

## 2 SERVICES FOR ADULTS WITH AUTISM

- 2.1 Individual** - specific programmes will be designed to address all aspects of development, satisfaction with life, health and fitness and interventions in disability. The service will be organised in such a way as to facilitate appropriate help to each individual. Programmes will be based on the TRIAD OF IMPAIRMENTS - Imagination, Communication, Social Skills. Services will in future be offered subject to a formal contract. Details are available from each service.
- 2.2 Service Users** - the service is geared to the needs of adults with autism and related conditions. It is our aim to actively intervene in the disabling effects of autism by reducing anxiety and assisting in learning, rather than to provide an environment which simply colludes with the disability by failing to provide challenges. In this context, it is essential that staff are trained in understanding autism and applying their understanding of the Triad of Impairments to real situations. It is essential that a thorough assessment of individual needs and the scheme's capability is made before placement. Adjustments can be made to individual programmes to cater for most levels of disability but there may be instances when, due to the nature of a particular service it is not in the interests of the person to be placed.
- 2.3 Protection and Rights of Service Users** - a statement of rights is enclosed in this brochure.
- 2.4 Assessment and Selection** - careful assessment of an individual's needs is undertaken by an admissions panel of each service. This panel includes relevant professional and managerial input. All placements are subject to a trial period, usually of 6 months. During this period, regular formal reviews are held before the panel considers confirmation of the placement.
- 2.5 Individual Programme Plans** - planning is conducted on an individual basis. This will reflect disability, needs, age, views and wishes. Such planning will also involve the supporters of each individual, i.e. family, friends or advocates. A programme of help will be devised which involves the service user to actively address specific areas of disability and to work towards the service aim of the achievement of a full life. Formal reviews of progress and plans are held at least annually and include the service user, their supporter and the sponsoring agency.
- 2.6 Other Support** - we encourage service users to develop feelings of security and to form relationships with others in the immediate and the extended community. We actively encourage involvement of families in the support of their family member and

paramount. Where there is possible conflict, this would be fully discussed.

**2.7 Development** - it is our aim to assist each service user in the development of skills that will enable their full participation in the life of the immediate and wider community. To develop competence in areas that will enhance the ability for self-determination and acceptance.

**2.8 Leisure** - we encourage the development of a wide range of leisure interests. By providing experience we can widen opportunities for informed decision making. As one aspect of autism is a narrowing of interests and emphasis on routine, it is essential that this is addressed. It is also important to enjoy relaxation and have fun!

**2.9 Health Needs** - a healthy, balanced diet is an essential prerequisite for a good service. Menus which reflect dietary needs are carefully planned involving the residents. Careful monitoring of intake of fats, sugar and additives is undertaken.

Vegetarian diets and those which reflect the cultural racial background of service users are available.

Service users are encouraged to take regular exercise as part of the lifestyle of the service.

Staff are not permitted to smoke on duty and the service makes special arrangements for those users who choose to smoke, having regard to the interest of other users and staff.

**2.10 Medical Care** - each person is registered with the local primary health care service. Access to more specialised medical intervention is usually via this route although the NAS has access to in-house expertise in Psychiatry, Psychology and Behavioural Management.

Medical needs, particularly medication, are kept under close and regular review.

**2.11a Staff** - staff are recruited on the basis of an Equal Opportunities Policy. We seek to provide staff with a wide range of expertise and from varied backgrounds which will support the service users in developing a fulfilled lifestyle. We also seek to recruit staff on the basis of their qualifications and experience and their compatibility with the service users reflecting, as far as possible, racial, age and cultural backgrounds. In addition to their qualifications and expertise staff must share our values of assisting each service user to achieve as full a life as possible.

**2.11b Staff - Structure** - staff are organised in such a way as to provide continuity and

users, we have specialist staff in the areas of Imagination, Communication and Social Skills.

**2.11c Staff - Training** - staff receive training according to their needs, interests and the task in hand. Training includes professional social work training, management, specific interventions, nutrition and hygiene. The NAS also seconds staff on a range of qualifying and post qualification professional courses.

**2.11d Staff - Supervision/Development** - each member of staff has an individual development plan which addresses their need to develop competence in all areas of their work. They receive help and encouragement to achieve personal goals which are geared at all times to the needs of the service and the resident. Training needs are assessed in this context.

**.11e Staff - Communication** - staff meet regularly in teams to discuss all aspects of the running of the service and their views are actively sought. In addition, regular communication days are held with family and carers to discuss issues of wider interest which reflect on the development of the service.

**2.12 Staff Conduct** - The NAS expects the highest standards of conduct from its employees in support of the care of its residents. Detailed procedures on equal opportunities, conduct and grievances are available to staff.