

SUBMISSION FROM LORNA RADBOURNE

1. I am the mother of a 13 year old boy with asperger's syndrome.
2. Are there sufficient diagnostic services? Sadly no. We have been trying for six years.
3. Called in school educational psychologist at our request. She came to no conclusion but also did not follow up to check development.
4. After being told by teacher not to go down the medical diagnostic line we decided to do just that! (Diagnostic waiting list at this point three years!)
5. Had to convince a GP (as he disliked labelling) to refer my son
6. Finally got appointment at mental health clinic where a screening member of staff looked at my son and said "I think there is absolutely nothing at all wrong with you". (Diagnostic waiting list now four years.)
7. Chance discussion with health visitor suggested community link worker. Finally someone LISTENED to us.
8. She brought in another educational psychologist who stated my son was clearly on the spectrum.
9. I asked what he could do to help so he laughed and said he was far too busy.
10. My son moved to secondary school where they were supportive. Waiting list for diagnosis five years!
11. By chance I saw a poster advertising the Perthshire SPECTRUM CLUB. A club for people just like my son. We were not alone!
12. After attending a meeting for parents I was advised to contact the speech therapy department.
13. Unfortunately my son was too old to get help apart from one off advice as he had left primary school however they started the ball rolling.
14. Informed of reduced waiting time for diagnosis so asked another GP to refer my son again. He clearly thought I was mistaken but did as I asked.
15. He is now awaiting diagnosis. The waiting time is going down due to emergency panel being introduced. Perhaps we will get a diagnosis in the coming year!
16. My son has been seen on separate occasions unofficially by two members of the panel who have said he is clearly on the spectrum.

17. We hope an official diagnosis will help to open some doors. People always ask if there has been a diagnosis. They simply do not believe a parent of a child who LOOKS normal. They put many traits down to bad behaviour, bad parenting etc.
18. I have read many of the other pieces of evidence. It is an alarming prospect to think there is little or no help or hope available. It is alarming dealing with a teenager during a 'meltdown' feeling there is no one to turn to for advice. The stress brought into a family can be immense and costs the NHS more dealing with the repercussions of lack of support by way of stress related conditions. These individuals can be extremely talented in many ways. It is criminal to allow such minds to be imprisoned in mental health related problems brought on by such neglect and negligence.
19. I am meeting more and more parents and individuals with this condition. Ours is not a unique story.

Lorna Radbourne
8 October 2010