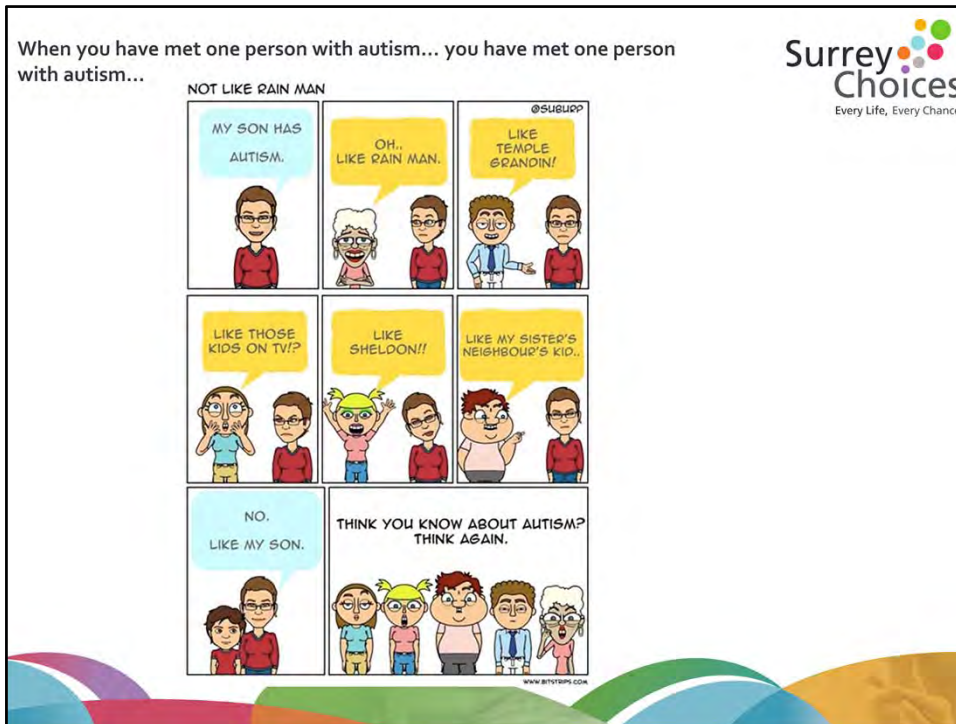


# Employment Works for Autism Project

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When you have met one person with autism... you have met one person with autism...



## Working with people with autism

- ▶ History – aspergers 1994
- ▶ “Cold parenting”
- ▶ Celebrate the difference of neurodiversity
- ▶ Common characteristics
- ▶ Aspergers not now used on DSM – ASD
- ▶ Surrey adult diagnosis service for just 2 years – already waiting list of a year.....



## The development of EW4Autism

- ▶ Portal course 2009 – partnership with NAS
- ▶ SET courses – 3 day courses
- ▶ Employment Works – student internships
- ▶ EW4Autism 2015



## Autism and Employment

- ▶ 15% of people with ASD in full time employment compared to 48% of people with all disabilities [Dept of Health, 2009]
- ▶ 43% of people with ASD have left/lost a job due to their condition [NAS, 2012]
- ▶ 79% of people with ASD claiming benefits want to work [NAS, 2012]
- ▶ Lack of support for higher functioning individuals
- ▶ Professionals not understanding issues



## People with autism at work

- ▶ Taking time to get to know people
- ▶ Empathizing with the job seeker
- ▶ Motivation to work
- ▶ Fears around Employment
- ▶ Barriers at the application stage
- ▶ Problems during placements



## Introduction

- ▶ For people with autism not eligible for other services eg ASC or Mental health services
- ▶ Supported internships for adults
- ▶ Funding by DH - Think Autism
- ▶ Partners Surrey Choices EmployAbility , National Autistic Society (Surrey Branch), JCP, Surrey CC commissioners, support of autism partnership board
- ▶ EmployAbility course – developed from previous course
- ▶ 3 days a week supported internships
- ▶ 1:1 support
- ▶ Job Clubs





## Referrals

- ▶ Only took referrals for two weeks
- ▶ Fully subscribed – some complex people who had no other options
- ▶ JCP, NAS and Sat Job Clubs
- ▶ Interviews
- ▶ Commitment to find work
- ▶ Mixed older and grads
- ▶ EmployAbility course



### Case Study – Partnership working

Before coming onto EW4A W lost his previous job due to his inappropriate behaviours and causing criminal damage. EW4A allowed us to explore his issues to prevent reoccurrence and support him in work experience and job searching. He needed a lot of support for example sending at least 1 long emails relating to his job searching each day due to his anxiety. We reassured him constantly, signposted to our partners National Autistic Society counselling service ASSIST and also worked closely with JCP Disability employment advisor to ensure we are all giving clear, co-ordinated messages to him. After 9 months has just secured a full time paid position at the NHS.

## Outcomes

- ▶ Intensive support
- ▶ 7 months
- ▶ On-going support until March 2016
- ▶ Job retention important



EW4A OUTCOMES	Number	Percentage
Referrals accepted	16	
Internships	15	93%
Paid work	7	43%
On-going Work experience or volunteering	8	50%
Not engaged	1	6%
Not selected for the project	3	15%

## Challenges

- ▶ Co-Morbidity- particularly mental health
- ▶ Geographic location – personalisation
- ▶ Timescales
- ▶ Staffing
- ▶ Social groups
- ▶ On-going support



#### Case Study – Challenges

T was exhibiting psychotic behaviour, in town trying to find his EW4A support worker. Family relations had broken down and would not get involved, police were involved. We organized emergency admission to hospital and short term accommodation and continued to contact him. His engagement had been patchy, but after a lot of perseverance we manage to get him to placement at community radio station and he has made his own podcasts. His health continues to be a concern but it is positive steps towards work and he continues to engage with us.

## What next?

- ▶ Applying for further funding
- ▶ Job Clubs – open to all
- ▶ Support until March 2016
- ▶ Social networks - outings
- ▶ Job retention
- ▶ Alternative support – eg partners
- ▶ Employment works (large employers)



#### Case Study – when it works best..

A had just left university the previous autumn and was concerned what the future would hold. He had High levels of anxiety. We provided 1:1 support in conjunction with National Autistic Society, to look holistically at his life and work. His supported internship was in a council finance team and he coped well as he knew there was someone to talk to. The employer was impressed with his quiet determination and how quickly he picked up the finance role – he was offered a paid job at the end of the internship and continues to receive support to sustain the role (funded now by access to work) but also natural support has been identified in the workplace.



## Impact on people with autism

After the way my last employment ended I was left a broken man in a very dark place and had all but given up but Surrey Choices greatly aided my reintegration into the working world and helped me to regain bits of my confidence and drive again. Without that support it is very likely that I would have ever recovered at all.'

I'm an intelligent and multi-skilled worker, but I lack the ability to "sell" myself to employers, that almost certainly stems from my Asperger's syndrome only diagnosed after a mid-life crisis. My [Surrey Choices] adviser gently but persistently supports me in a number of ways: taking the negatives out of my pitches to employers; starting the jobseeking/research that I never get round to; regular chats to see how I'm doing; advocating at PIP assessment; and most importantly being someone I can be totally honest and open with. Without him I'd be much more likely to slip back into clinical depression, and far less likely to be holding down the three-quarters of full-time work that I am doing.'

"I never would have come this far, this quickly without EmployAbility support"



**How can we make employers more engaged  
with people with ASD?**

**What kind of reasonable adjustments can we  
ask from employers for people with ASD?**

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Thank you

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