

Scottish autism

WHERE AUTISTIC PEOPLE
ARE VALUED



Enabling happy, healthy and fulfilling lives

OUR APPROACH



At Scottish Autism, we place wellbeing at the heart of our personalised support as we enable people to lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives.

Our diverse range of services includes education, day and vocational opportunities, residential, supported living, outreach and specialist transition support. We support autistic people, families and professionals across Scotland and beyond through our Autism Advice Line, One Stop Shop, Training and Consultancy service, Right Click online support programmes, and other community support services.

As the largest provider of autism-specific services in Scotland, it is our responsibility to advocate for better autism practice, and to champion the voices and rights of autistic people. Our commitment to innovation, continuous learning and collaboration with others is embodied in the work of our Centre for Practice Innovation. We strive to create sustainable societal change that will enable autistic people to be included and valued in their communities, and to lead the life they choose.

OUR VISION

A world where autistic people are understood and enabled to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives as valued members of the community.

OUR MISSION

To enable autistic people to lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives.

OUR VALUES

COLLABORATION

We work with others and value their opinions

COMPASSION

We work with each other and our supported people with care and kindness

CHANGE MAKERS

We never stand still, we move positively forward always focused on quality and being the best

CONTRIBUTION

We love what we do, we never lose sight of our purpose and the difference we make in society.

Our Approach to Support Provision

We place wellbeing at the heart of our practice, and our approach is designed to meet the specific needs of autistic people. Our support provision is aligned to seven statements that we believe define ethical autism practice.

A focus on wellbeing enables happy, healthy and fulfilling lives

We don't start with how someone behaves, but how they feel. Promoting physical health, positive psychology and stress reduction are key to our approach.



Understanding communication enables us to listen to a person's individual voice and choice

Choice and control over our lives are a fundamental aspect of wellbeing and a human right. Understanding autistic communication and communicative intent provides the means for supported autistic people to have a real say in the way their services are run and to make meaningful choices about their lives.



By understanding thinking styles we can support individuals to plan their life and achieve their aspirations

Understanding autistic cognitive differences and developmental trajectories allows us to recognise diverse thinking styles and to support individuals to live a meaningful life on their own terms.



**Positive interactions
nurture meaningful
relationships and
supportive
communities**

We believe that positive relationships are a crucial element of wellbeing. Instead of seeing 'impairments' in social interaction we aim to enable positive interactions between practitioners and supported people, and to nurture relationships between autistic people and those around them.



**Low stress
environments provide
safe space for
personal growth**

We understand the role the environment can play in enabling and disabling people with differences in sensory processing. Our practitioners seek to minimise sensory stress and provide calm, empowering spaces for supported people.



**Continuous learning
empowers us to share
and apply knowledge**

We are committed to providing continuous learning for our practitioners. Our learning pathway combines online resources with coaching and critical reflection on day-to-day support practice.



**Collaboration
with families and
agencies encourages
holistic support
for individuals**

Collaboration is one of our organisational values and it enables us to achieve the best outcomes for autistic people. Building on a supported person's expressed wishes and goals, we work with families and allied professionals to build a shared understanding of what best outcomes look like for each person.





Improvement and Innovation

The quality of our support provision is underpinned by our commitment to continually reflect upon and improve our practice.

- Our Autism Practice Improvement Framework is Scottish Autism's process for improving the quality of our services and support. The process comprises state-of-the-art improvement methodology developed by the European Foundation for Quality Management and is aligned to our own ethical practice statements.
- Our practice research programme provides a means for our practitioners to undertake critical inquiry into support practice, with the meaningful participation of our supported people. This provides an opportunity to innovate and evidence good practice whilst contributing to the broader field of autism research.
- The voices and opinions of autistic people are crucial in shaping our practice development. We involve our supported people through review processes, recruitment activities, and service forums. Our service experience survey employs individualised communication methods to ensure that everyone has a say in how we innovate and improve our services

Voices from our Services



Alan Shepherd, Founders House

"I like Founders, it's my home, I like to relax it's very relaxing. I like that I can hang my own washing out myself and I'm in charge to water the plants."

Alan is supported at Founders House, a residential service that provides accommodation for up to nine autistic adults. The aim of this service is to provide accommodation which meets the specific care needs of autistic adults as they age.

Robin, Fife Services

"At present, I am being supported with my staff to purchase a new Mobility Car. To the right is a picture of me and Kit, my staff member, looking at possible cars. Although this one is Blue, it's red I want."

Robin has been supported by Scottish Autism in our Housing Support Service and Day Opportunities for over 25 years.



Jamie, Tayside Services

"I think my house is a nice house and I enjoy sleeping in my bedroom at bedtime and watching movies."

Jamie is supported in our Tayside services. He recently moved into his own, specially adapted home.



The Centre for Practice Innovation is our base for learning, sharing knowledge and promoting good autism practice both within Scottish Autism and the wider community. In addition to ensuring the best quality support for those in our services, we are striving for sustainable societal change that will enable autistic people to be included and valued in their communities, regardless of where they live.

Practitioner Learning and Practice Development

The Centre's practice advisors facilitate our practitioner learning pathway and the Autism Practice Improvement Framework. In addition, our practitioners are encouraged to develop and share practice through our online e-learning Academy and annual staff conference.



Community Engagement

The Centre for Practice Innovation provides support and information to autistic people and their families in the wider community via our Autism Advice Line, Right Click online support programmes, our One Stop Shop in Fife, online events, and multiple community support services. We offer consultancy and training to a range of businesses and public bodies on topics ranging from employment practices to inclusive design.



Research and Thought Leadership

We work together with universities and partner organisations to undertake collaborative research. We aspire to be thought leaders in the field of autism, sharing our knowledge and experience in Scotland, the UK, and beyond. We do this through publications; conferences and events; and the Centre's *Share Magazine*



Policy and Advocacy

Scottish Autism is a tireless advocate for good autism practice, greater social inclusion and the human rights of autistic people. We draw on our practice experience, community engagement and insights from research to influence public policy at national and local level. We work collaboratively with autistic-led organisations and other national charities to bring about societal change.



Would you like to know more
about how we enable happy,
healthy and fulfilling lives?

CONTACT US

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