

PE1704/D

Glasgow City Council submission of 29 October 2018

That every young person going through an autism diagnostic procedure will be assessed within a calendar year and receive a statutory services assessment from a qualified social worker as an integral part of the process, within 12 months from the date of their initial referral

Response: It has already been determined that referrals for autism diagnostic procedures take, on an average 10 hours to assess, frequently with very considerable individual variation. This is obviously an extensive time commitment required by professionally-qualified staff.

No one test is appropriate for all young people and each individual referral may be assessed using a different combination of tools, for example, Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised (ADI-R), Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders (DISCO), Autism-Spectrum Quotient (AQ), Empathising Quotient (EQ), Systemising Quotient (SQ), Krug Asperger's Disorder Index (KADI), Social Communications Questionnaire etc.

In addition, early developmental history is gathered by whatever means possible (interviews with parent if available, partner, family member, early medical records, school reports etc.).

Whilst aspirational, we would question how realistic it would be to expect statutory services assessment to be completed within 12 months of initial referral.

That children with autism in mainstream schools will have their assessed needs for classroom support met by an ASL assistant with a recognised autism qualification as part of a mandatory registration process for ASL professionals

Response: Assessed needs for classroom support do not necessarily require that a dedicated Support for Learning Worker (termed an ASL assistant in the petition) would have to be employed to support meeting needs. If this were to be the case, there would potentially be significant funding implications.

Holistically it makes better sense to ensure that **all staff** within an establishment have the relevant skills and training to allow them to support the needs of young people on the spectrum rather than having an over-reliance on one SfL worker or group of staff which can also create an over-dependence on an adult.

The term '**recognised autism qualification**' would need to be clarified as would the reference to a '**mandatory registration process for ASL professionals**'.

Currently Glasgow City Council currently works in partnership with the Autism Resource Centre (ARC) which houses a range of clinical and non-clinical

staff. This partnership encompasses Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS, the National Autistic Society, the Scottish Society for Autism and Strathclyde Autistic Society, and already offers the following services:

- Information Base - advice and information in person, over the phone or through various media, via the information officer; library of current books, articles and service information; computer access to a range of online resources; operation of a duty system so that visitors have access to further specialist support and/or advice;
- Training - training to all individuals e.g. professionals, carers and clients; a wide range of training options are provided from one day autism awareness training to high level diagnostic training; training is also available on an outreach basis;
- Adult Autism Service - diagnosis and assessment (via community based clinics); individual & group interventions; support and linking to services; drop-in facility; user-led interest groups;
- Development Team - strategic planning for autism services; partnership working with mainstream services and care groups; ensuring standards of service delivery for all individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders; helping Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board and Glasgow City Council ensure that they meet national standards through involvement in a range of Parliament/Executive- led reference groups; ensuring consultation and participation for people with ASD.

The ARC provides training to approximately 1,500 people per year at a range of levels to a wide range of professionals and carers. Evaluations show that 95% and above of people who attend this training find it be 'relevant' or 'very relevant' to their everyday practice.

That young adults with autism will have a statutory right to specialist support from their local authority up to the age of 25

Response: We would suggest that this should read 'will have a statutory right to be assessed for specialist support'. Having autism does not necessarily mean that every young person needs specialist support.

That an Autism Act will be in place within the next 5 years to enshrine specific rights and services for autistic people in our legal system

Response: We would support this aspiration.