

PE1837/Q

Jane Hook submission of 26 January 2021

I wish to support this petition lodged by Stephen Leighton in which he asks for clear direction and investment for Autism Support.

I am deeply saddened that the Scottish Strategy for Autism is due to finish at the end of March 2021. It promised much for people with Autism but significant issues have not been addressed.

The Petition Calls on the Scottish Parliament to urge The Scottish Government to:

- clarify how autistic people, who do not have a learning disability and/or mental disorder, can access support and;
- allocate investment for autism support teams in every local authority or health and social care partnership in Scotland.

It is a disgrace that people with Autism who do not have a learning disability should not be able to access appropriate support services. This is of course partly due to the fact that people with Autism and have a learning disability still find the main focus of their service delivery is around their learning disability and not their Autism. This means many services do not address their actual needs.

Until the focus is on people's autism and the individual needs this brings service provision will not improve. it also does ill service to the many who have a learning disability but not Autism. Their needs are very different. It is therefore important that service provision for people with Autism should be appropriate to the individual's needs as dictated by their Autism and not whether they have or have not got a learning disability.

This of course should be done on the basis of 'Think National but act at local level'.

The Scottish Parliament already has a mass of information on Autism at all levels and surely by now should realise that urgent action is required for the massive number of people with Autism who are simply being lost due to lack of appropriate support.

I highly recommend that The Scottish Parliament should act on this Petition.