The HIDDEN IMPAIRMENTS PROJECT (HIP)

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What is it?

Hidden Impairments (HI) is a term used to cover a set of related disabilities, sometimes known as Neuro-Diverse conditions / developmental neurological conditions / specific learning difficulties.

These include:
- Dyspraxia
- Dyslexia
- ADHD
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions (including Asperger Syndrome)
- Specific Language Impairments
- Dysgraphia
- Tourettes
- Dyscalculia

This pertains to service users, carers, staff and other people who access our services.
What is it?

- HI are common in society but they are poorly understood. HINg project estimates that 11% or more of the population have HI.

**“Nature doesn’t draw a line without smudging it” (Lorna Wing, leading expert on Autism)**

Co-existing HI: A high incidence of people having more than one HI. Now generally accepted that ‘Pure’ cases are the exception not the rule. E.g. half of those with Dyspraxia have Dyslexia.

- ADHD
- Autism
- Dyspraxia
- Dyslexia
- Tourettes
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia

Percentages of population affected by conditions: ADHD 2-5% of people, Autism 1%, Dyspraxia up to 8%, Dyslexia up to 10%, Tourettes up to 1% of children and 300,000 adults and children, Dyscalculia 3-6%, Dysgraphia 10%.

Amongst service users the incidence of HI or undiagnosed HI seems to be substantially higher than in the general population.

- The incidence/risk of mental health issues amongst people with HI is high (either as a result of coping or by association)

  67% of people with Autism have experienced anxiety and 33% have developed a serious mental health problem (Institute for Psychiatry).

  “Many adults remain undiagnosed and can be lost in the mental health, prison and probationary services” (Dyspraxia Adult Action).

- HI can be overlooked as a root cause of mental health and other problems.

- Those issues can be particular to HI and require an understanding of HI for services to respond.
HI can often be mistaken for other conditions including mental health issues, for example:

- Schizophrenia
- Personality Disorder
- Bipolar Disorder

Some common issues

Low confidence/self-esteem, social skills / relationships, finding suitable employment, education & learning, life skills, bullying, housing and living independently, co-ordination, sleep deprivation, concentration, learning to drive/travel/using public transport, social exclusion, stigma, complications from co-existing conditions, associated offending & substance misuse problems, associated hearing, speech and visual impairments, lack of access to diagnostic pathways and support
Question: which HI?

‘After seeing an educational psychologist I was told to see my GP. My GP said I couldn’t have ___________ as I was talking...!’

Answer

‘After seeing an educational psychologist I was told to see my GP. My GP said I couldn’t have Asperger’s Syndrome as I was talking...!’

Adult with autism

(Source: NAO web consultation)
Why have a project?

Risks of poor provision

- misdiagnosis
- inappropriate treatments/support/referrals/signposting (e.g. people with Asperger Syndrome being put on wards and copying people who harm themselves.)
- missed opportunities in the care pathway
- complaints
- impacts upon employee potential
- missed opportunities for service improvement

Key Drivers

- Trust expansion into new services, Barnsley
- Autism Strategy 2010
- Person centred care
- Equality Strategy
- Staff disability survey
- Innovation thrust

• Good news - Celebrate the difference!

We would also like to emphasise that lots of people with these conditions draw strength from what they see as the gifts of being different. Below are some commonly cited strengths attributed to 3 of the conditions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dyslexia strengths</th>
<th>Asperger strengths</th>
<th>ADHD strengths</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creative/spatial flair</td>
<td>Learning facts and skills</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Global thinking – problem solving</td>
<td>Unusual gifts e.g. memory, musical, logic, problem solving</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good verbal communication</td>
<td>Meticulous, punctual</td>
<td>Drive</td>
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</table>
Some well-known people with HI

- Cher: Dyscalculia
- Jonas Alberg (Basshunter): Tourette’s
- Daniel Radcliffe
- Albert Einstein: ADHD, Asperger’s, and Dyslexia
- Bill Gates: Dyslexia
- Thomas Edison: Dyscalculia
- John Lennon: ADHD
- Winston Churchill: ADHD and Dyslexia

Seed idea – hypothesis

Research

Set up steering group

Establish email network

Awareness raising & promotion

Celebrate awareness days

First ever HIP conference

HI included in Exemplar Employer Project
Key Outcomes

• To raise awareness of HI and the part this plays in mental health issues and wellbeing; provide training and learning opportunities. Cultural change.

• Mapping existing services, practices and support; identifying and challenging gaps.

• Ensuring the Trust meets obligations, follows best practice and key drivers.

HIP conference November 2012
SAS Drama & Theatre Crafts group - The Sunbridge Road Colliery Band

Two thirds of the learning was delivered by service users and carers
“Best conference ever organised by SWYPFT” (Staff member)
Feedback

HIP conference attended by SWYPFT from many services and disciplines, plus police officers, housing staff, employment and benefit services, youth offending teams, homeless workers, service users and carers

“An Awakening for staff”
“Will definitely impact on my OT work and as a school governor”
“Raised a lot of questions, we have a long way to go”.
“The way that you achieved a genuine balance with the presenters between people who provide services and people who use services lays down a marker for how we should do things”
(Mary Duggan - Service Improvement and Development Lead, SWYPFT)
“An excellent platform in which to celebrate what makes people unique” (Ann-Marie Slavin (Occupational Therapist, Learning Disability Team, Folly Hall)

Action

Help establish e-learning package

Khidmat Project: instigated to educate South East Asian population about ADHD and help increase referrals to ADHD service.
Consulted with and established links with over 50 organisations
Responded to over 900 requests for information, advice and signposting since June 2010
Given talks on HI to dozens of groups

The future
The Future

- Develop more opportunities for face to face learning
- Embed HIP work into locality services
- Another HIP conference in 2014
- Develop Resource information pack
- Further develop the HIP network
- Launch e-learning and Exemplar Employer

Thankyou for listening

Any questions?

“It is not the position in which you stand but the direction in which you look”.
(Buddhist proverb)
Some Resources:

- Contact HIP: alex.feather@swyt.nhs.uk
- www.britishdyslexia.org.uk The British Dyslexia Association Info and resources for Dyslexics, students, professionals, teachers, parents
- www.dyslexiaaction.org.uk Dyslexia Action – national body leading on education, research, assessments and campaigning
- www.addys.org/ ADD/ADHD Online Information
- www.addiss.co.uk/ - ADHD charity, resource and support service 020 8952 2800
- www.adhduk.org.uk/ Social Network and Support Centre for ADHD in the UK
- www.autism.org.uk/ National Autistic Society
- Creative approaches to HI
  - Spell checkers e.g. www.medispell.com/index.htm?q=medspellchecker Spellcheck Medical Spell Checker for making sure you’ll never misspell medical words again
  - www.boxofideas.org 1000s of ideas, guidance and information on everything from early years to employment
  - www.artsdyslexiatrust.org/ Arts Dyslexia Trust (ADT). A UK based charity focusing on the visual-spatial abilities as demonstrated in the work of talented dyslexics.
  - Talli’s Secret by Julie Noble. A novel about the link between Dyspraxia and the Bronte sisters www.talliissecret.com

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