

Autism passport scheme

A virtual online passport to enhance awareness and safeguarding of individuals with autism, by integrating records into NICHE (a record management system).

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Key details

Stage of practice	Untested
Purpose	Prevention
Topic	Public Protection, Safeguarding & Vulnerability Community engagement Diversity, equality and inclusion (DEI)
Organisation	Bailiwick of Guernsey Law Enforcement
Contact	Steve Gilman
Email address	stephen.gilman@guernsey.pnn.police.uk
Region	South East
Partners	Police Government department Health services Voluntary/not for profit organisation
Stage of implementation	The practice is implemented.

Key details

Start date	March 2020
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Adults Children and young people Communities Families Offenders Victims

Aim

- safeguard those with autism, whether they are a victim, witness or suspect
- provide enhanced information to colleagues dealing with those with autism

Intended outcome

To improve:

- understanding and insight into people with autism who are in contact with the police
- response for neurodivergent members of the public, taking into account their specific needs
- management of the incident or scene

To reduce:

- poor communication outcomes
- over-policing of those that are vulnerable, through better understanding and communication

Description

The force worked with Autism Guernsey, a local charitable organisation, to gain support for this initiative.

Research was carried out to see what was available and already being used in practice to support those with autism.

A form was developed, which acted as a 'passport'. This captures the specific details needed to further safeguard those with autism when encountering the police. This form was amended numerous times with assistance from stakeholders until the agreed form was accepted. The specific details contained in the form are:

- participant name
- home address and postcode
- gender
- date of birth
- phone number(s)
- email address
- details of two appropriate adult details (family member or friend)
- 'things you may find helpful when dealing with me'
- 'things that make me anxious or stressed'
- signed consent

A fair processing form was designed to accompany the passport, outlining how the force will obtain and treat the data provided.

Record management

The force investigated the possibility of embedding this form into a NICHE occurrence (a record management system incident). An autism-specific occurrence was created to house details of the person, the passport form and their appropriate adult contacts. This has the ability to flag their address within the warnings and markers, enhancing awareness for control room operators and colleagues.

Promotion

The internal communications team highlighted the initiative to staff and members of the public. It was presented to Autism Guernsey, and signposted to linked agencies within government departments and the wider community to alert those that could benefit.

Resources

No funding or costs were required apart from resource time during working hours to work on the project. Mainly the forms are emailed out, and they provide them in a printed version.

Overall impact

To date, 66 people with autism have signed up with consent. There has been a steady flow of new applicants to the scheme both at child and adult levels. This has allowed additional support when in contact with the police especially in light of the challenges that the third sector currently has ([Autism Guernsey](#)) around resourcing.

There has been a positive impact by the police and Border Agency when communicating with people who have provided their information, particularly around pre-planned warrants. Front line and other departments have continued to use the provided information and use it as guidance and approach in enhanced communication and relationship building.

The response from the general public and people who have signed up to the scheme has been very positive and supportive.

Learning

- a lot of information was considered for the form and a fair amount of it was removed for clarity and focus
- no cost meant that the scheme was easily accepted and adopted
- good communication helped colleagues to understand the importance of the scheme and to embed it
- linking the data into the force's record management system, so that the force took ownership and used it, was key to making this a success
- there has been a varied responses around what impacts people with autism, which has provided a learning opportunity of what the force needs to be aware of at organisational level

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Tags

Diversity and inclusion Vulnerable people