



2011 CHAPTER 27

The Autism Strategy

Autism strategy

2.—(1) The Department must prepare a strategy on autism to be known as the autism strategy and must publish the autism strategy not less than two years after the passing of this Act.

(2) Before preparing the autism strategy, the Department must consult the Northern Ireland departments [^{F1}, and such other persons as the Department considers appropriate,] on it.

(3) The Department must request every HSC trust to provide data on the prevalence of autism in its area in order—

- (a) that it can publish and update the strategy; and
- (b) that the Northern Ireland departments can effectively implement the strategy.

[^{F2}(3A) The data on prevalence must include data on prevalence in adults and prevalence in children.]

(4) The HSC trusts must provide the Department with all information it requests under subsection (3).

(5) The Department must keep the autism strategy under review and must publish a revised strategy at intervals of not more than seven years.

(6) The Department must monitor the implementation of the autism strategy by the Northern Ireland departments.

(7) The Northern Ireland departments must co-operate with the Department in relation to the preparation, review and implementation of the autism strategy.

Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Autism Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, Cross Heading: The Autism Strategy. (See end of Document for details)

(8) The Northern Ireland departments must implement that part of the autism strategy which falls within their responsibilities and the Department must implement that part of the autism strategy which falls within its responsibilities.

(9) Not more than three years after the publication of the autism strategy, and at intervals of no more than three years thereafter, the Department must prepare a report on implementation of the autism strategy by the Northern Ireland departments and the Department.

(10) The Minister shall lay a report prepared by the Department under subsection (9) before the Assembly as soon as possible after its preparation.

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 2(2) inserted (27.7.2022) by [Autism \(Amendment\) Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2022 \(c. 13\), ss. 1\(a\), 7](#)
- F2** S. 2(3A) inserted (27.7.2022) by [Autism \(Amendment\) Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2022 \(c. 13\), ss. 1\(b\), 7](#)

Content of the autism strategy

3.—(1) The autism strategy must set out how the needs of persons with autism are to be addressed throughout their lives.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) the needs to be set out in the autism strategy shall include the health care, educational and social needs of persons with autism.

(3) The autism strategy must set out how the needs of families and carers of persons with autism are to be addressed.

(4) The autism strategy must set out the Department's proposals for promoting an autism awareness campaign.

[^{F3}4A) The autism strategy must set out how training (including accredited training) is to be provided to the staff of Northern Ireland departments and other public bodies on how to best address the needs of—

- (a) persons with autism, and
- (b) the families and carers of persons with autism.

(4B) The autism strategy must set out how the Department is to make provision for an autism support and early intervention service.

(4C) The autism strategy must set out how the Department is to make provision for an autism information service which is accessible (both in person and remotely) by—

- (a) persons with autism,
- (b) the families and carers of persons with autism, and

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(c) professionals working with persons with autism, and their families and carers.

(4D) The autism strategy must set out how the needs of adults with autism will be addressed, including in particular their needs in respect of—

- (a) lifelong learning,
- (b) employment support,
- (c) recreation,
- (d) physical health,
- (e) emotional and mental well-being,
- (f) supported living, and
- (g) housing.

(4E) The autism strategy must set out how the Department will reduce waiting times for autism assessment and treatment services provided by HSC trusts.]

(5) The Department may make regulations as regards the content of the autism strategy.

(6) No regulation may be made under this section unless a draft of the regulation has been laid before, and approved by resolution of, the Assembly.

(7) Before making a regulation under this section the Department must consult the Northern Ireland departments and other such persons as the Department thinks appropriate.

Textual Amendments

F3 S. 3(4A)-(4E) inserted (27.7.2022) by [Autism \(Amendment\) Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2022](#) (c. 13), **ss. 2, 7**

Changes to legislation:

There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Autism Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, Cross Heading: The Autism Strategy.