

What is Autism?

Sunderland Learning Disability
Community Treatment Team
Information for service users



A member of staff or a carer can support you to read this booklet. They will be able to answer any questions that you have.

Introduction

This leaflet tells you about autism and being autistic. If you have questions, contact the team at Monkwearmouth Hospital. You can find their contact details on the back of the leaflet.



What is autism?



Some people are born with autism and it stays with them their whole life.



Every autistic person is different, but they might not always understand why.



Not everybody knows they are autistic.



More men than women are diagnosed with autism. Women can be autistic too.



Autistic people have differences with social skills and communication.



Autistic people often like their own routine and structure to feel safe and secure.



Many autistic people have differences with their senses. For example, how they feel, see, hear, smell and taste.

Differences and strengths



Autistic people can have lots of strengths including:



Noticing details.



Remembering facts well.



Staying focused.



Saying what they think.



Seeing things in a different way.

Differences and challenges



Autistic people can find some things more difficult:



Making friends.



Knowing what to say.



Understanding.



Knowing who to trust.



Coping with change.



Understanding other people's emotions and difference showing emotions.

Assessment



If you or someone you know, thinks you might be autistic, you can ask about an assessment.



For more information about assessment see the leaflet: **Autism Diagnostic Service**

Further information



There are some good websites which may be useful:

www.autism.org.uk/

www.autism-matters.co.uk/

www.ne-as.org.uk/

www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/

How to contact us



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Sunderland Learning Disability
Community Treatment Team
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Further information about the content, reference sources or production of this leaflet can be obtained from the Patient Information Centre. If you would like to tell us what you think about this leaflet please get in touch.

This information can be made available in a range of formats on request (eg Braille, audio, larger print, easy read, BSL or other languages). Please contact the Patient Information Centre
Tel: 0191 246 7288

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