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| Present | |
| Jo Williams | **Laura Hill** |
| Savana Guy | Jonathon Martin |
| L (Ambassador) | Dawn Cox |
| H (Ambassador) | Helen Dunlop |
| Katrina Hill | S (Ambassador) |
| Kate Marks | Trish Darke |
| Chris Entwistle | Rachel Webb |
| A (Ambassdor) | Sue Taniguchi |
| Nicola Stanners |  |

Apologies Jo Williams, Jon Anthony, Ali Kingdon, Jude Pinder, Sharon O’Reilly, Adam Russell, R (Ambassador), H (Ambassador), Lorna Sinfield, Katy Heard, Rachel Gaywood

Introductions and Apologies

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting; introductions were made, and apologies noted. Dawn offered to Chair this meeting.

# Previous Minutes and Actions

The previous minutes were agreed as accurate, and the actions table was updated.

# Langdon Unit

Chris presented a presentation of the new unit being built at Langdon. It is anticipated that the unit will be open for patients in June 2025, however it will be handed to DPT in March 2025 for some simulation exercises prior to people moving in. Trish advised that she and the Ambassadors would be very interested in taking part in these exercises.

# Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Laura advised that this policy is for people using Council services and there is a separate policy for Council employees. Once this policy is complete, Laura will be working with teams within the Council to raise awareness of it.

S advised that one of the issues she finds with reasonable adjustments, is that they’re not always consistent and clearly recorded. Laura agreed, but added that when a person calls the contact centre, they can be recorded as a flag on the Council’s system.

Rachel advised that it would be good to have some information on the employee’s policy for when a Manager is unable to meet any reasonable adjustment requests.

Helen raised that she had recently received a letter which included information on accessibility needs, but did not mention anything about making requests for reasonable adjustments. The Board discussed how it would be great if it could be mentioned on official letters, so that people know that they have the option.

**Action:** Ambassadors to develop some potential text for inclusion on Council letters to highlight that reasonable adjustments can be requested.

# Autism After Hours

L advised that there have now been 3 sessions and approximately 7 people have been attending. These sessions take place on the second Saturday of the month. There are plans for a trip to the Autism Woodland Project, a project set up by a DFA member.

# Ambassador Update

* Jude and Sharon visited the Ambassadors to talk about upcoming work. The importance of the requirement was raised – this will be covered later on in the agenda.
* Barriers to healthcare – Helen, Trish, S and L have been looking at developing a user friendly hospital passport. They have amalgamated a few different passports already in existence and created their own. Helen is going to look into the best way of printing this to make it easier to carry around

**Action:** Helen to look in to printing options for the hospital passport

* Trish raised that it would be good for representatives from Devon Mental Health Alliance to attend a future board meeting to discuss mental health conditions comorbid with Autism.

**Action:** Trish to send contact details for Devon Mental Health Alliance to Savana. Savana to contact them to attend a future meeting.

* Trish also raised that there is a disproportionate number of those affected by Cancer due to being unable to get an early diagnosis. Abi Gascoyne will also be invited to attend a future meeting.

# Carer 1-1 and Group Support Summary

Sue advised that the group has been valuable so far however it is early days. It was noted that some of the Carers attending were from out of area, and that some carers may being missed due to the time of the day that the sessions are held. Trish advised that she can be flexible with out of hours appointments, but it was agreed that more awareness for the sessions is needed – this will be picked up during the next carers meeting.

# Carers Strategy

The Carers Strategy (which is undertaken every 3 years) is about to be published. Dawn gave a verbal update on this.

# Safeguarding & Counselling

The Board discussed that a generic approach to counselling does not always work, and with higher rates of suicide prevalent in autistic people, this is something that needs to be discussed more. It was agreed that Devon Mental Health Alliance and Public Health will be invited to the next meeting to discuss in further detail.

**Action:** Savana to invite representatives from Devon Mental Health Alliance and Public Health to the next meeting.

# Torbay Council Webpage

Savana advised that the Autism Partnership Board does not currently have a webpage on the Torbay Council website. Trish and the Ambassadors will meet to plan in more detail what they wish to include on their webpage.

**Action:** Savana to link Trish with the Torbay Council web team to plan the Autism Partnership Board webpages

# Autism Strategy

Jude provided an update prior to the meeting, advising that producing a co-produced autism plan for Torbay Social Care is on her workplan for this year. Jude noted in her update that conversations have been taking place with other ICB partners about a Devon wide strategy.

The Ambassadors advised that they are particularly keen to have a Torbay-only plan. Jo clarified that Torbay will be doing their own strategy.

Rachel noted that it is important to be mindful that some services work over both Torbay and Devon. The Board discussed that although some services work over Devon and Torbay, it can be difficult to get appointments in the Torbay area. Jo advised that there may be some space in Torbay which could be used for services and as a community space. Jo advised that these discussions are in the very early days and the space won’t be available for some time yet, but she will raise the idea with the Planning team.

# 9. AOB

* Rachel advised that Silverclouds, an online mental health support platform is currently being piloted. This pilot involves some Autism modules – if anybody would like to take part in the pilot of the modules, please complete the form attached with these minutes.

**Date of next Meeting:**

**Friday 24th May 2024, Large Meeting Room, 4th Floor, Tor Hill House, 14:00 -16:00**

# ACTIONS

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Action** | **Owner** | **Timeframe** | **Status** |
| 1 | AR to investigate scope, funding, and process for hiring additional sensory OT’s. | Adam Russell | Next meeting | In progress |
| 2 | RW to share the post implementation review with colleagues (OT’s). | RW | ASAP |  |
| 3 | SG to circulate information regarding the ‘carers rights’ day on November 18th. | SG | ASAP | Complete |
| 4 | JM to investigate the process of issuing the Health Passport to newly diagnosed individuals. | JM | Next meeting | In progress |
| 5 | AR to circulate the letter from Sonja Manton, detailing information on the planned inpatient units with the group. | Adam Russell | ASAP | Completed but AR will confirm |
| 6 | Kate Marks to attend the next DFA and Carers meetings and develop a communication strategy for information on exploitation and grooming. This will then be shared with the group. | KM | Next meeting | In progress |
| 7 | EM to circulate information about how to be involved in the social care webpages development. | EM | ASAP | In progress |
| 9 | Savana Guy to speak to Sharon O’Reilly if assistance dogs will be allowed on the Hospital walkaround | Savana Guy | ASAP |  |
| 10 | Adam Russell to link with Sarah Cubberly on South Devon College options | Adam Russell and Sarah Cubberly | ASAP |  |

# COMPLETED ACTIONS

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Action** | **Owner** | **Timeframe** | **Status** |
| 1 | Adam Russell/SG/ALC/Trisha Darke to facilitate Richard (Ambassador) to be Co-chair of the board. | Adam Russell/SG/ALC/Trisha Darke | Next meeting | Completed |
| 2 | LS to share the LD boards feedback on the inpatient units with SG to circulate to the group. | LS/SG | ASAP | Completed |
| 3 | Trisha Darke to email Adam Russell with the current requirements for the Leisure Card and funding needs, and Adam Russell to try and progress this with relevant colleagues. | Trisha Darke/Adam Russell | ASAP | Completed |
| 4 | Trisha Darke to send information regarding additional guest members for the next meeting to SG/ALC and SG/ALC to facilitate this. | Trisha Darke/SG/ALC | ASAP | Completed |
| 5 | TD to send information regarding additional guest members for the next meeting to SG/ALC and SG/ALC to facilitate this. | Trisha Darke/Savana Guy/ALC | ASAP | Completed |

# SUCCESS STORIES

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| **No** | **Success Story** | **What is the Impact** |
| 1 | Carers and Careers Group | Helped understand sensory and communication amongst the Autism community. |
| 2 | Leisure Cards | The Leisure card is now being offered to the Autistic community, and Ambassadors are being consulted to help communicate and implement an application process that works efficiently for everyone so the card can be enjoyed by all. |