Training Standard: Autism

This **mandatory** training standard outlines training and practice standards for Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

**Who must have this training?**
It is applicable to all staff working for Cambridgeshire County Council social care services and its contracted partners. This document is designed to assist managers and staff in understanding the training required to meet their responsibilities in this area.

**When must the training be taken and when must it be refreshed?**
- Within 12 weeks of new care worker being in post.
- Refresher training at level 1 to be undertaken as required.
- Refresher training at levels 2 - 4 to be undertaken every 2 years.
- Refresher training can be face to face training; by relevant e-learning modules or by distance learning.

  - If a specific knowledge gap is identified or there are changes in service need then a full refresher will be required as soon as possible.

**How must the training be delivered?**
- Face to face; 1:1 or in groups.

**Who is qualified to deliver the training?**
- Trainer with PTTLS or Level 3 Award in Education and Training together with relevant subject expertise.
- Teaching Qualification equivalent to above together with relevant subject expertise.

All trainers must evidence subject specific Continual Professional Development / Refresher training and train others only to the level at which they have expert knowledge and experience.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Stage</th>
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| Level One: Raising Awareness | Within 12 weeks of commencing employment and before working with service users | **The Learner must know and understand:**  
Information about Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC):  
- That it is a spectrum of conditions; life-long and the prevalence in general population  
- What the main differences are for a person with ASC including social communication, interaction, imagination and sensory  
- The difficulties these can cause for the individual and their family  
- The need to ensure that people are treated in an equal and fair way, with respect, dignity and confidentiality  
- Specific information given where this directly affects safety or quality of service  

**At Level 1 only, initial training maybe undertaken by e-learning or included with Equality and Diversity training** | Competent persons/line managers must ensure that learning has taken place. This can be achieved by asking relevant questions and **observation** of staff practice. A record of this must be kept in the staff members file together with the certificate of training attendance. |
| Level Two: Basic Awareness of ASC | **Before** working with and supporting people with ASC | **The Learner must know and understand:**  
- Develop understanding of autism as a spectrum based on the theories of Kanner and Asperger  
- Relate this to the 'triad of impairment' considering difficulties associated with social skills, relationships, communications and flexibility of thought and behaviour  
- Impact of sensory difficulties e.g. sound, light, taste, texture, smell, body awareness and balance  
- Individual affect of ASC and understanding of difficulties associated with diagnosis and terminology used to described ASC  
- Awareness of other conditions that can be related to ASC  
- Emotional and environmental impact on abilities and the changing needs associated with a life-long condition  
- Need to adapt own communication approach and make other reasonable adjustments to service provided |
| Level Three: Developing ASC knowledge and skills | For social care staff working with people with ASC or those having an assessment role and **before** carrying out assessments | **The Learner must know and understand:**  
- Theories associated with autism and knowledge of other conditions e.g. ADHD, epilepsy, learning disability, mental health, dyspraxia, dyslexia, etc.  
- How ASC can impact on all areas of an individual's life and assumptions over perceived areas of competence should not be made  
- Possible causes of high levels of anxiety or fear for people with ASC e.g. change, routine, unfamiliar environments or people, sensory difficulties, etc  
- How this can impact on a person's behaviour leading to that perceived as challenging or socially unacceptable.  
- Reflect on the positive aspects of ASC focusing on the strengths and abilities of the individual  
- Understand how to assess and use communication skills appropriate to the individual and the variety of methods this may include.  
- Identify those who know the person well e.g. family and friends, work with them to develop understanding and develop effective ways of working  
- Know when and where to get additional support or advice on other approaches, interventions or strategies including those involving safeguarding and risk  
- Understand how developing the person can support overcoming areas of difficulty e.g. motivation and raise self-esteem | Competent persons/line managers must ensure that learning has taken place. This can be achieved by asking relevant questions and **observation** of staff practice. A record of this must be kept in the staff members file together with the certificate of training attendance. |
|---|---|---|
| Level Four: Development of specialist skills | Continuing Professional Development and/or development of skills to meet the identified needs of individuals/teams/services | **The Learner must know and understand:**  
- Sensory profiling  
- Environmental assessment  
- Communication and information processing  
- Personal behavioural difficulties  
- Diagnosis  
- Developing services  
- Transitions  
- To be commissioned on an as needed basis. |
The standards in this document comply with the following Legislation/Regulations:

Legislation and guidance that has informed these standards:

- Autism Act, 2009
- Fulfilling and rewarding lives, the strategy for adults with autism, March 2010
- Towards Fulfilling and rewarding lives, first year deliver plan, April 2010
- Implementing “Fulfilling and rewarding lives”, statutory guidance Dec 2010
- Improving Access to social care for adults with autism, SCIE Guide 43, At a Glance 49
- Autism skills and knowledge list, Skills for Care and Skills for Health

Government Guidance “Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives” makes clear that one of the most important steps towards improving services for adults with autism is to increase awareness and understanding. It directs this to all public services as being a way of providing a foundation for the changes to the way services are planned, provided and delivered for people with ASC. Within Cambridgeshire this is extended to those working in services commissioned by the local authority. This is in line with Skills for Health and Skills for Care who state in their ‘Autism skills and knowledge list, for workers in generic social care and health services’: "Every health or social care service should be ready to provide services to people with autism or to their families....."

(http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/developing_skills/autism/autism_skills_and_knowledge_list.aspx)

The Autism skills and knowledge list developed by Skills for Health and Skills for Care can be used as a checklist to demonstrate that staff have the right levels of knowledge and skills needed to provide a good service for people who have autism. They have been used as a guide in developing these training standards

Resources
National Autistic Society e-learning; SCIE; British Psychological Society e-learning 'Building awareness of autism'; “Supporting Me” guide for Personal Assistance for people with ASC booklet; Level 2, 3 Health & Social Care (QCF)
## Version Control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Created on</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>Next Review Date (subject to policy/legislation changes)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Version 1(2)</td>
<td>August 2012</td>
<td>These standards were developed by the cross-organisational Cambridgeshire Adult Social Care Training Standards Steering Group in consultation with the multi-agency Autism Consortium and Workforce Development Sub-group.</td>
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