

Working  
together to  
improve  
health  
service  
access for  
autistic  
people

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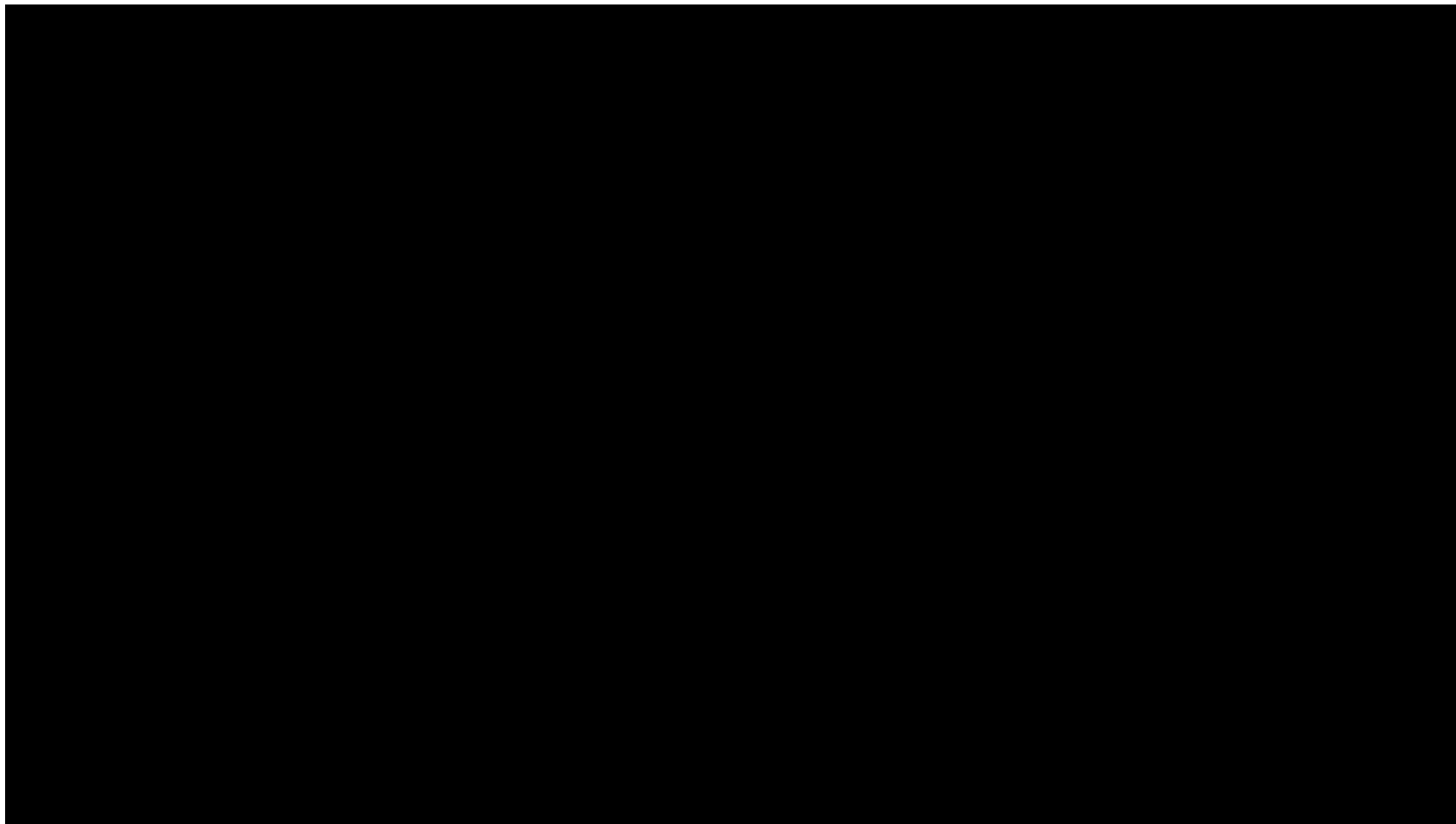
**Bristol, North Somerset  
and South Gloucestershire**  
Integrated Care Board

# Project overview

- started with autistic service users
- working in partnership with Trusts
- developed autism access audit tool for Emergency Departments
- Group audited 4 ED depts across ICB
- interviewed psychiatric admissions
- interviewed LD & autism liaison team



- **Why this project matters to autistic people**



# Hospital ED Audit Findings

Most had well spaced waiting areas

No staff awareness of autism – especially reception staff

Lack of separating screens for privacy or dignity

autism alerts not on medical records tested

'Volume' of too many posters on display

Noise and stress variable depending on time of day

Autism welcome poster was being used in some locations

# Recommended actions for hospitals

Account for different ages/gender with dignity

Pagers for people in quiet rooms

Autism awareness training – co-produced with autistic people

Autism training for 'meet & greet' volunteers

Promoting use of autism passport & flag on patient records

Reasonable adjustment resources in every area

Develop 'presenting problem' form for non-verbal patients

NHS/BASS autism wallet card

# Reasonable adjustments – actions for Trusts

## Sensory Resources

- Purchase of resources to support reasonable adjustments
- ‘Bags of Calm’ inc lights, sensory fidgets, gel squeegees
- Noise cancelling headphones, ear defenders, ear plugs
- weighted blankets or lap pads
- Essential oils/smells – lavender/orange
- Offer dark glasses/visor for light sensitivity
- Use of augmented communication tools
- Stickers to show dimmer switches for lights
- Stickers for plugs to charge tablets/phones

# Reasonable Adjustments For Autistic Patients

Possible adaptations that can help



**Quiet & Calm**

## Find them a quiet and calm place to wait

Autistic people can struggle with noise, lights, movement, smells etc. A quiet calm place to wait can help reduce stress.



**Clear & Concise**

## Use clear, direct, unambiguous language

Explain what is happening. Ensure you have been understood. Avoid sarcasm, irony & metaphors. Autistic people can struggle with general chit chat.



**Time For Questions**

## Allow enough time for questions and answers

Allow time for the person to process each question and their answer. Ask clear, closed questions if possible. Process of elimination questions can help. If asked to clarify something, do not just repeat your previous answer, something may still be unclear.



**Ask Before Touching**

## Autistic people may not like being touched

Ask before touching and only touch if necessary. Explain the procedure, where you need to touch and why. Stop immediately if asked to.



**Autism Diversity**

## Each autistic person is different

Treat each person as an individual. Check their autism passport. Ask about their needs & how you can help. Do not assume distress is health anxiety.

- **autistic members developed this reasonable adjustments guidance**



Avon and Wiltshire  
Mental Health Partnership  
NHS Trust

Reasonable adjustments are a legal duty under the Equality Act



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## Autism training for Emergency Department staff



These online training sessions have been specifically tailored for ED staff – clinical teams and reception desk. They will be a maximum of 40 minutes. Content will be practical and include time for questions and answers. The session will be co-designed and delivered with autistic people.

You only need to book/dial into one of the sessions that is most convenient for you. There is no limit on numbers and training is offered to ED staff across NBT and UHBW.

### Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 8:30am

**Join on your computer or mobile app**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 369 025 091 709

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### Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 13:30pm

**Join on your computer or mobile app**

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 352 540 805 792

Passcode: ePphfM

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### Monday October 10<sup>th</sup> 8:30am

**Join on your computer or mobile app**

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Passcode: r9JyCt

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### Monday October 24<sup>th</sup> 13:30pm

**Join on your computer or mobile app**

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Meeting ID: [376 516 072 568](#)

Passcode: GARPWE

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- **autistic members developed this co-produced autism training for ED staff**

Please share with as many ED colleagues as you can. The sessions will not be recorded due to confidentiality.

**Working together to support Autistic people**



# Making a difference to autistic people

