

Draft autism law for Wales:

Autism (Wales) Bill



Please tell us what you think by **17 April 2018**

This is an easy read version of 'Autism (Wales) Bill [Draft]'

February 2018



How to use this document

This is an easy read version. The words and their meaning are easy to read and understand.



You may need help and support to read and understand this document. Ask someone you know to help you.

Some words may be difficult to understand. These are in **bold blue writing** and have been explained in a box beneath the word.

If any of the words are used later in the booklet they are shown in **normal blue writing**. If you see words in **normal blue writing**, you can look up what they mean in **Important words** on page 25.



Where the document says 'we' this means National Assembly for Wales.



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Introduction



My name is Paul Davies. I am an **Assembly Member (AM)** for Preseli, Pembrokeshire.



The **National Assembly for Wales** has agreed to let me try to get a new law for Wales.



The **National Assembly for Wales** is the parliament for Wales. It:

- has 60 elected Assembly Members
- makes laws
- decides how much some taxes will be in Wales
- checks that **Welsh Government** is doing a good job.





I want this new law to help children and adults in Wales who have **autism spectrum disorder** to get the support they need.



Autism spectrum disorder is often called 'autism.'

The proposed new law says that **autism spectrum disorder** means:

- whatever the World Health Organisation says that **autism spectrum disorder** means; plus
- any other **neurodevelopmental disorder** that the **Welsh Government** say should be treated in the same way as autism.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



A **neurodevelopmental disorder** is when something goes wrong with how the brain develops.



I am calling this law the **Autism (Wales) Bill**.



I have until 13th July 2018 to write the **Autism (Wales) Bill**.



This document asks for your views on the **Autism (Wales) Bill**.



If my law is agreed by the [National Assembly for Wales](#), it will then be called the **Autism (Wales) Act 2018**.



This proposed law says what more the **Welsh Government** must do to support children and adults with autism in Wales. An adult is anyone 18 or over. A child is anyone under 18.



Welsh Government is the government for Wales. It:

- has Ministers who are in charge
- makes sure laws and policies are carried out.





It says **local authorities** and the **NHS** should follow this law, and the guidance about it.



A **local authority** is your local council.



The **NHS** means various health services.



The **Welsh Government** can make new rules to make sure this law is followed properly. For example they can make sure other organisations have to follow guidance about this law.



The **National Assembly for Wales** must agree to any new rules.



This law starts 3 months after the **National Assembly for Wales** agrees to it.



Autism strategy

The proposed law says that the [Welsh Government](#) must write an autism [strategy](#).



A [strategy](#) is a plan that says what will be done to achieve our aim to get people with autism the support they need.



The [strategy](#) will say how to meet the needs of people with [autism spectrum disorder](#).



It will say how services will be made better for people with [autism spectrum disorder](#).



The autism [strategy](#) should be shown to the [National Assembly for Wales](#). This should happen as soon as possible.



The autism [strategy](#) should be written within 6 months of this law starting.



Checking the strategy

The [Welsh Government](#) must check the autism [strategy](#) often. They can make changes to it if they need to.



If they make changes to the autism [strategy](#) they must show them to the [National Assembly for Wales](#). They must do this as soon as possible.

Report on the autism strategy



The [Welsh Government](#) must get a report written about how well the autism [strategy](#) is doing.



The report should be written by someone independent. This means they are not involved in writing the autism [strategy](#).



A report should be written every 3 years at most.



The report should be shown to the [National Assembly for Wales](#) as soon as it is finished.

Writing the autism strategy



The [Welsh Government](#) must ask people their views about what should be in the autism [strategy](#).

For example, they should ask:



- people who provide services to people with [autism spectrum disorder](#)



- people with [autism spectrum disorder](#)



- groups who work with people with [autism spectrum disorder](#).



They must ask people their views about any big changes they make to the autism [strategy](#).

What should be in the autism strategy



The autism **strategy** must explain the best way to **diagnose** autism spectrum disorder.

Diagnose means a team of people work out if a person has **autism spectrum disorder**.



The autism **strategy** must explain the best way to do an **assessment**.

An **assessment** is when someone looks at what care and support a person needs.



The autism **strategy** must explain the best way to plan care and support for people with **autism spectrum disorder**.



The autism **strategy** should help local authorities and the NHS write clear **pathways**.

A **pathway** is a document. It sets out what services are available and how people can get them. They are services that people with **autism spectrum disorder** may need.



Pathways should show how people can get the services they need.



The autism **strategy** should say **diagnosis** should happen as soon as possible. It should happen within the timescales written in national guidelines.



The **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)** writes the national guidelines. It is an official group that writes guidelines for health and social care.



The autism **strategy** should say that there must be teams put in place to **diagnose** whether people have **autism spectrum disorder**. Teams should be made up of people with different jobs.



The autism **strategy** should say that an **assessment** of what care and support a person needs should be done within 2 months of getting a **diagnosis**.



The autism **strategy** should say that people should not be turned away from services because of things like their level of intelligence, known as IQ. Or because they have an illness.

The autism **strategy** should say how to meet the needs of people with **autism spectrum disorder**. It should say how different services should meet their needs. For example:



- Health services



- Education



- Support to get a job



- Housing



- Services in Welsh



- Other public services



- Support to be part of the community



- Advocacy. An advocate is a person who speaks up for you.



The autism **strategy** should make sure there are enough services in Wales. Services that support the aims of the **strategy**.



Everyone with **autism spectrum disorder** should be able to get these services



The autism **strategy** should say how to support children with **autism spectrum disorder** as they become adults.



The autism **strategy** should say how important families and carers are. They should say how they can be supported to help their loved one.



The autism **strategy** should say how important it is to listen to what people want. Services should be planned as much as possible around what the person wants. And their families and carers.



The autism **strategy** should say how important it is to find new and better ways of providing services.



The autism **strategy** should help new research take place into **autism spectrum disorder**.



The autism **strategy** should say how information about **autism spectrum disorder** should be collected.



The autism **strategy** should say how the **Welsh Government** will raise awareness of the needs of people with **autism spectrum disorder**.



The autism **strategy** should say who the most important staff are that can provide support. It should say what training they need to help them support people with **autism spectrum disorder**.



The autism **strategy** should say how services should be organised and managed. This is to make sure the autism **strategy** is being followed.



The **Welsh Government** has powers by law to say other things should be in the autism **strategy**, if it thinks they are important.



Writing guidance

The [Welsh Government](#) must write guidance to go with the autism [strategy](#). The guidance should say what needs to be done to follow the autism [strategy](#).



The guidance must be written and sent out within 3 months of the autism [strategy](#) being finished.



The [Welsh Government](#) must check the guidance often. It must check if the guidance is working.



If the autism [strategy](#) has changed it must check if the guidance needs changing.



The [Welsh Government](#) can make changes to the guidance to make it better. If they make changes the new guidance should be sent out as soon as possible.

What should be in the guidance



The guidance should say:

How teams of people can best work out if a person has **autism spectrum disorder**.



What services are needed to **diagnose autism spectrum disorder**.

Who should be in the team that carries out a **diagnosis**. Teams should be made up of people with different jobs. For example:



- A **psychologist**. Psychologists help people learn how to cope with mental health problems.



- A **psychiatrist**. Psychiatrists are doctors for mental health.



- A **speech and language therapist**. They treat people who find it hard to talk, eat, drink or swallow.



- An **occupational therapist**. They help people stay independent. They support them to be able to do everyday things.



- A **behavioural therapist**. They help people overcome problems with the way they behave.



- A **social worker**. They support people through hard times. They make sure people are kept safe.



How information about **autism spectrum disorder** should be:



- collected



- shown to people.



What training staff who support people with **autism spectrum disorder** will get.



How services should be managed in local areas.



The **Welsh Government** must ask people their views about what should be in the guidance.

For example they should ask:



- people who provide services to people with **autism spectrum disorder**



- people with **autism spectrum disorder**



- groups who work with people with **autism spectrum disorder**.



The **Welsh Government** must ask people their views about any big changes it makes to the guidance.

Collecting information about autism spectrum disorder



The [Welsh Government](#) must collect information about [autism spectrum disorder](#). It must make sure this information is correct. And keep it up to date. And let other people see it.



The [Welsh Government](#) can ask other organisations for information about [autism spectrum disorder](#) that does not have the names of people with [autism spectrum disorder](#) on it.



[Local authorities](#) and the [NHS](#) must give information to the [Welsh Government](#). Unless another law says they cannot.

Raising Awareness



When the autism **strategy** is written the **Welsh Government** must start raising awareness of the needs of people with **autism spectrum disorder**. They must keep doing this.

The **Welsh Government** must help people understand the needs of people with **autism spectrum disorder**. It must tell:



- the public



- employers



- people who provide services to people with **autism spectrum disorder**.



The **Welsh Government** must write about how well awareness raising has gone. It must write in the report about how well the autism **strategy** is doing.

Important words in the proposed law

Assessment

An assessment is when someone looks at what support a person with autism spectrum disorder needs.

Autism spectrum disorder

Autistic spectrum disorder is often called 'Autism.' The proposed new law says that autism spectrum disorder means:

- whatever the World Health Organisation says that Autism spectrum disorder means; plus
- any other neurodevelopmental disorders that Welsh Government say should be treated in the same way as Autism.

Definition

A definition is an explanation. The definition in this Bill will explain what is meant by autism spectrum disorder.

Diagnosis

A diagnosis is when a team of people work out if a person has autism spectrum disorder.

Draft Bill

A draft Bill is the words of a proposed law. It has not yet been introduced at the National Assembly for Wales. This means I can change it if I want to.

It will then be called a Bill when it is being looked at by the National Assembly for Wales.

The National Assembly for Wales can change the Bill.

If the National Assembly for Wales agrees to the Bill, it will then become an Act

Local authority

A local authority is your local council.

National Assembly for Wales

The National Assembly for Wales is the parliament for Wales. It:

- has 60 elected Assembly Members.
- makes laws.
- decides how much some taxes will be in Wales.
- checks that Welsh Government are doing a good job.

Neurodevelopmental disorder

A developmental disorder is when something goes wrong with how the brain develops.

NHS

The NHS means various health services.

Pathway

A pathway is a document. It sets out what services are available and how people can get them. They are services that people with autism spectrum disorder may need.

Strategy

A strategy is a plan that says what will be done to achieve our aim to get people with autism the support they need.

Welsh Government

The Welsh Government is the government for Wales. It:

- Has Ministers who are in charge
- Makes sure laws and policies are carried out.