



Coventry and Warwickshire Autism Partnership Board Newsletter

Neurodiversity and autism remains a top priority and through working with partner organisations from across Coventry and Warwickshire, we aim to improve the lives of neurodiverse and autistic children and adults and help them feel part of their communities.



Find out more about the Coventry Family Hub Offer

The Coventry Family Hub offer to children, young people and families is growing and has some exciting developments to share with you that can benefit ALL families. From visiting one of our eight Family Hubs, to exploring the new Coventry Families website, local families can access support in various ways when, and how, they need it. Whether you're a parent with young children, a teenager, or anyone in between, a Coventry Family Hub is the place to connect with the help and guidance the family need to ensure that they receive the right support, at the right time, from the right people.

Four of our eight Family Hubs have sensory rooms that are FREE and available for any Coventry resident to book by calling 08085 834 333. We currently host several services for families with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) including short breaks and Teenvine.

We also have a Youth Inspector programme which young people can join to tell us what they think of our buildings and how we can improve to meet everyone's needs.

We also have a Parent Voice network and would like parents and carers of families with SEND to join this to help us develop our services.



We recognise that families with children and young people with SEND also need to access help and support outside normal working hours, and we are pleased to announce the new Coventry Families portal - available at www.coventryfamilies.co.uk. This is a 'one-stop shop' for information useful to all Coventry families, bringing together resources from various organisations across the city, including Coventry City Council and the NHS. The portal also includes the SEND Local Offer.



To add your details to the circulation list for this e-newsletter, please email

IntegratedLDACommissioningTeam@Warwickshire.gov.uk



Warwickshire Family Information Service and SEND Offer Update

Live in Warwickshire and not sure where to start?

Contact the Warwickshire Family Information Service (FIS) for a wide range of information relating to children and young people aged 0 – 25 including, but not limited to:

- Childcare
- Money and benefits
- Housing
- SEND
- Health and wellbeing

Visit the [Family Information Service web pages](#) and [SEND Local Offer web pages](#) for information and signposting to services to support the whole family.

If you'd like to contact the FIS team, please call 0800 408 1558 (freephone) or email fis@warwickshire.gov.uk.

The FIS team also offer a 1-hour Discovery Webinar for parents, carers, and professionals. The webinar includes the role of FIS, takes you through a guided tour of the FIS and SEND Local Offer webpages, including information on holiday activities and food (HAF) programme.

[View future webinar dates and book a place.](#)



To keep up-to-date on events, services, news, information and support for your family:

- Follow us on the FIS Facebook page and the [SEND Local Offer Facebook page](#) and/or the [FIS X page](#).
- Subscribe to the [FIS newsletter](#) and/or [SEND newsletter](#).



WARWICKSHIRE SEND

[Read the September issue](#)



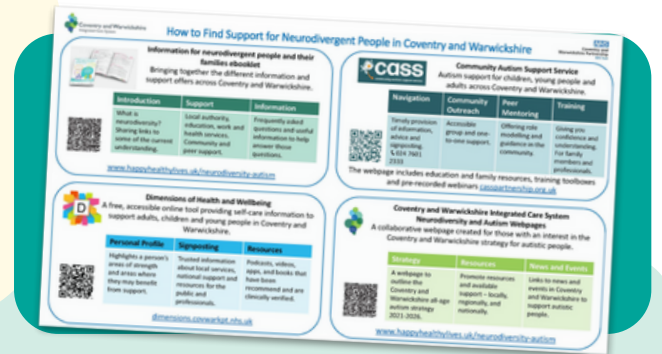
Remember, you can always visit www.dimensions.covwarkpt.nhs.uk at a day and time to suit you, and create your own Dimensions profile to identify your strengths and support needs. Then explore the support options available to you in the self-care flyers.



New overview of services for neurodivergent people and their families



To make it easier to navigate the support available for neurodivergent people and their families, a new infographic has been created, showing the four main places you can go to get support and be signposted to people, places and resources locally in Coventry and Warwickshire, as well as nationally.



These are:

- [The Information for Neurodivergent People and their Families e-booklet](#)
- [Community Autism Support Service \(CASS\)](#)
- [Dimensions of Health and Wellbeing](#)
- [Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care System Neurodiversity and Autism Webpages](#)

The infographic can be shared by email or printed and includes links to the websites and QR codes to enable you and the people you support to easily navigate to them.

Download the one page overview

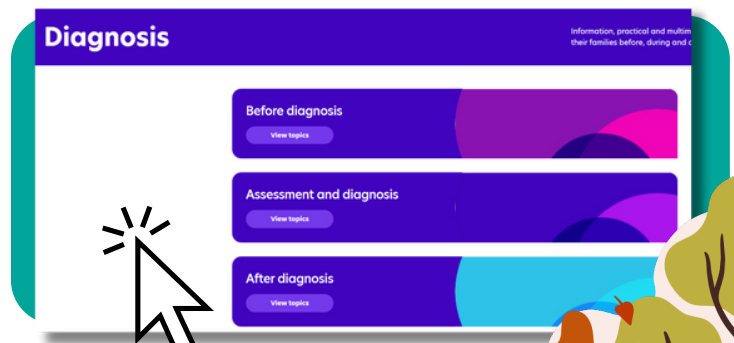
DOWNLOAD



National Autistic Society launches new Diagnosis Advice Hub

The National Autistic Society (NAS) have launched their new diagnosis advice and support hub, packed with evidence-based advice and guidance and practical resources, to help support people pre-assessment and post-diagnosis.

Take a look at the new [Diagnosis Advice Hub](#).



Health and Social Care Employability Academy



The NHS Health and Social Care Employability Academy aims to create meaningful and accessible training and employment opportunities for people from lots of different backgrounds in Coventry and Warwickshire. It is a collaboration between organisations across the Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care System (ICS) and is

led by four local NHS Trusts:

- Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust
- University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust
- George Elliot Hospital NHS Trust
- South Warwickshire University NHS Foundation Trust

The employability academy also works closely with local authorities, charity organisations and education providers.

Who does the NHS Health and Social Care Employability Academy support?

We recognise some of the best talent comes from some of the most overlooked and socially excluded groups, and this is something we are passionate about changing. The NHS Health and Social Care Employability Academy supports people living in Coventry and Warwickshire who identify with any of the following groups:

- people who are disabled or neurodivergent
- people who are a care leaver or child in care / child looked after
- people with refugee status
- people from other disadvantaged groups.

To express an interest in the employability academy, for you or on behalf of somebody else, please complete this [short form](#).

You can also contact the team by email at employabilityacademy@uhcw.nhs.uk or by phone on 024 7696 8744.



Neu Insight Training



[Neu Insight](#) is a reliable, evidence-based online training resource that aims to make spaces more inclusive for autistic and neurodivergent people. The training is informed by cutting-edge research alongside lived experience and is co-created in partnership with neurodivergent people.

[Find out more about their free training courses:](#)

- An Introduction to Neurodiversity
- Sensory-Inclusive Spaces for Autistic People



Research into experiences of autistic parents during pregnancy and childbirth



Phoebe Dacre is a first year Trainee Clinical Psychologist at Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Staffordshire University. She is seeking autistic parents that would be interested in supporting the development of her research.

Phoebe is currently creating her research proposal in which she is hoping to explore the experiences of autistic parents during pregnancy and childbirth. She feels strongly about the importance of involving autistic people at all stages of research, so is hoping to talk with autistic parents to provide ideas about the particular direction of research to hone the area of investigation.

She is looking for people to talk to via email/phone/video call to discuss ideas that they believe would be helpful to capture about autistic people's journey of pregnancy and birth. Are there topics which are important for research to capture such as, understanding any difficulties experienced during this time period? Or are there specific aspects in the perinatal journey which could be investigated, e.g. birthing environment, midwife appointments, bonding with baby, etc?

There would be no expectation to share personal experiences and experiences would not be included in the research write up. Your role would be to guide the research project rather than being a participant.

If you are interested, please email Phoebe.Dacre@mpft.nhs.uk

New sensory-inclusive supermarkets e-guide

Sensory Street has launched a sensory-inclusive supermarket e-guide. The guide was co-produced with members of the autistic community and based on research conducted at the Universities of Reading and Oxford. It contains information and simple tips to support autistic shoppers and employees and is designed for anyone who works in supermarkets.



Visit the [Sensory Street website](#) to find out more.



Coventry and Warwickshire Together for Autism Conferences

Together with Autism conferences are being held across Coventry and Warwickshire to support families and anyone who wants to better understand autism and find out about local support available.

The first conference took place in Coventry on 14th September and future conferences will welcome local people on:

- Saturday 9th November at North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (Hinckley Road campus) in Nuneaton.
- Saturday 7th December at North Leamington School

These conferences are open to family members of autistic children, and autistic adults, and professionals however, anyone can attend the conference for inspiring talks, workshops and to meet with your local service representatives.



This is a funded, ticketed event, free to Coventry and Warwickshire residents only.

The conferences will feature a number of speakers from across all sectors, including autistic people, and there will be a number of workshops taking place which you can book onto.

Registration for tickets will open 6 weeks before each event, with registration now open for the second event, taking place in Nuneaton on 9th November:

<https://bit.ly/TwAC2024Nuneaton>

Further information on how to book on to workshops will be shared closer to the date to all those registered to attend.

Free Autism training receives positive response

Schools across Warwickshire receive free 'Making Sense of Autism' training.

Schools across Warwickshire are embracing free training designed to improve support for autistic students, fostering a more inclusive school environment with a greater understanding and increased confidence to support pupils with special educational needs.



The cornerstone of this initiative, "Making Sense of Autism," is a comprehensive training module offered by Warwickshire County Council in collaboration with the Autism Education Trust. This training equips educators with crucial knowledge and strategies to better understand and support autistic students. Feedback from participants has been extremely positive, with 93% of delegates rating the training as good or above and expressing increased confidence and competence in their ability to create an inclusive learning environment.

[Read the full news article.](#)

Upcoming workshops and toolbox sessions with the Community Autism Support Service (CASS)

Learning about autism helps us all to build confidence and capacity, improves our understanding and provides practical support for daily living. CASS offers a choice of workshops and sessions for families/ carers, autistic people and professionals to join.

To find out more and to book onto any of these please visit:

<https://casspartnership.org.uk/training-and-education>



For parents/carers

Toolbox sessions

Bite-sized 1-hour sessions for parents, carers and family members of autistic children.

These take place fortnightly on a Tuesday evening or Thursday lunchtime. Each session focusses on a particular topic. Recent topics include: talking to your child about autism, going on holiday, sibling relationships and gender identity.



Teenage Autism Support Programme (TASP) of 4 workshops, each 3-hours.

Suitable for families / carers of children over 12.

Topics include:

- Understanding Autism
- Teenage brain
- Girls and Masking
- Self-awareness and identity
- School
- Transition
- Relationships

If you want to join online the next programme starts on Tuesday 5th November.

Children's Autism Support Programme (CASP) of 4 workshops, each 3-hours.

Suitable for families / carers of children under 12.

Topics include:

- Understanding Autism
- Sensory challenges
- Communication support
- School
- Person centred approach
- Co regulation
- The 3 C Pathway to help our children thrive.

If you wish to join in person, the next programme will be held at Allesley Park Neighbourhood Centre in Coventry and begins on Wednesday 6th November.



Insight workshops: Understanding Autism

An online 2.5 hour session for families of newly diagnosed children wanting to understand autism and empower their support journey.

Topics include:

- What is Autism?
- What local services are available?
- What are our children's strengths?
- What supports children to feel safe and seen?
- The 3 C pathway – a relational approach to successful parenting.

If you want to join these online workshops, they are available on Tuesday 15th October and Monday 18th November.

New Online Drop in sessions

An online, open space led by parents and professionals for anyone wanting to find out more about autism in relation to the child they are supporting.

You can join for all or drop into part of the 2.5 hour session. People are able to join and listen or to ask any questions they might have. These sessions will be led by the topics people want/need to cover and facilitated by the Act for Autism training team.

Please note this session will not offer a crisis or counselling service.

If you want to join these online drop-in sessions they are available on Thursday 3rd October, Thursday 14th November and Thursday 5th December.

To find out more and to book onto any of these workshops please visit:

<https://casspartnership.org.uk/training-and-education>

Please visit the above webpages to also access pre-recorded webinars and toolboxes around anxiety, masking, sensory processing and the 3 C Pathway.

For autistic adults - diagnosed or awaiting diagnosis:

Adult education sessions

1-hour information and discussion sessions for autistic adults.

Topics include:

- Understanding autism
- Masking
- Sensory processing
- Wellbeing
- Communication

These take place on a Wednesday evening and people are able to join the sessions with topics of most interest to them.



Professionals Corner

Upcoming workshops and toolbox sessions with the Community Autism Support Service (CASS)

Connections workshop 10 – 4pm online

A workshop suitable for all professionals working with or supporting autistic children.

Topics include:

- Links to local services
- Autism context/lived experience.
- 4 areas of difference
- Neuro affirmative practice
- 3 C pathway – relation approach to support
- Case studies

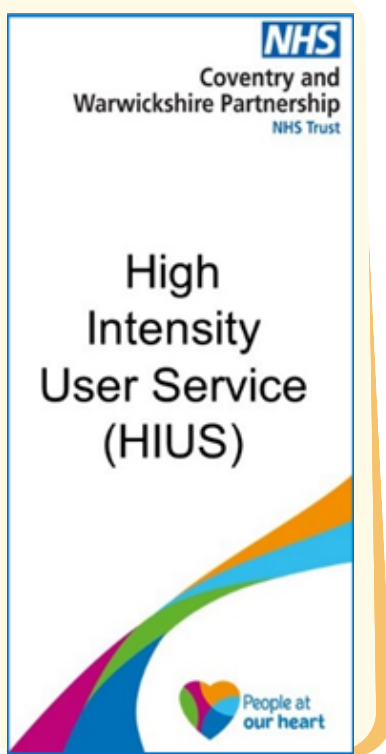
If you would like to join these online workshops for professionals, they are taking place on Tuesday 1st October and Thursday 21st November.

To find out more and to book onto any of these workshops please visit:

<https://casspartnership.org.uk/training-and-education>

Please visit the above webpages to also access pre-recorded webinars and toolboxes around anxiety, masking, sensory processing and the 3 C Pathway.

Adult Mental Health High Intensity User Service



The High Intensity User (HIU) Service acts as a bridge between individuals and services. It seeks out collaborative working to enable both the people who use services and the teams who support them.

For staff working in this area, there is an increased need of support due to the complexity of working with individuals with underlying unmet needs. The HIU Service offer teams the opportunity to pause and step back from their work, so they can consider what is happening for a person through reflection, team formulations and MDT-based teams' consultation.

The HIU Service will work with teams and individuals to develop a more psychologically informed understanding of a person's high intensity use of services. This assessment and formulation can be developed either indirectly or directly with the individual themselves. From this understanding, a comprehensive proactive plan (including risk) can be developed.



An MDT model will be paramount to ensure a holistic collaborative approach. This will be inclusive of the other Crisis Plus services for alternatives to admission with social care partners, third sector agencies and the system wide network.

The HIU Service will ensure that the individual is supported in the least restrictive way, promoting independence and recovery.

The HIU Service will offer psycho-education and training to teams about the issues that face individuals who are deemed high intensity users of services.



Inclusion Criteria

- Person is 18 years of age or over
- The individual will be identified as a HIU of secondary care mental health services (e.g., more than 3 admissions to a psychiatric bed within a 12-month period OR 4 referral episodes to liaison mental health in a month OR be significantly higher than average contact with other urgent care services, acute hospitals or West Midlands Ambulance Service).
- The individual will be open to a mental health service and have a lead professional.
- The individual will benefit from a team-based, collaborative approach, taking into consideration biopsychosocial factors of vulnerability.
- The individual consents to engaging with HIUS OR, where they do not but input is still considered beneficial, their team consents to engage in indirect work with HIUS.

Exclusion Criteria

- An individual aged under 18 years.
- Individuals who are not medically fit or where their physical condition is of greater urgency than their mental health presenting symptoms. (Medically fit is defined as there being no expectation of the area to which they are admitted providing any medical monitoring, treatment, or intervention over and above what the patient or relative would expect to undertake).
- Individual is unwilling or unable to engage.
- Drug/alcohol use to such a degree that it precludes engagement.



HIUS is a relatively short-term service. If working directly with an individual we would offer approximately 10 sessions (plus information gathering/getting to know you meetings/sessions) and would be aiming for 4-6 months, with a clear plan in place of which service/professional will be continuing to support the individual in following their Proactive Plan once HIUS has withdrawn.

