

# **BOLTON ADULT AUTISM SUPPORT GROUP**

## **Minutes of the Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> August at Thicketford Care and Community Centre**

### **1. Welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chairman extended a very warm welcome to members present.

Apologies for absence were received from Elaine Birch, Helen Green, Janet Thompson and Alison Thompson. There were ten members present including our guest speaker.

### **2. Presentation: Dr Pedro Vital – Bolton University**

The Chairman said he was delighted to introduce Dr Vital to this, his second visit to the group in order to share the conclusions of this important piece of research undertaken by the University. The following is précis of his presentation entitled;

#### **Effects of ethnicity and Socio Economic status on the age at which a person receives an ASC Diagnosis.**

- Non-white population are 50% more likely not to seek a diagnosis, which has many practical issues
- Autism is a condition not a disorder – Leo Kanne 1943 'Happier when left alone'
- Autism initially classified as a childhood schizophrenia condition or more widely known as a neurodevelopmental disorder
- In 1980 autism considered a childhood neuro condition, we are now aware of the complexities and scope of the spectrum.
- We now know it can involve high functioning young adults – who do not get diagnosed until much later in the adult life, this could also include motor neurone skills but it nearly always diagnosed later in life
- The condition is known as the 'triad of impairment' and social communication skills i.e. socialization, communication and imagination.
- Monologue - reading others intentions, this can create a problem in enabling the young person to navigate
- Imagination - this involves repetitive behavior patterns and the young person finds it difficult to manage new situations
- In 1966 one in 10,000 statistically shared these traits
- In 2009 one in 100 statistically shares these traits, common in males
- In 2014 one in sixty eight ( and one in forty two being male)
- Diagnosis tools have now been changed, the diagnostic process now involved the family co-operation

#### **The above study implies:**

- Differential in ages of diagnosis, particularly in ethnicity/non white
- Severe cases at about nine years, or much later in life if learning disability is present
- Usually if a Learning Disability is diagnosed there is often no further diagnosis sought
- More prevalent in lower social economic backgrounds, this has an effect on early diagnosis and could be a co-variant
- Study involved 60 male and 19 female students – of which 16 from ethnic groups and the remaining white/non white
- A variety of ethnicity and social economic backgrounds etc., and also involved paternal occupations of which two things were of significance: when mother registered as non-white, diagnosis was earlier

- Genetic factors and reduced skills present in parents of young adults with the condition due to limitations and future directions
- The University intend to conduct future studies on a larger scale which will involve
- Family incomes and occupation etc., particularly as the survey carried out was in most part completed 'on line' and the University would like to see a greater participation from other European Universities

At the end of Dr Vital's presentation members asked a number of questions resulting in a lively and informative discussion.

The Chairman and members thanked Dr Vital for a most interesting and informative presentation.

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2017**

The minutes of the above meeting were reviewed and accepted as a correct record.

### **4. Matters Arising**

There were a couple of minor adjustments to the minutes after which they were accepted as a correct record.

### **5. Chairman's Report**

- A first stage application has been submitted to the Post Code Lottery Trust (which is a grant giving organisation) and if successful BAAS will be invited to submit a second more detailed application. The application is for the employment of a Volunteers' Co-ordinator to work within the Befriending service.
- Befriending Service – we have now placed an advertisement for volunteers on the 'charity job' web page and also with the Bolton CVS. The time scale for receipt of applications will be mid October.
- Awards for All application (National Lottery Fund) will contact early September, the scheme has been delayed due to NAS training provision not being available at the expected time. It is expected this will have a negative impact on our chance to obtain up to £50,000 due to our inability to provide positive progress so far and demonstrate the importance of additional funding.
- We are still looking for volunteers – please visit our website to register your interest.

### **6. Carer's Trips**

- Our trip to Port Sunlight was a huge success however transport costs for future trips in 2018 may be an issue.
- Next trip will be on the 6<sup>th</sup> September to Chester Zoo at a cost of £20 pp. This will be our last trip for 2017.
- Carers' feedback sheets need to be completed for each trip.

### **7. Dates of next meetings**

Thicketford Care & Community Centre 2pm on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

Drop-in at Commerce House 2-4pm on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2017.

**AGM: Will be in November on a date to be determined.**

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### **OPEN FORUM**