



Your Voice Network Neurodiverse group

Thursday 7th December 2023

Attended by

Self-advocates from Gloucestershire
Self-advocates from Wiltshire
Self-Advocates from Bristol
Self-advocates From Devon
Self-Advocates from Cornwall

Represented groups

Dimensions for Autism
Your Voice

Ice breaker question

What's your favourite type of weather? People said they liked cloudy and 72 degrees, warm, snow, warm but not too hot, hot like in South of France, sunny and frosty, windy but only if outside on top of a hill.

Main Discussion **Planning the conference**

Feedback given by the group

- Sammy shared the draft agenda that they had put together and asked for opinions
- It was asked how many people will be attending bearing in mind the break out rooms. Sammy said it would be good to have about 4 or 5 break out rooms.
- It is difficult when people have needs that are not being met
Issue remains with not understanding neurodiversity
- It was mentioned that Devon had been talking about the lack of reasonable adjustments in healthcare and the obligations there are. It was noticed there wasn't anything in the agenda about getting support either financial and social care support.
 - It is tricky because how every county offers support is different, but we can talk about the rights of getting informal or other support. It was mentioned that we could cover the social care act and carers allowance/assessment . We can go for the rough/general ways of getting support. We could get Access Social Care to be involved.
 - Access Social care make sure you get the right support from social care which should be the same across the South West. it would be good to get an overview of each regions procedures to see if we can find the common elements and areas of concern. There will be common elements about how to access social services, how to appeal etc. that we can give broad strokes about. We could then give advice about local support services.
 - Someone said we all have the same legal rights so it's helpful if we have a good picture across the counties. That includes things like employment, transport, access to social care etc.
 - It was thought that a presentation would be best rather than a break out room as its an important thing to give a bit of time to.
 - Devon mentioned their Yellow Brick Road guide and how that would be good to share with other areas. They might give some time in their presentation (it was mentioned that some plain English versions of the legal acts and get Access Social Care to have a look over it)

Feedback given by the group

- Someone said if it's worth it we can invite a speaker of some kind who is relatively well known. We have a few fans of Chris Packham in our area. I invited Chris Bonello from 'Autistic but not Weird' to an event before. Perhaps a person who is involved in media or social media might be good to contribute or be involved in the section on dispelling myths about autism. Other names suggested Robyn Steward Emily Katy on social media or Kieran Rose the autistic advocate .
- While discussing the topics for the conference it was noted that we might also need to make sure that we avoid the break out rooms etc. being a 'sea of negativity'. Maybe we want to include some positive stories of what has worked e.g. reasonable adjustments at work. We have also shared in our groups on special interests and it went down really well. I think the session about legal rights will be a heavy one and we don't want them all to be like that. Little bits of autistic joy through out the day.
- We also thought about having sessions on co-occurring neurodiversities such as ADHD and also transition into adult hood .

While discussing the times and date of the conference we thought that 4 hours would be long enough. Maybe sandwiching lunch in-between. So 2 hours before lunch and 2 hours after . We're thinking about timing the conference for the end of March either neurodiversity week (18th March - 24th March 2024) or autism awareness week (27 March - 2 April)

- Sammy is going to put together some surveys to workout timings, dates and topics.
- Topics - <https://forms.office.com/e/Y8RZx9qAtR>
- Time and dates survey <https://forms.office.com/e/sQexS87ztQ>
- Anti-ms and DFA are going to do 20 minute sessions on their work and what they can offer to the autistic community.

Next meeting

- Next meeting is Thursday 4th January 2024 – 6:00 - 7.30