not want to appear to say the person is 'inflexible' instead we want to understand how they cope/manage with change and transitions in order for them to be supported.
Gender Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self and Identity 	We extended Gender identity to be wider consideration about self and identity as we are aware of the many parts of what influences a person's sense of identity and their sense of belonging.
Friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships 	We removed this as our neurodivergent community shared with us that they want friendships and enjoy healthy friendships, particularly when around people who adjust their communication style or have similar communication and interaction styles.
Offending Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety and Risk to Self or Others 	We have now included in safety and risk to self or others as it was too limiting and didn't capture the level of risk to the person and others.
Family Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finances, Housing and Accommodation • Relationships • Supportive Environments 	Has been removed as factors are now included in finance and housing, relationships and supportive environments. This is because family situation can be due to other factors which weren't captured before.
Attention and Concentration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking and Memory 	We wanted to consider wider aspect of 'executive functioning' but didn't want to use this term. We have included differences in attention and concentration in the 'thinking and memory' Dimension.
Learning Difficulty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking and Memory 	We have removed this as it wasn't felt to add to what the Dimensions captured. We are planning on creating a set of Dimensions for people with a learning disability which will be helpful. Also, this previous Dimension covered aspects that are now captured in the 'thinking and memory' Dimension.
Problem Solving and Managing Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinking and Memory 	This has been removed as a separate Dimension, problem solving is now part of the 'thinking and memory' Dimension, capturing wider executive functioning differences. Managing stress is now covered in other Dimensions such as 'coping with emotions'.

Difficult Experiences and Adversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traumatic Experiences • Loss and Grief 	This has been changed to traumatic experiences in order to capture how people refer to their experiences and we have added a new Dimension to cover loss and grief.
Using the Toilet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities of Daily Living 	This has been replaced with 'activities of daily living' as we understand people may find other things such as washing and dressing tricky so this allows more areas to be considered and will facilitate a more detailed conversation to unpick the specific areas of support.
Managing Impulses and Urges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addictions • Safety and Risk to Self or Others 	This has been removed as we felt that some of this needed to be captured in the new 'Addiction' Dimension and also the new 'safety and risk to self or others' as this would include tics (those which cause self-injury).
Connection with the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobbies and Interests • Supportive Environments 	This has been included in 'Hobbies and interests' and this is also part of the supportive environments Dimensions.
Behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Communication Style • Coping with Emotions • Worrying and Anxiety • Mood • Supportive environments 	This has been removed as we believe behaviour is either a form of communication or in response to an unmet need. This would then be highlighted in 'social communication style', 'coping with emotions', 'anxiety', 'mood' and 'supportive environments'.

If you are curious about neurodevelopmental conditions such as Autism and ADHD you may see profiles where there are higher support needs in a combination of the following Dimensions.

Autism Characteristics	ADHD Characteristics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coping with Emotions • Relationships • Self and Identity • Sensory Responses • Social and Communication Style • Transitions and Managing Change • Thinking and Memory • Worrying and Anxiety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coping with Emotions • Education, Training or Work • Relationships • Safety and Risk to Self or Others • Sensory Responses • Sleep • Social and Communication Style • Thinking and Memory