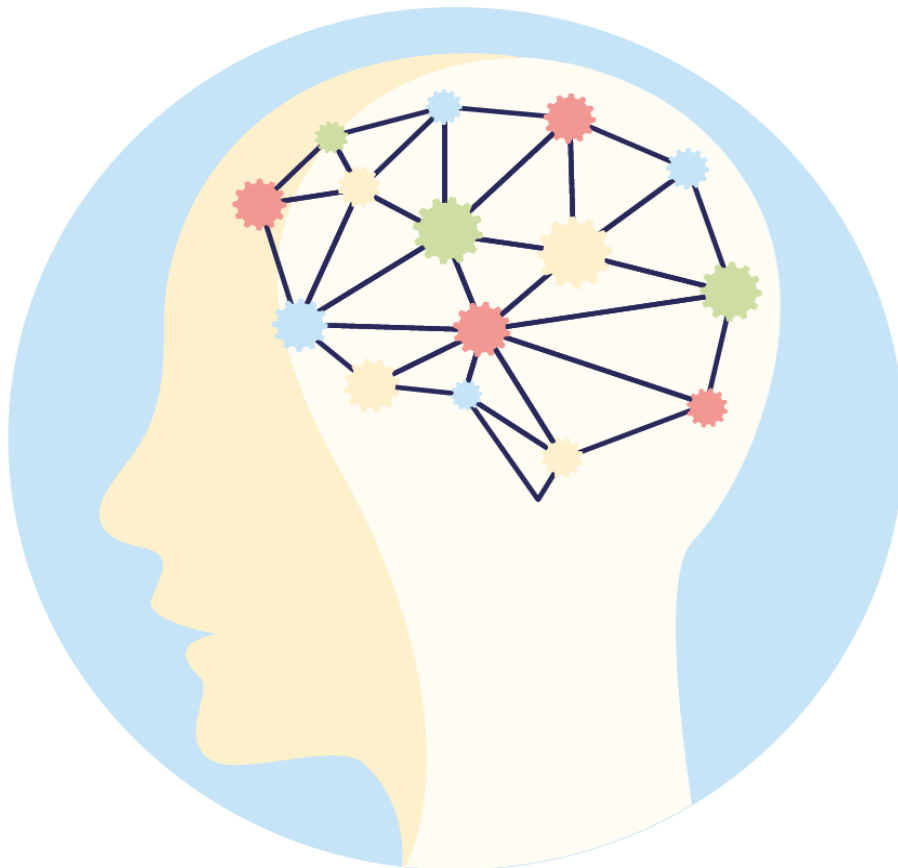


Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) Strategy 2024-2034

Phase 3 Action Plan: October 2026 – March 2028



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Department of Health and Social Care

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The information in this document is also available in Easy Read format, and can be provided in other accessible formats, such as audio or braille, on request.

1. Introduction

The Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) Strategy 2024–2034 was published in March 2024, setting out a ten-year vision for improving the lives of autistic people and their families. The six goals were:

1. Increase community awareness and acceptance of ASC.
2. Reduce health and social care inequalities for people with ASC.
3. Provide high quality, safe and clear all-age routes (pathways) or diagnosis and support.
4. Improve professional awareness and capability across public service providers.
5. Improve access, support and transitions to education at all levels.
6. Improve everyday experiences of people with ASC, their carers and families.

Steady progress has been made in laying the foundations to meaningful change. The Department has published its [first annual report](#), documenting achievements against the Phase 1 action plan covering the period March 2024 to September 2025. Alongside this, the Department also published its Phase 2 action plan, which will be reported to Tynwald in early 2027.

A key commitment within Phase 2 was to engage directly with autistic people, their families and the wider community ensuring their experiences and priorities shape the next stage of delivery. We have also worked with the 3rd sector, government departments, political representatives and the business community. This engagement, including surveys and public meetings, has informed the development of the Phase 3 action plan.

Phase 3 covers the period from October 2026 to March 2028. With a stronger focus on outcomes, this phase will start to enable measurable improvements in the lives of autistic people. It contains two main areas of focus: **Health** and **Reasonable Adjustments**.

The **health section** will build on phases 1 and 2 work to improve access to health and social care services, with a focus on making these services more responsive, consistent and accessible for the autistic community. This will include supporting work to achieve the future provision of an all-age diagnosis pathway.

The **reasonable adjustments section** seeks to cover a broad range of community settings, including government services, businesses, community organisations and social activities. Its aim is to expand community-based non-medical support that makes everyday life easier for autistic people and increases access to inclusive services and resources.

2. Phase 3 Action Plan

Section 1. Health

Improved Health Access, Experience and Outcomes		
Delivery Plan	Task Owner	Completion Date
We want people with Autism Spectrum Condition to get the health and care support they need, in ways that are easy to use, well-joined-up, and high quality throughout their lives. The following actions aim to help us achieve this: 1. Establish an adult ASC/ADHD diagnosis service as part of the 3 year plan to introduce an all-age neurodivergent support and diagnosis pathway. Outcome: Adults on the Isle of Man can access a defined pathway for ASC and ADHD assessment, diagnosis and post-diagnostic support through a formally established adult neurodevelopmental service.	DHSC	April 2027
2. Publish Easy Read information across autism-related health and social care services, beginning with the development of a 'What Happens Next?' guide for parents of newly diagnosed children. Outcome: People entering autism-related services have access to clear, information that helps them understand available support and navigate services with greater confidence. Parents of newly diagnosed children understand the next steps following diagnosis.	Manx Care	Ongoing
3. Scope the feasibility for the introduction of annual health checks for autistic people to support earlier identification of physical and mental health needs and reduce health inequalities. Outcome: Autistic people receive more proactive and preventative healthcare through earlier identification of health needs and timely access to appropriate support and treatment.	Manx Care	Sep 2027

4. Fund and support selected Manx Care staff and people with lived experience to become accredited Oliver McGowan Tier 2 trainers, enabling delivery of the programme locally and supporting its long-term sustainability. Outcome: Manx Care has increased local capacity to deliver Oliver McGowan Tier 2 training, supporting a workforce that is better equipped to meet the needs of autistic people and people with learning disabilities.	DHSC	Dec 2026
5. Extend the availability of Oliver McGowan Tier 1 training, or other appropriate training, to staff working in primary care, including GP practices, dental practices and opticians, as well as other commissioned services. Outcome: More people working across community healthcare services have the knowledge and confidence to communicate effectively and make services easier to access for autistic people and people with a learning disability.	Manx Care	Dec 2027

Section 2a Reasonable Adjustments

Employment		
Delivery Plan	Task Owner	Completion Date
We want as many people as possible to be able to access and remain in meaningful employment within inclusive workplaces. We also want workplaces to support progression for autistic employees. The following actions aim to help us achieve this: 1. Establish a multi-agency forum to identify and address barriers to employment for autistic people. The forum will bring together representatives from the public, private and third sectors, alongside autistic people, to support co-production and develop practical solutions. Outcome: Organisations are working together to make employment more accessible, inclusive and supportive for autistic people. Autistic people have a stronger voice in identifying and sharing barriers to employment and shaping solutions.	DHSC	Mar 2027
2. Review the support currently available to disabled people, including autistic people, who wish to enter or return to employment. Identify opportunities to strengthen and improve that support where necessary. Outcome: Disabled people, including autistic people, can access the support they need to find, return to, and stay in employment. Support is accessible and recognises individual's strengths, needs and circumstances.	DHSC	Sep 2027
3. Work with key stakeholders across Isle of Man Government to further improve recruitment processes and ensure they are clear, accessible and inclusive and responsive to the needs of all applicants. Outcome: All people are able to navigate the Isle of Man Government recruitment processes with appropriate support for their particular needs. This helps more people apply for jobs, show their skills and have a fair opportunity to succeed.	OHR	Mar 2028
4. Make resources available for managers and staff across the public service to improve understanding of autism in the workplace, including the importance of reasonable adjustments and inclusive working practices.	OHR	Dec 2026

Outcome: Autistic staff feel more supported, understood and able to thrive at work, with workplaces that recognise and respond to different needs. 5. Continue working with the Chamber of Commerce and its members to promote autism-friendly workplaces and increase awareness of reasonable adjustments and inclusive employment practices. Outcome: Employers have greater awareness and understanding of autism, reasonable adjustments and inclusive employment practices. Autistic employees are supported in the workplace to thrive and succeed in their job.	Steering Group	Dec 2027
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Section 2b Reasonable Adjustments

Community based support		
Delivery Plan	Task Owner	Completion Date
We want our Island's communities to be inclusive, accessible and welcoming for autistic people and their families. We want support to be available when it is needed and easy to access, enabling autistic people to participate fully in community life and activities throughout the year. The following actions will help us achieve this vision: 1. Commission the development and promotion of a suite of resources to help community groups, event organisers and activity providers make their events and services more autism-friendly and inclusive. Outcome: Community groups, event organisers and activity providers have access to clear resources to help make their events and services more autism-friendly. 2. Encourage the development and promotion of autism-friendly community groups, clubs and activities throughout the year. Focus will be given to increasing opportunities for autistic teenagers, helping to ensure support and social opportunities are available beyond school-based activities and holiday programmes. Outcome: Autistic people, especially teenagers, feel more included, connected and supported in their communities. They have opportunities to build friendships, develop confidence and take part in meaningful activities throughout the year, supporting their wellbeing and sense of belonging.	DHSC DHSC	Sep 2027 Ongoing

Section 2c Reasonable Adjustments

Whole-life impact		
Delivery Plan	Task Owner	Completion Date
We want systems across education, justice, and public services to be coordinated, inclusive, evidence-based, and responsive to improve life outcomes and opportunities. The following actions aim to help us achieve this: 1. Work with the Criminal Justice Board to identify any gaps in knowledge, training, information, guidance or support relating to autism across the criminal justice system and develop proportionate actions to address these where required. Outcome Plans are developed to support staff working across the criminal justice system to have a better understanding of autism and the practical steps they can take to support autistic people. 2. Review the data collected across Government and related services about the autistic community. Use this information to better understand current and future demand, identify gaps in provision, and support the planning and development of services. Outcome: Services are planned and developed based on a better understanding of the needs of autistic people. This helps ensure support is available where it is needed most and can respond to current and future needs. 3. Engage with families of autistic children who are educated at home to better understand their experiences, challenges and support needs. Use this feedback to inform the ongoing development and delivery of support and services. Outcome: There is greater awareness and understanding of the experiences, needs and challenges of autistic children who are educated at home, and of those who support them. As a result, they feel that their experiences and perspectives are acknowledged and understood. 4. Expand the training modules provided through the Neuroinclusive Education Network (NEN) Programme in Schools to include the 'Transition in Schools' module and initiate the development of the Early Years NEN Package.	DHSC DHSC Steering Group DESC related	Mar 2028 Sep 2027 Sep 2027 Mar 2028

3. Training

By the end of Phase 3, autism-related resources and support will be part of normal working practice across Isle of Man Government. This means that, where possible, autism awareness and acceptance, understanding reasonable adjustments, and promoting inclusive services will be embedded within staff induction, training programmes and professional development.

Each Department will be responsible for monitoring participation and assessing the effectiveness of training within their services. This information will be reported to the Steering Group to provide oversight and assurance that training is reaching the workforce and supporting improvements in practice.

The Steering Group will continue to provide advice and expertise on training content and priorities. It will also support the continued rollout of training across public services, statutory services and commissioned providers to help ensure a consistent approach across the Island.

4. Measuring success and scrutiny of progress

It is important that progress against the Action Plan is regularly monitored to ensure actions are delivered and that they lead to real improvements for autistic people and their families. Progress will be tracked through:

- Annual progress updates to Tynwald.
- Regular meetings of the Steering Group to review progress and address any issues.
- Continued involvement of lay members and people with lived experience in key workstreams.
- Public surveys and engagement activities to gather feedback and assess whether the changes being made are having a positive impact.

5. Engagement

Engagement with the ASC community has been a vital part of the development and implementation of this strategy so far. This will continue throughout Phase 3 to ensure the strategy meets the most pressing needs of the ASC community.

The DHSC will continue to:

- Lead the ASC Steering Group, working collaboratively with autistic lay members, 3rd sector members and representatives from key areas of Government.
- Convene subgroups with subject matter experts to lead 'task and finish' projects as and when necessary.
- Deliver annual Autism Acceptance Month Campaigns every April with key partners across the public and private sectors.
- Facilitate 6 monthly public meetings in order to provide updates and listen to feedback.
- Review the ASC webpages with the aim of increasing accessibility to information.

6. Expenditure

A total of £150,500 was allocated by the DHSC in March 2024 to support delivery of Phase 1 of the Strategy. Expenditure during this period was lower than initially anticipated, largely because action leads were able to make use of existing resources where appropriate. As a result, remaining funds have been carried forward to support activities within Phases 2 and 3, providing continued investment in the delivery of the Strategy beyond the original funding plan.

Table 1: Expenditure from the commencement of Phase 1, including forecast expenditure for Phase 3.

Financial Year	% of allocated funds used each financial year	% remaining unspent
2024-2025	< 0.5%	> 99%
2025-2026	< 3%	97%
2026-2027	59% (estimate)	38% (estimate)
2027-2028	27% (estimate)	11% (estimate)

To date, the estimated expenditure associated with the delivery of Phase 3 actions during the 18-month implementation period is £41,172.

The figures above do not include funding for Action 1.1: “Establish an adult ASC/ADHD diagnosis service as part of the 3 year plan to introduce an all-age neurodivergent support and diagnosis pathway”. Funding for this action will be sought from Treasury through a Business Case, which is expected to be submitted towards the end of 2026.

7. Glossary

ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder)

A condition that affects how someone focuses, stays still, and controls impulses. People with ADHD may be very energetic, get distracted easily, or find it hard to finish tasks.

All-age pathway

A plan or service that supports people of all ages from children to adults.

ASC (Autism Spectrum Condition)

A lifelong condition that affects how someone understands and interacts with other people and the world. People with ASC may find social situations, change, or loud environments difficult, and may have strong interests or routines. ASC is sometimes referred to as ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) and includes autism, classic autism, Asperger's Syndrome, high-functioning autism etc.

CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)

Providing mental health assessment and treatment for children, young people (aged 0-18) and their families.

Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce is the Isle of Man's leading business community. They are independent from Isle of Man Government and work to accelerate economic growth through listening to their members, gathering evidence and engaging with decision makers on the island.

Commissioned services

These are services not provided directly by Manx Care, which instead are planned and purchased by Manx Care in order to meet the health and social care needs of the island's population. They include primary care, community health, care homes, hospice and other specialist services provided both on-island and off-island.

Co-production

Co-production means people who use or are affected by services working together with organisations, as partners. This can include disabled and non-disabled people, family members, carers, professionals and community groups. Everyone's knowledge and experience is valued, and decisions are made together.

Criminal Justice Board

The Criminal Justice Board was created as part of the introduction of the Criminal Justice Strategy in 2012. The Board consists of representatives of the Department of Home Affairs, Isle of Man Constabulary, Isle of Man Prison and Probation Service, Attorney General's Chambers, Treasury, General Registry, and the Isle of Man Law Society.

DESC (Department of Education, Sport and Culture)

A Department within Isle of Man Government that is responsible for education, sport, culture and youth services. Its role includes overseeing schools, additional educational needs services, University College Isle of Man, and a range of community, sport and cultural programmes.

Manx Care

Manx Care delivers health and social care services on the Isle of Man, including hospital, community, mental health and social care services.

Manx Care Mandate

The Manx Care Mandate is a plan that sets out what health and care services Manx Care will provide and improve. Through the Mandate, the DHSC can ask Manx Care to develop new services, such as an adult ASC and ADHD assessment and support pathway.

NEN (Neuroinclusive Education Network)

A not-for-profit organisation, linked to the [National Autistic Society](#). The NEN provides training programmes and education resources that are created in partnership with [Autistic Young Experts](#), parents/carers, and a network of Training Partners, education professionals, experts, and specialists.

OHR (Office of Human Resources)

OHR is part of the Isle of Man Government's Cabinet Office and provides human resources support, advice, policies and employment services for staff and managers across Government. It helps with areas such as recruitment, learning and development, pay and benefits, people management, workplace wellbeing, and employment policies

Oliver McGowan training

A training programme for healthcare professionals to learn how to support people with a learning disability and/or autism in a respectful and safe way. The training is delivered in two tiers with each tier consisting of two parts. The first part of both tiers is an eLearning module, and the second part of the training is either an online interactive session (Tier 1) or a face-to-face session (Tier 2). All of the training includes delivery by people with lived experience of a learning disability or of being autistic.

Primary Care

The first point of contact for most people when they use health services. It includes, amongst other things, GP practices, community pharmacies, dental surgeries and optometry providers. These services provide day-to-day healthcare, treatment and advice, as well as referrals to specialist health services.

SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator)

A SENCO is a staff member at a school or educational setting who is responsible for overseeing provision for students with special educational needs and disabilities.

Steering Group

The ASC Strategy Steering Group (the Steering Group) is responsible for monitoring the progress of the strategy. The Steering Group includes government, third sector groups, and members of the ASC community.



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