

Autistic Friendly Neighbourhoods

Newsletter



Neighbourhoods



Welcome to the second edition of the Autism Friendly Neighbourhoods Newsletter! A place to get all of your updates about the work happening in and around Hackney relating to the City and Hackney all age Autism strategy (2020-2025).

Last Month we held our first Autistic project steering group meeting at Hackney Hall. There were representatives from different partners across Hackney services as well as some key representation from our Experts by experience panel. We launched straight in to talking about what we mean by "Autistic friendly".

We wanted to think about what we would expect from autistic friendly services and spaces in Hackney. Some of the key themes which emerged from our discussions:

autism acceptance training
co-production
sensory environment
predictability

We are very close to finalising our 5 Autistic friendly standards. We will be consulting with Autistic led groups in the coming months to get people's opinions and feedback before we can start sharing it as a tool to support spaces to be more accessible to Autistic people in Hackney.

Language Matters

We recognise that every person has a preference on how they identify. As part of the City & Hackney Autism strategy, we use identity-first language. For example saying "autistic person" as oppose to "person with autism" (this was agreed by our local Autism alliance board). There is a general preference among autistic people for identity-first language. Of course, best practice is to observe the individuals' choices, and where it is not known, to ask.

A group of researchers (Dr. Ruth Monk et al). are advocating for the language used to talk about autism in science and more broadly in society, to change, so that we can move away from discussing it as a problem, and instead as a neurological difference. To find out more about their approach [CLICK HERE](#)

Are you Autistic and living in Hackney? Do you want to join in on discussions with the local council to improve services for autistic people. To get involved email us on: userengagement@hackney.gov.uk

SUPPORT FOR AUTISTIC PEOPLE

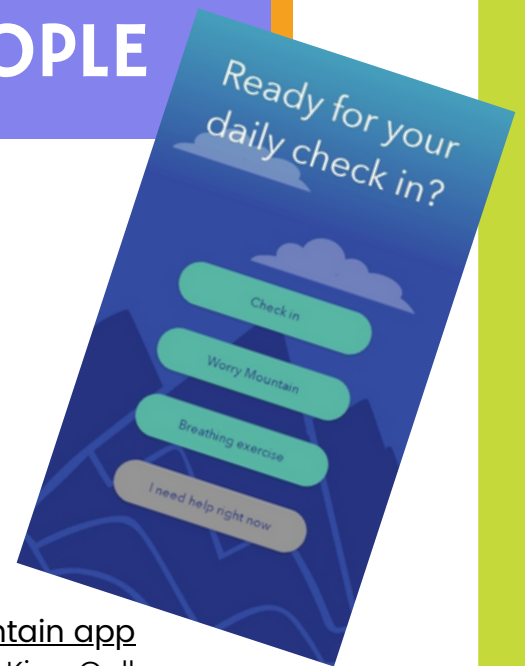
Supported employment service

The supported Employment Service helps Hackney residents with disabilities or health conditions to find work matched to their individual needs and interests. They offer:

- A dedicated advisor to support you on your employment journey
- Help with CVs, job applications and interview coaching
- Support for employers to make adjustments to the interview process and in explaining your health condition to employers
- Support to make changes or adjustments in the workplace
- Help to keep your job and progress in your chosen career and access to in work support
- CV and skill-based workshops (open to all!)

To find out more about their service and to make a referral visit their website

www.opportunities.hackney.gov.uk



Molehill Mountain app

Autistica and King College

London have designed an app to help autistic people understand and self-manage anxiety. You can use Molehill Mountain to:

- explore the causes and symptoms of anxiety.
- Track your worries and the situations that trigger anxiety.
- get evidence-based daily tips to understand more about anxiety.
- feel more confident to self-manage anxiety

The app is available via the app store and google play. To find out more about the app

[CLICK HERE](#)

Resources for Autism virtual groups

For autistic adults who would like to attend a group but from the comfort of your own home. Resources for Autism run three virtual adult groups online. Each group will cost £7 (with subsidies available on request). To find out more information by visiting their webpage www.resourcesforautism.org.uk

MEET THE LEAD FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES AND AUTISM AT HOMERTON HOSPITAL - SEBASTIAN GONZALEZ

Seb works at Homerton Hospital. His job is to support people who have a learning disability and/or are autistic during visits to Homerton hospital. He is able to support with planned hospital admissions, check that reasonable adjustments are put in place and make sure hospital staff are aware of people's needs. You can contact him via email on huh-tr.learningdisability@nhs.net or call 0208 510 7032.

To find out more about his work visit the Homerton hospital webpage: <https://www.homerton.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities-and-autism-service>



AUTISTIC FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOODS PILOT – AUTISM SPECIFIC ANNUAL HEALTH CHECKS

This month we were delighted to find out that we have been chosen to take part in a NHS ENGLAND & IMPROVEMENT (NHS E&I) pilot project. The pilot is looking at carrying out a number of annual health checks for Autistic people.

We know that autistic people are more likely to face a range of barriers when accessing healthcare providers. Unfortunately, this means autistic people are not always getting the healthcare and support they need when they need it.

NHS E&I and Newcastle University have created an annual health check which focuses on some key areas for autistic people. This includes diet, which can impact on health and functioning, gastrointestinal and stomach issues, sleep difficulties, mental health and emotional wellbeing and pain.

The annual health checks will be offered to a selected group of autistic adults in London fields. The process will then be evaluated and rolled out nationally, in line with the NHS Long term plan.



We have been spending some time collecting photos of the GP practices in the London fields neighbourhood.

These will be used to make visual and written supports so that the surgeries can be more predictable spaces and to support people to know what to expect when go to their GP practice.

The NHS England Learning Disability and Autism Advisory group are looking for autistic people, people with a learning disability and family/ carers to join their group. They want members who can share their experiences of health services so that they can make improvements. They are keen to make links with people who have a more severe learning disability and people from different ethnic backgrounds.

To find out more and/or to express your interest in joining visit the [NHS England website](#). Expressions of interest close on **14th Nov @ 9am**. For more information: e-mail: engage@nhs.net or phone on 0113 8249686



LOCAL UPDATES

Autism specific crisis worker recruitment

This month we welcomed Maria Bell as the Autism Navigator working within the Crisis Pathway. Maria's role will be to offer specific support to autistic people accessing crisis services. We will feature her in an upcoming newsletter!

Pain service @ St Leonards Hospital

We met with the Pain service to discuss how they could start adapting how they work with autistic patients to make their service more accessible. The service is hoping to consult with autistic people and to develop an action plan in the coming months!

MOUTH THAT ROARS IN FOCUS FILM SCREENING EVENT @ THE BARBICAN, CINEMA 3 19th Nov from 3-6pm

Book tickets:

Young neurodivergent filmmakers will share their everyday lives through animation, drama, documentary and experimental films. The screening will be followed by a panel discussion with members of the neurodivergent creative community, which will focus on increasing positive representation and opportunities in the film and creative industries.

WESTMINSTER CONVERSATIONS: What is neurodiversity and why should I care? Online event, University of Westminster, 8th Dec from 5-6:30pm

Book tickets

At this event, a diverse panel will discuss what neurodiversity means to them in their contexts (e.g social movements, business, medicine or university). How can organisations better support neurodiversity? What are the benefits to doing this, for all of us, and why are our institutions and practices so often hostile to neurodivergent people?



- Hackney Education – are offering free training for professionals who work with autistic children and young people in Hackney schools. All face-to-face training is held at the Tomlinson centre. Training can be booked through Hackney Services for Schools portal or the links below.

For the Primary schools training menu

[CLICK HERE](#)

For the Secondary schools training menu

[CLICK HERE](#)

- FREE ONLINE – Autistic Experiences of Pregnancy Loss and Associated Healthcare, Centre for Research in Autism and Education (CRAE) on Thu 3 Nov 2022 at 16:00. Book a space via Eventbrite [HERE](#)
- This web resource is a training package recommended by NHS ENGLAND for GPs and Primary Care practitioners. To access it [CLICK HERE](#)
- The 'More than words: Supporting effective communication with autistic people in health care settings' is a coproduced guide which supports healthcare settings to know how best to make spaces accessible for Autistic people. [CLICK HERE](#) to access it. Alternatively, it is available on NHS futures platform.

To subscribe to this newsletter, please email me: Jody.Barrientos@nhs.net (please note my name has changed from Jody Laronde to Jody Barrientos).

Special thanks to Francene Clarke-Walden, Quality Improvement Homerton University Hospital, for helping to design this publication