

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD: WEDNESDAY 10 MARCH 2021

5.1 Question from Clare Smith

The health and social care needs of the Norfolk autism community are largely unmet and autistic suicide rates are now of national concern. For autism, JSNAs rely on The Needs Assessment for Adults and Children with Autism. In 2019 it used, almost exclusively, extrapolations from national data. The autism community is unaware of any population-wide data-gathering about autism since then. Without such data, planning and providing services to meet our needs will remain impossible.

At 2.2.1 the JSNA says “Electoral Division profile dashboards have been completed”: what actual data has DPH acquired on the autistic population of Norfolk, as opposed to data extrapolated from national statistics?

Response from Chair

Thank you for your question. The Electoral Division Profiles, referenced in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Report for the Health and Wellbeing Board, provide a high-level picture of health and wellbeing in each division relating to our [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities](#). They are not a resource for prevalence of all local health needs and conditions.

The application of national data sources is a recognised way of understanding local population health needs and ensures data is verified, accessible and comparable.

If you would like any additional information regarding Autism information, please contact autism@norfolk.gov.uk

Supplementary Question from Clare Smith

Ms Smith asked a supplementary question at the meeting; she noted that among the legal demands to acquire actual Norfolk based data placed on Health and Wellbeing Boards to improve the lives of autistic people, was that they must make reasonable adjustments for autism. The first adjustment required by the Autism Act since 2015 is that all statutory officers, including Councillors, whose work significantly impacts the lives of autistic people must undertake in-depth autism training.

Ms Smith therefore asked whether Cllr Borrett and anyone else on the Health and Wellbeing Board had undertaken this training and if so when, and from which accredited training provider. She also asked if Cllr Borrett and Health and Wellbeing Board members had not undertaken this training, the reason why not.

Response from Chair

The Committee Chair, Cllr Bill Borrett, confirmed that he had not completed this training, and that a full written response would be sent to Ms Smith.

5.2 Question from Sue Vaughan:

With the current improvement in infection rates and the near certainty that Covid-19 will be with us long term, the need for the best possible infection control system is urgent. Local knowledge enables public health teams to trace contacts that the call centres haven't been able to reach. However, delays and the lack of resources prevent a fully effective service. Many Directors of Public Health are calling on the government to hand responsibility and resources to them and to end the outsourced contract with Test and Trace.

Should Norfolk Public Health be in charge of Find, Test, Trace, Isolate and Support for the people of Norfolk and Waveney?

Response from Chair:

Thank you for your question, this is an area reserved for national policy and is therefore a decision for the national government and not one we can amend here in Norfolk.

Supplementary Question from Sue Vaughan:

If the safety of the population would be best served by having responsibility and resources devolved to local public health, how can this be brought about?

Response from Chair:

Further to the response to your first question, our local Contact Tracing team in Norfolk is a great example of collaborative working across our public services and with the national team. This locally delivered service follows up cases identified by NHS Test and Trace. Specially trained local call handlers from Norfolk County Council contact cases, including checking local information to clarify and improve data details. If they are unsuccessful by phone, the service then extends out to ground teams at all the district councils who can further enhance the chances of engaging with local people.

Please note that this response refers to Norfolk, as the Waveney area would be the responsibility of the Suffolk Director of Public Health