

Cover Sheet Autism Programme Board Papers

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Title of paper

Royal College General Practitioners Clinical Priority Programme for Autism

Author: Dr Michael J White, General Practitioner, Waterlooville, Hampshire

Summary

Outline of how the College's Programme for Autism can enhance implementation of the 2010 Autism Strategy

Action required / recommendation

For information and discussion.

Date: Monday 3rd February 2014

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Summary: Outline of how the College's Programme for Autism can enhance implementation of the 2010 Autism Strategy

Action: For information

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1 Summary

- The Royal College of General Practitioners has adopted autism as a Clinical Priority from April 2014 until March 2017
- RCGP Clinical Priority programme aims include:
 - Raise profile & awareness of autism
 - Improve quality of patient care of individuals with autism
 - Stakeholder partnership with health, social care & third sector
 - Liaison with Clinical curriculum guardians
 - Development of a clinical network of general practitioners and others
- Dr Carole Buckley is the Clinical Champion
- RCGP Centre for Commissioning can be involved and facilitate setting of appropriate commissioning standards

2 The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP)

- Professional membership body for family doctors in the UK and overseas
- Network consists of more than 46,000 doctors
- Committed to improving
 - Patient care
 - Clinical standards
 - General practitioner (GP) training
- Voice of general practitioners on education, training, research and clinical standards
- Compulsory Licencing Exam (“MRCGP” or Member of the RCGP)
- Curriculum ownership and maintenance
 - Includes autism within “Care of People with Intellectual Disability”
 - Current version only mentions autism three times
- Clinical Structured Assessment (CSA) – autism cases
 - “Great validity”
 - “Expensive to run” (need two instead of one actors or actresses)
 - “High failure rate”
- No power over established general practitioners
- Post-licence membership is voluntary
- No statutory authority
- Persuasive influence only

3 Clinical Priority Programme

- Clinical Priority programme aims:
 - Raise profile & awareness of lower profile clinical area across primary care
 - Improve quality of patient care
 - Specific focus
 - Audit
 - Clinical innovation
 - Research
- Three year duration
- Nine active priorities

- Each led by a clinical champion
- Welcome submissions from charities & patient groups
- Priorities for April 2014 – March 2017
 - Autistic spectrum disorders
 - Health inequalities (relevant to individuals with autism)
 - Perinatal mental health (consider pregnant women with autism)

4 Clinical Champion Role

- Dr Carole Buckley
 - General practitioner, Fishponds, Bristol
 - Son, aged 24 years, has Kanner's autism
 - NICE Guideline development group for Adults with Autism & Children with Autism
- Honorary
- "One day per month"
 - Reality probably one day per week or more
- Influence & shape development & delivery
- Partnership with key stakeholders from health, social care & third sector
- Raise profile & awareness within primary care community
- RCGP spokesperson on autism issues
- Different to national clinical director role

5 What happens next?

- RCGP Steering group until March 2014
- RCGP Stakeholder group
- RCGP Consultative group (wider)
- Programme leadership
 - Clinical champion, Dr Carole Buckley
 - Clinical support fellow, general practitioners in first five years of practice
- United Kingdom network of general practitioners

6 Educational Support

- MRCGP Curriculum
 - Include autism fully – need liaison with Curriculum Guardians
 - Include scenarios in examinations
 - Include scenarios in CSA educational DVDs
- Postgraduate post-MRCGP
 - Essential Knowledge Updates (EKU)
 - E-learning module
 - British Journal General Practice (BJGP)
 - National & local training events

7 General Practitioner Autism Network

- Would be based on experience of RCGP Intellectual Disability Professional Network that is

- Very effective
 - Evidence-Based Commissioning Guide for Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG)
 - “A Step by Step Guide for GP Practices” including Annual Health Checks
- Regional approach
- Links interested general practitioners and others with each other and with the College
- Could link with CCG autism leads across England

8 Funding & who pays

- Funding is a significant challenge
- The College needs to raise its own funding for different work packages and for additional clinical time
- Joint funding with other bodies in past
- Dept of Health has commissioned RCGP autism e-learning package
- This programme could save much time & repetition of effort elsewhere in the NHS

9 General practitioner commissioning perspective

- Set up commissioning standards in partnership with RCGP Centre for Commissioning
- Benefits
 - CCG have defined standards
 - Consistency across United Kingdom
 - Improving the Health and Wellbeing of People with Learning Disabilities: An Evidence-Based Commissioning Guide for Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)
 - Dissemination of examples of good practice

10 Patient focussed challenges

- Raise awareness – everyone
 - Identification & diagnosis
 - Doctors
 - Receptionists can be effective as they interact regularly with “literal” individuals
 - All other primary care clinicians
- Patients with autism able to access our services effectively, e.g. make appointments
- Clinicians able to communicate with patients as autism can be a barrier to managing underlying problems

11 Aims & standards

- Clarity about aims & standards
 - Mindset of clinical practitioners
 - Mindset of frontline staff
- Achieving & maintaining standards
 - Current practitioners & staff
 - Future practitioners & staff

12 Issues – General practitioner engagement

- General practice under considerable pressure
- High risk of “professional burnout”
- General practices are not statutory bodies
- Who is responsible for staff training? Practice or CCG?
- “Commissioning mindset” is intrinsically different from daily general practice

13 Conclusion

- Nobody “owns autism” in the same way as cardiology, mental health or learning disability
- No national “clinical” director role to pull everything together
- Programme gives opportunity for coherent “clinician” approach within general practice
- RCGP aim to improve standards
- Programme needs to demonstrate that it can relate with front line primary care practitioners in their daily work
- Clinical Commissioning guidance is available
- Build up on expertise & work done to date

14 Facilitate autism strategy

- Facilitate curriculum to include autism
- Set appropriate standards for primary care practitioners
- Encourage increased awareness the possibility of the diagnosis of autism
- Encourage improved access for individuals with autism
- Encourage primary care clinicians how to communicate with individuals with autism