

# Supporting people with autistic spectrum condition (ASC)

## 1. Guidance notes

### What are knowledge sets?

Knowledge sets are sets of key learning outcomes for specific areas of work within adult social care. They are designed to improve consistency in the underpinning knowledge learnt by the adult social care workforce in England.

It is intended that the key learning outcomes within each knowledge set should be used by employers to develop in-house learning, and by training providers, publishers and awarding bodies to produce learning programmes, resources (CD-ROMS, videos, workbooks) and, potentially, qualifications. The key learning outcomes are intended to provide **minimum** standardised outcomes that employers may use *either* to produce their own in-house learning or learning packages *or* as a benchmark when buying in learning provision or learning packages.

### Why were knowledge sets commissioned?

The development of knowledge sets is designed to empower employers to produce appropriate in-house learning sessions for their workers or to buy in learning with some degree of confidence about what will be included in the learning packages. Knowledge sets facilitate consistency in learning packages produced throughout England so that employers can have greater confidence about the learning that employees transferring from other organisations and other regions may have received.

In 2008 a first series of specialist knowledge sets for workers supporting people with learning disabilities was produced, to accompany the then new Learning Disability Qualifications (LDQ). In 2009 a further series of such specialist knowledge sets was published, of which this is one.

For information purposes, this knowledge set has been mapped to:

- the LDQ Induction Standards
- the General Social Care Council (GSCC) Code of Practice for social care workers, which all care workers should have (available free from [www.gsc.org.uk](http://www.gsc.org.uk))
- other knowledge sets.

In view of the change from NVQs to the QCF, forthcoming at the time of publication, this second series of learning disability knowledge sets have not been mapped to NVQ units.

### Where and how are knowledge sets undertaken?

The employer and employee should decide the most suitable method of undertaking this learning in line with the needs of the service and the people who use it. Employers may choose to offer knowledge sets delivered in-house by their own trainers or on the

---

premises of external learning providers. They may use specialists in the field in the delivery of some learning.

### Who uses knowledge sets?

**Employers** use knowledge sets to provide knowledge and understanding in particular subjects for their workers so that the service benefits from:

- essential learning for specific tasks
- enhanced worker practice
- staff being supported to complete their qualifications by a systematic approach to underpinning knowledge.

Social care **workers** use knowledge sets to:

- assist their development of new skills to open up career options and as part of their continuing professional development
- improve self confidence
- support transition from other work settings into the social care sector, or between social care settings
- ensure their work is consistent with their direct care colleagues' 'best practice'.

Professional language or correct terminology has been used. Knowledge sets have been written primarily for employers rather than for individual learners.

**Learning providers, publishers and awarding bodies** also use knowledge sets in the design of training programmes, materials and awards.

Topics covered by Skills for Care learning disability knowledge sets	Cross-referenced as:
<i>Series 1:</i>	
• History and context of learning disability services	H&C
• Communication	C
• Relationships	R
• Accessing and using information	AI
• Independence and well being	I&WB
<i>Series 2:</i>	
• Working in partnership with family carers	FC
• Supporting people with autistic spectrum condition	AC
• Supporting people positively with their behaviour	SPPB
• Supporting people to be part of their community	SPPC

Published by Skills for Care, part of Skills for Care and Development, the sector skills council for social care, children and young people.

[www.skillsforcare.org.uk](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk)

Albion Court, 5 Albion Place, Leeds LS1 6JL

© Skills for Care, 2009

This material may be copied, with due acknowledgement of its source, for the promotion of social care workforce development.

## 2. Supporting people with autistic spectrum condition (ASC)

Main area	Learning outcome	Cross reference to:		
		LDQ Induction Standards	GSCC Code of Practice (workers)	Other Knowledge Sets
1. Understanding autistic spectrum condition (ASC)	1.1 Understand that ASC is a spectrum and that individuals have different needs and will be affected differently		1.1	I&WB 3.4
	1.2 Know that there are many different and evolving theories about autism			
	1.3 Understand that people with ASC can learn new things			
	1.4 Understand that people with ASC are likely to be good at some things and not so good at others (sometimes called a 'spiky profile')			I&WB 3.4
	1.5 Understand that the abilities of a person with ASC may vary dramatically depending on their emotional state and environment			I&WB 3.4 SPPB 3.5, 3.6
	1.6 Understand what diagnosis the person has and that not everyone has a diagnosis			I&WB 3.4
	1.7 Understand how labelling can be bad for a person			I&WB 1.9 SPPB 1.5, 1.6 H+C 1.3
	1.8 Know about the history and role of the 'autism rights movement'			I&WB 3.4 H+C 2.1, 2.2, 2.3
	1.9 Recognise and understand how the physical environment can impact upon an individual and the way they behave and communicate			SPPB 2.6, 3.5 FC 4.4, 4.6
	1.10 Understand that different people may prefer to use the term 'condition' 'disorder', 'disability' or 'differences'			I&WB 1.2 SPPB 3.5, 3.6
	1.11 Understand that some people			I&WB 3.4

Main area	Learning outcome	Cross reference to:		
		LDQ Induction Standards	GSCC Code of Practice (workers)	Other Knowledge Sets
	<p>with autism may have difficulties with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• non-literal use of language</li> <li>• non-verbal communication</li> <li>• thinking in an abstract way</li> <li>• predicting the consequences of their actions</li> <li>• being able to use their own initiative</li> <li>• transferring learned skills into new situations</li> </ul>			
	1.12 Understand that some people with an ASC may be much more or less affected by particular sensory stimulus than other people			I&WB 3.4
	1.13 Recognise how ASC impacts on all aspects of identity, self esteem and self image			
	1.14 Understand how to get to know the people you are supporting	201-3.1		
	1.15 Understand what is meant by 'triad of impairments' (i.e. problems with social skills and relationships; language and communicating with others; and thinking and behaving flexibly)			I&WB 3.4
	1.16 Understand how the individual impairments within the triad might affect the people you support and those close to them			I&WB 3.4
	1.17 Understand how ASC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• impacts on the lives of individuals with ASC</li> <li>• can affect all aspects of the person's daily and social functioning</li> <li>• impacts on parents,</li> </ul>			I&WB 3.4 FC 4.1

Main area	Learning outcome	Cross reference to:		
		LDQ Induction Standards	GSCC Code of Practice (workers)	Other Knowledge Sets
	families, carers* and other key people in the person's life (i.e. those people who are key to the person's health and social well-being)			
	1.18 Understand how to support a structured environment			
	1.19 Understand the importance a special interest may have to a person with ASC			
	1.20 Understand why it is important to work consistently	202-4.1		C 2.3 SPPB 5.12
	1.21 Understand that a person with ASC may need support to manage change and unpredictability			
	1.22 Know about other conditions that may be associated with ASC, particularly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ADHD</li> <li>• dyspraxia</li> <li>• dyslexia</li> <li>• bowel &amp; bladder conditions</li> <li>• epilepsy</li> <li>• learning disability</li> <li>• mental health issues</li> </ul>			I&WB 3.4
2. The law and policies	2.1 Know which laws and policies are important when you are supporting someone with ASC	202-2.1 202-4.1 203-1.1	3.3, 3.6, 6.1	
	2.2 Know how to help the person understand relevant laws and policies	202-4.1 203-1.1		
3. Getting to know the person you support	3.1 Know how to use the information you have been given			AI 8.1
	3.2 Know how to work collaboratively with families and carers, other professionals		6.5, 6.7	C 5.2 FC 4.1, 4.2

\* 'Carer' is used throughout to mean family and friends of the person being supported, as distinct from care workers.

Main area	Learning outcome	Cross reference to:		
		LDQ Induction Standards	GSCC Code of Practice (workers)	Other Knowledge Sets
	and the person themselves			I&WB 6.4
	3.3 Understand how to help someone understand their own autism			
	3.4 Know what routines, timetables and structures are important to the person you support and why			I&WB 1.6
	3.5 Understand how to match your support to the person's needs	201-4.1	1.1, 1.2, 1.3	I&WB 1.2
	3.6 Know the importance of empathising with the person you support			
	3.7 Understand what triggers anxiety and stress for the person you support			
	3.8 Understand techniques that help the person you support to calm down if they are anxious or stressed			C 3.3
	3.9 Understand why it is important to support someone to take risks	201-6.1	4.1	I&WB 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 SPPC 1.2
	3.10 Know what appropriate action to take when an individual's anxiety levels are likely to present a risk to themselves, others, you or the environment	202.-4.1 203-1.1	3.2, 3.3, 4.3	
	3.11 Know what is meant by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• person-centred approaches</li> <li>• information processing</li> <li>• autistic spectrum</li> <li>• diagnostic criteria</li> <li>• historical perspective</li> <li>• theory of mind</li> <li>• 'unconditional positive regard'</li> </ul>	201-1.1		C 5.1 I&WB 1.1
	3.12 Understand why it is	202-6.1	2.2	C 2.1

Main area	Learning outcome	Cross reference to:		
		LDQ Induction Standards	GSCC Code of Practice (workers)	Other Knowledge Sets
	important to check the effect your own verbal and non-verbal communication techniques have on the individual you support			
	3.13 Understand the preferred communication styles of the person you support and know how to use them	202-6.1	2.2	C 1.1, 2.1
4. How to support the person through good practice	4.1 Understand how to support someone's communication for example with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social stories</li> <li>• sequences (comic strips)</li> <li>• scripts</li> <li>• picture exchange</li> <li>• diaries/activity schedules</li> <li>• objects of reference</li> </ul>	202-6.1		C 1.2
	4.2 Understand how to help a person with ASC protect themselves from unfairly being taken advantage of	204-2.1		SPPC 6.6 R 1.7, 1.6
	4.3 Know when to question decisions made by a person you support			
	4.4 Know about the range of approaches, interventions and strategies			
	4.5 Understand how to get advice on an approach, intervention or strategy.			AI 9.2, 9.3 SPPB 7.3, 7.4
	4.6 Recognise the importance of working consistently and the effects of change and unpredictability on the person's behaviour			C 2.3 SPPB 5.12
	4.7 Understand the importance of helping people to develop new skills and abilities that will enable them to communicate and function socially			C 5.2, 5.3 I&WB 7.3

Main area	Learning outcome	Cross reference to:		
		LDQ Induction Standards	GSCC Code of Practice (workers)	Other Knowledge Sets
	4.8 Know how to reflect on your own practice and where to go for help to do this		6.8	AI 9.3 C 1.4, 4.5 I&WB 7.7
	4.9 Understand how to create and maintain a structured environment	202-4.1		
	4.10 Understand what is meant by providing support to enable the person you support and others to identify and communicate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>any changes that have taken place or are about to take place and the likely impact of the change</li> <li>the individuals associated with the change</li> <li>any methods they can use or need to develop to cope with and manage the change</li> <li>any risks associated with the change</li> </ul>	201-4.1		
	4.11 Understand how to promote choice and control for the person you support, and how this might feel for the person	201-4.1	1.3	I&WB 3.1, 6.5, 7.3
	4.12 Understand the difference between caring for someone and enabling someone	201-4.1		

