

News story: Government review to improve the lives of autistic children

The government's review of services and support for autistic people is covering autistic children as well as adults for the first time.

The review will inform the new joint adults and children autism strategy to be published in autumn 2019.

The review looks at:

- joining up health, care and education services to address autistic children's needs holistically
- developing diagnostic services to diagnose autism earlier, in line with clinical guidance
- improving the transition between children and adult services so that no young people miss out, and ending inappropriate reliance on inpatient hospital care
- improving understanding of autism and all its profiles, including recently identified forms such as pathological demand avoidance (PDA)

As part of this review, the government will collect evidence from autistic children and adults, families, carers and professionals on how to improve services and support.

Supporting people on the autism spectrum or with learning disabilities is one of the 4 clinical priority areas in the NHS long-term plan.

Minister for Care Caroline Dinenage said:

I want to see young people on the autism spectrum given the same start in life as any other child. Currently, outcomes simply aren't good enough, with too many autistic children falling through the cracks and not getting the care and support they need.

With the right support, they can live happy, healthy and independent lives within their own communities, so it's vital we have a national autism strategy that works for both children and adults.

Children and Families Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

Our ambitions for children with autism are exactly the same as for all other children – to do well in school and college, find sustained employment and live happy and fulfilled lives.

Schools and colleges already do a great job at supporting children

with autism but we know there is more to do to make sure these young people are given the opportunity to unlock their full potential and succeed.

This pivotal review will help to find out how we can further our understanding of all forms of autism, improve how children and adults are supported and transform the life outcomes for people with autism.