



AIM NEWS

Winter 2019 | Leeds Autism AIM's official newsletter
A FREE service for autistic adults in Leeds with little/no support

NEW LGBT+ PROJECT TO START

• Service jointly run by Advonet, CHANGE & MESMAC

A new project promoting the inclusion of LGBT+ people who are autistic, have a learning disability or a mental health issue has launched.

The project is run jointly by Advonet (the organisation that Leeds Autism AIM is part of), user-led learning disability charity CHANGE and LGBT+ sexual/mental health charity Yorkshire MESMAC. It is funded by a grant awarded by the Government Equalities Office (GEO).

As part of the project, we will be developing self-advocacy courses to enable LGBT people who are autistic and/or have mental health issues or a learning disability to know their rights and put forward their needs and wishes.

We will also be developing self-advocacy resource packs, peer support roles and co-delivered training to health professionals to improve access to services. There



are paid staff roles which are currently in the process of being filled.

We are also looking for volunteers to be part of a steering group to make sure that the project works well.

If you are interested in taking part in any of the upcoming courses or

volunteering on the steering group, please send an email to Wendy at Wendy.Cork@advonet.org.uk.

You can find more info on what the project is about and on joining the steering group as a volunteer at advonet.org.uk/lgbt-health-inclusion-project-launches.

Employment workshops and having a say

We will be starting new employment workshops at the end of March, and will be doing some consultation about what you want from these. We will be offering eight sessions weekly on our quieter Friday session, run by an outside linked provider with development from AIM staff.

They plan to have a focus on understanding how autism affects you, linking to employment goals. These will start on **Friday 29th**

March. If you're interested, email leedsautismaim@advonet.org.uk.

Have your say

We have heard from autistic people that they felt they have not always had enough of a say in how services could work better for them. We are running several consultations from the Hub to help wider services hear what you need.

We will also have a survey about how

the Autism Reference Group at the Hub can work better for you. The Group is a forum for autistic people to tell services what you want.

The first one of 2019 is **Tuesday 26th February** from **5-6.30pm** then Tuesday 21st May, Tuesday 3rd September and Tuesday 19th November.

If you are interested in attending and want more info, please contact us or look on our website.

First visit to the Hub?

Due to increasingly high use of our Tuesday drop-in (recently averaging 35 people each session), we would like to request that any people who have not visited the service before contact us first to make sure we can give enough time and support to you on your first visit. The contact details are on the other side of the newsletter.

“**Advonet**
Providing Independent Advocacy”

Leeds Autism AIM is part of Advonet, a charity which provides a range of independent advocacy services throughout Leeds. Find out more about what they do at advonet.org.uk

LEEDS AUTISM AIM NEWS

CAFE AUTISTIQUE CHANGE

Our Cafe Autistique discussion group on relationships and feelings, which was initially set for Tuesday 26th February, is now going to be on **Tuesday 26th March** due to a clash with the Autism Reference Group on that date.

This session is autistic-led and takes place at the Lovell Autism Hub. It starts at **5:30pm** and finishes at **6:30pm**. After each session, we have a write-up of what was said from Gill, our Peer Development Worker.

UPDATES ON HUB GROUPS

The Gaming group has been very well attended and now runs on the second Tuesday of the month at the same time as the Carers Group.

We will be introducing more structure, visitors and videos to the Women's Group. This starts with a visit from Women's Lives Leeds between 4:30-5:30pm on **Tuesday 19th March**.

We will also be starting a new Craft group at your request from **5-7pm** on the first Tuesday of the month.

CONSULTATION ON UTCs

On **Tuesday 2nd April**, staff from the Leeds NHS Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) are visiting the Lovell Autism Hub to ask for your views on Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs) in Leeds. UTCs are there for any emergency health care that isn't life threatening e.g. minor injuries.

They also have a survey out asking for your views. If you would like to take it, please go to leedsccg.nhs.uk/UTCsurvey, where you'll find a link and info on what UTCs do.

AUTISM NEWS IN BRIEF

BABIL 2019 TO BE IN JUNE

The Bigger and Better in Leeds annual autism information event, is to take place on **Tuesday 25th June** this year. The event is being moved to coincide with Autistic Pride Month. The event will see Leeds Autism AIM, Leeds Autism Services, Leeds ABC and Specialist Autism Services hold stalls, alongside many other services. There will be some autistic guest speakers, while the event is free to attend. It starts at **9:30am**, finishing at **3pm**.

For more info on the event, please go to biggerandbetterinleeds.org.

NEW EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

A new employment support service has launched for autistic people and people with learning disabilities aged 16-24. The **Positive Futures** Course is run by Mencap and will run over 22 weeks, including time spent on a work placement.

Most of the course will be taught at the Vinery Centre in Leeds. It will also cover areas including money management and employability.

If you are interested in enrolling on the course or would like any more info about what it offers, please contact Mencap on **0113 827 0058**.

AUTISTIC PEOPLE'S SURVEY

An Auternative, an autistic-led group of researchers and academics, have a survey out. It asks autistic people about how they use strategies like logic and reasoning to understand social situations and to empower themselves, as well as the barriers to using their strengths.

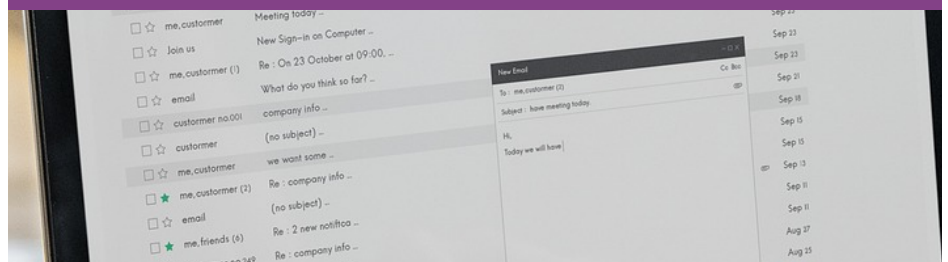
The survey only takes a few minutes to complete. The results will be used to give recommendations for service providers decision-makers and autistic people based on what people have said in the survey. To take it, go to anauternative.uk/questionnaire.

INFORMATION

If you are not able to use the drop-in or mentoring services, you can contact us for info by phone, email or on our Facebook page at any time.

Just send us a message to the contacts below and we will do our best to answer any questions.

MENTAL HEALTH SURVEY



Healthwatch Leeds have a survey looking at mental health crisis services in Leeds, what works and how they can be improved.

The survey is for anyone who has used local mental health crisis services and wants to share their

thoughts on what went right for them and what could be better. To take it online, please go to bit.ly/2Tu1cMq. Email Healthwatch Leeds at info@healthwatchleeds.org.uk or call them on 0113 898 0035 to request a paper survey.



We are funded by The National Lottery Community Fund, Leeds CCG and the Health & Social Care Volunteering Fund

CONTACT THE AIM TEAM

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