

# Introduction

These implementation resources support social workers, organisations, people with lived experience and higher education institutions to implement the Capabilities Statement and continuous professional development (CPD) pathway for social work with autistic adults.



The resources have been developed with the support of a cross-sector Advisory Group, including people with lived experience, social workers and educators.

The resources include:

- a practice toolkit for social workers: including reflection tools, top tips, video featuring Sylvia Stanway an autistic adult and parent, plus easy read material
- a toolkit for autistic adults: including resources that explain the role of the social worker, a feedback tool and easy read material
- a self-evaluation tool for organisations
- a post-graduate curriculum outline for higher education institutions, including how to develop a modular, blended learning approach.

## Background

In September 2019, BASW published the [Capabilities Statement and continuous professional development \(CPD\) pathway for social work with autistic adults](#), commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

Written for the England practice and policy contexts, the Capabilities Statement was co-produced with autistic adults, families and carers.

The Capabilities Statement shows social workers what they need to know and be able to do to make positive changes in the lives of autistic adults. The DHSC have commissioned and funded the development of additional resources and activities to support organisations and social workers working with autistic adults to embed the Capabilities Statement into social work practice.

The aim of this work is to develop a consistent pathway for professional development for social workers, and their employers, and help to ensure that people who use services are supported by social workers with consistent levels of professional skills.

Work to develop these additional resources was led by BASW, in partnership with the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) and Research in Practice for Adults (RIPfA). It was supported by a cross-sector Advisory Group including practitioners, experts-by-experience and educators and informed by wider consultation.

Special thanks to Sylvia Stanway, Ben Vickers, members of the Embedding Capabilities Advisory Group and other key partners, Jane Green and Infinite Autism, Bradford City Council Learning Disability service, SORM studios, the City of Stoke-on-Trent Council Learning Disability service, people, families and carers in the development of the toolkit resources.

Within these resources there are key messages for supervisors, managers and organisational leaders. Their role includes ensuring that opportunities for social workers to use the Capabilities Statement and toolkit to inform practice are created and supported.

### Who are these toolkits for?

- **Social workers:** to explore and understand capabilities associated with good practice in generic and specialist services; to promote the human rights, ethics and values driven purpose and practice of social work in this field and to frame social work continuous professional development (CPD) priorities to improve the practice and impact of social work
- **Autistic adults** who may also be parents and may encounter social workers in their own right, or their children may have social workers
- **Families and carers** supporting an autistic young person or adult

- **Organisations** that employ social workers and support autistic adults – to improve their service, and the capabilities of their workforce
- **Educators:** to develop and deliver post-graduate programmes on social work with autistic adults.

### How do the toolkits support social work practice?

The toolkits:

- were developed with sector feedback and involvement
- incorporate feedback from people and families with lived experience
- promote the role and contribution of social work with autistic adults
- link to the Capabilities Statement for social work with autistic adults providing an evidence base for practice
- provide opportunities for learning, critical reflection and development.

Tools designed to support evidence of continuous professional development to meet standard 4 of the regulatory professional standards set by Social Work England.

### How to use the tool

Each tool provides an introduction and explanation about how and when to use it.

The toolkit can be used as a whole or at different times to support best practice with autistic adults, families and carers.