

KEEPING PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITY/AUTISM CONNECTED SERVICE

- **What is it?**

Keeping People with Learning Disability/Autism Connected is an ICS (Integrated Care System) project covering the North East and North Cumbria. It is a co-ordinated approach to help people with a learning disability/autism stay safe, well and connected during the Covid-19 Coronavirus emergency. The project is co-ordinated by the North East & Cumbria Learning Disability Network and Inclusion North. It is delivered in every Local Authority area by a local self-advocacy or other CVS organisation. Appendix 1 is a list with contact details of the organisations in each locality

- **Who is it for?**

The Keeping People Connected project is for adults with learning disability/autism (or those you feel may have a learning disability) living alone with limited or no regular support.

- **Why is it needed?**

In 2018/19 at least 41% of people with a learning disability who died, died as a result of a respiratory condition. There is therefore, strong reason to suspect that people with a learning disability may be significantly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

The size of the population of people with learning disability/autism who live alone with little or no support is difficult to estimate as they are likely to be on the fringes of services, perhaps just getting by day to day.

This project is needed to find those people not well known to local services. These people may be feeling isolated, scared, lack understanding of what is happening and as such not following 'stay at home' instructions putting themselves and others at risk of the virus.

• What the project will do

The project will urgently contact people with learning disability/autism who live alone with limited or no regular support to establish:

- Understanding of 'lockdown' and what it means for them
- Understanding of the virus, signs and symptoms and what to do if developed.
- Understand immediate personal circumstances e.g. support, food, medication, how to raise alarm for help
- Stay in contact on ongoing basis, if needed
- Support people to problem solve if things go wrong
- Support people to get help from other services if needed

• How you can help

Promote the Keeping People Connected service within your locality, teams, colleagues etc. Ensure colleagues working in the **new community hubs** are aware of Keeping People Connected so they can divert people with learning disability whom they might be contacting to a local organisation that has expertise and knowledge about working with people with learning disability and/or autism.

Other suggestions of where you can promote it are social work teams, community learning disability teams, GP practices, social care provider organisations, local police, local food banks, CVS organisations such as Carers Centres, MIND, Samaritans.

• Summary

1. This is a new service developed & commissioned as a direct response to the Covid-19 emergency.
2. It is primarily for adults with learning disability/autism who have little or no support and are not well known or not known at all to health & care services.

Appendix 1

Local authority area	CCG	3 rd sector org	Telephone number	Project lead contact
Cumbria (north Cumbria only)	North Cumbria	People First Cumbria	07763546116	David Blacklock
Northumberland	Northumberland	People First Cumbria Border Links	07763546116 01289 305423	David Blacklock Joanne Cowens
Newcastle	Newcastle/ Gateshead	Skills for People (covering Newcastle)	0191 2828737 Checkandchat@skillsforpeople.org.uk	Nick Ball
North Tyneside	North Tyneside	Skills for People	0191 2828737 Checkandchat@skillsforpeople.org.uk	Nick Ball
Gateshead	Newcastle/ Gateshead	Your Voice Counts (covering Gateshead)	0191 4786472	Lindsay Henderson
South Tyneside	South Tyneside	Your Voice Counts	0191 4786472	Lindsay Henderson
Sunderland	Sunderland	Sunderland People First connecting with Autism In Mind	0191 521 4123	Lisa Clark
Durham	County Durham	DAD Include in Autism Bridge Creative	01325 360524 / 01325 489999 07415761787 01388 44 94 10 hello@bridgecreative.org	Tracy Roberts Marie Jevon Ben Tinkler
Darlington	Tees Valley	DAD	01325 360524 / 01325 489999	Tracy Roberts
Hartlepool	Tees Valley	Skills For People	0191 2828737 Checkandchat@skillsforpeople.org.uk	Nick Ball
Stockton	Tees Valley	Catalyst	01642 265784	Karen Grundy
Redcar and Cleveland	Tees Valley	Skills for People	0191 2828737 Checkandchat@skillsforpeople.org.uk	Nick Ball
Middlesbrough	Tees Valley	MAIN	07584 914582 checkandchat@iammain.org.uk	Helen Jaques