

## **SUBMISSION FROM HELEN ELSLEY**

1. As the parent of a young person with Asperger's Syndrome, I have often struggled to get adequate support and services for him.
2. Resources are scarce. Even when voluntary guidelines, codes of practice or policies clearly indicate that someone should be helping (or even just not harming) him, the help will be endlessly delayed or withheld unless there is a legal lever to make people do what they should.
3. This bill would place a duty on local authorities and National Health Service bodies to have regard to guidance given to them in relation to the autism strategy. The key to a successful outcome for the person with autism is that twinning of advice and information (the guidance) with an element of compulsion (the duty).
4. The bill recognises, and seeks to address, the unusual complexity involved in providing services to people with autism spectrum conditions. There is a need for specific legislation, and this does not conflict with, or imply priority over, the needs of other groups. I have found that many professionals in health, education and youth services still struggle to understand a disability they cannot see or measure, and while training resources exist, they are not always readily available or used by staff.
5. The impact of living in a world which has very limited understanding of his needs has, at times, been catastrophically disabling for my son. Sometimes the consequence of failure to provide timely support, has been the need for far more costly and long term support to repair the damage. I agree that the cost of implementing this bill would be offset by the savings produced by good life outcomes for people with autism.

Helen Elsley  
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