



SUMMARY OF IMPACT (Equality Impact Assessment EQIA)

General Equality Duty is to:

- *Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010*
- *Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not*
- *Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.*

Autism is a disability and therefore a Protected Characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Carers are also likely to be affected by the changes.

Stage 1 – About your work.

The Highland One Stop Shop (HOSS) services are delivered by Autism Initiatives, it is not an NHS Service.

The EQIA assesses the impact of the withdrawal of Autism Initiatives and the closure of the Highland One Stop Shop, this will have a major impact upon a limited number of people with protected characteristics.

Autism is a disability and therefore a Protected Characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Carers are also likely to be affected by the changes.

Evidence considered in this Summary of Impact:

1. ARGH Report. Highland One Stop Shop: user evaluation (no date on publication but shared with NHS Highland in January 2018)

Due to time constraints this IEQA has only included participation of NHS Highland employees.

Stage 2 – How people might be affected by your work

The current level of incidence of autism is 1 in 100. Highland has a population of 200,000; the incidence in Highland is estimated at 2000 people.

500 people are registered with the HOSS and approximately 50 attend as regular users.

Negative impact of closure	Opportunities created from closure
Loss of Autistic Friendly space (previously lost, however if Autism Initiatives no longer have a presence in Highland there is less likelihood of new space being identified and resourced)	Potential to enable closer working with community partnerships to ensure individual's needs are met in their local community, thus addressing the remote & rural issues.
Loss of organised leisure / social activities with peers that offer support and feelings of being understood, therefore potential of decreased wellbeing, poorer mental health and increased loneliness.	The current situation has enabled the inclusion of Drew Hendry who states in the press that he will attempt to identify additional stakeholders who could create a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of existing HOSS users.
Potential of increased poverty due to inability to access benefits. Increase workload for CAB to support autistic people through benefits system.	Increased demand on MH workers and therefore opportunity to increase skills and knowledge to ensure MH services are accessible to all.
Increase workload on Diagnostic service workers (Highly specialist health professionals) as increase demand in requests for training.	The increased publicity increases awareness of the needs of autistic people in Highland.
Loss of ease of access to information regarding autism and the potential related issues.	Individuals maintain friendships and relationships through their own volition and due to necessity, expand leisure / social opportunities beyond those offered by HOSS.
Loss of opportunity to meet peers may have a significant impact upon the ability of autistic people to participate in public life.	Opportunity to increase knowledge and awareness of needs of autistic people across a wide range of support networks and services to ensure people's needs are met "at source".
	Lessen dependence on paid workers and therefore increase resilience and mental well being.
Influence for other individuals with protected characteristics	
<i>Impact upon Older Autistic People:</i> not known how many older autistic people access support via HOSS	
<i>Impact upon Children with Autism:</i> HOSS provide support to adults over the age of 16, therefore children with autism are not affected	
<i>Impact upon Carers:</i> some carers will benefit from respite offered by activity groups and the support their cared for person receives from HOSS	

Stage 3 – Promoting Access to services and rights to care and support

Some autistic people benefit from the support offered by HOSS, all have been signposted by existing services. Referrers will now be required to provide support and / or find alternatives based on their assessment of the individuals needs.

For further details regarding the promotion of autistic people's rights to health, care & support please see Highland Autism Strategy & Outcome Plan (currently in a consultation phase)

<http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk/YourHealth/Pages/Autism.aspx>

Alternative opportunities to promote equality and / or foster good relations include:

- Review existing NHS Highland assets to identify opportunity
- Increase training to NHS Highland staff and other key stakeholders
- Continuation and consolidations of links with other 3rd sector organisations to provide support

Some of the negative impacts of closure of the HOSS have already been experienced by autistic people in the loss of an autistic friendly space. The other potential negative impacts could be resourced elsewhere.

Stage 4 – Taking action based on your findings

Recommendations:

- Complete an EQIA on the Highland Autism Strategy & Draft Outcome Plan
- Ensure opportunities are available to discuss alternatives with autistic people
- Explore the potential and suitability of NHS Highland building space as autistic friendly space that can be made regularly available.
- Recognise the distress caused to autistic people during this time of uncertainty and change
- Ensure the needs of autistic people are reflected in other NHS Highland strategy documents.

Select which one of the following steps you are taking following this assessment:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No major change | <input type="checkbox"/> Adjust the work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Continue the work | <input type="checkbox"/> Stop the work |

The HOSS is not an NHS Service therefore it is not a requirement of NHS Highland to complete the above stage.