

SENSORY CHECKLIST

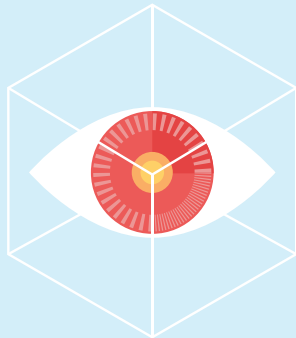


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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY



VISUALS




Good Practice and what to look for	Current Situation	Possible Solutions
<p>The environment is orderly and not cluttered so that service users can make sense of the environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The impact of wall displays, and visuals is considered. • Designated areas for specific activities to give clarity to environment organisation. 		
<p>Environment lighting is suitable for autism service users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Florescent lights are regularly checked and changed. • The effects of natural light coming into the environment through blinds and creating distracting patterns are limited. • Reflective surfaces are made a note of. 		
<p>Staff are wearing their uniform correctly and there is no extreme variation in their presentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uniform is not coloured in especially bold or vibrant shades. • Any jewellery you are wearing is limited and not overly bright or distracting. • Extensive or colourful tattoos are appropriately covered up. 		


NOISE & HEARING

Good Practice and what to look for	Current Situation	Possible Solutions
<p>Audio audit the environment to ensure its physical layout is sensory friendly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor surfaces are made from materials, such as carpet, which limit impact and movement noise. • Are there particular sounds which may irritate hypersensitive individuals? (e.g., clocks ticking, bells, lights humming, road noises, etc.) • The acoustics of rooms are checked and modified to lessen echoes. • Clear visual warnings are in place informing people of an alarm, and why and when it may go off. 		
<p>Sounds from onsite equipment is kept to a minimum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio systems, computers, lights and visual displays are switched off when not in use to avoid a mass humming noise. • Speakers are not especially loud in their noise level and pitch. Use only when necessary. • Avoid using blackboards. White boards are a less noisy alternative but take care when using markers. 		
<p>Raised voices and shouting are a common source of distress in autistic individuals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of the volume and pitch of speakers in your workplace. Are they all at a standard volume? Is it too loud? • Ensure that clear signage warns service users that speakers are in place within your environment and their purpose. • Do not immediately chastise or yell at an autistic person if they are stimming or exhibiting challenging behaviour. Establish the cause and deal with it calmly in a level tone. 		
<p>There is a Sensory or 'Quiet' Room available for service users who feel overwhelmed. These Rooms are sensory friendly environments which provide a calm space for people to relax.</p>		


BALANCE & COORDINATION

Good Practice and what to look for	Current Situation	Possible Solutions
<p>The environment is spacious and is free of unnecessary obstructions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited movement can cause distress to many individuals on the spectrum sensitive to touch and enclosed spaces. Visual warnings and instructions are in place where more space is not and or cannot be made readily available. 		
<p>Physical adjustments and supports are installed for individuals who may struggle with their coordination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bars and railings are in place within appropriate settings where regular movement or unstable areas. (e.g., stairways, wide corridors, on public transports, etc.) 		
<p>Arrangements are made to make navigation easier for those people who may have fine motor difficulties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear signage in appropriate colours is used to direct people to key areas within busy environments. (e.g., airports, bus and train stations, post and social welfare offices, etc.) 		
<p>Opportunities and appropriate space are available for autistic individuals to stim.</p>		


COMMUNICATION

Good Practice and what to look for	Current Situation	Possible Solutions
<p>To what extent is your service’s accessibility aided by communication systems (e.g., symbols, pictures, photos etc.)? Would their inclusion be appropriate or helpful?</p>		
<p>Alternative arrangements are made for service users who may struggle with writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness of the service provider to accept alternative signature forms from customers such as audio recordings. • Allowance of forms to be typed. • Inclusion of electronic signature software to use when signing forms. 		
<p>Relevant forms and documents are accessible online in a downloadable format.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signpost these documents on services’ literature and websites clearly. Include QR codes for the relevant link. 		
<p>Use plain English (ideally NALA approved) when clarifying and giving directions in announcements and literature.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write for your audience. Many autistic people are literal thinkers and process instructions easier when it is issued clearly and plainly. • Keep communication succinct and spaced out. Many autistic individuals struggle to process large sections of information all in one go. 		
<p>Appropriate signage and visual aids are in place guiding service users on particular stages and tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services which require step-by-step involvement from users provide clear guidance on what is needed at each stage. (e.g., post office, social welfare etc.) 		

EXITING & WITHDRAWAL OPTIONS

Good Practice and what to look for	Current Situation	Possible Solutions
<p>Is there a system in place to know when an autistic person need to escape from an environment?</p>		
<p>Have a strategy in place which informs designated members of staff on how to appropriately manage a service user experiencing distress or a meltdown.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autism liaison officers, or champions, are trained to identify warning signs and direct distressed individuals to a safe space. 		
<p>Raising public awareness through your example is an ideal way of getting other customers thinking about autism. By providing clear signages and explicit mentions of autism within your service, you will help generate conversations and inform people of what to be mindful of.</p>		
<p>There is a Sensory or 'Quiet' Room available for service users who feel overwhelmed. These Rooms are sensory friendly environments which provide a calm space for people to relax.</p>		

TOUCH & FEEL

Good Practice and what to look for	Current Situation	Possible Solutions
<p>Does your service involve physical interaction and or contact? If so, do you make your intentions and rationale clear?</p>		
<p>Seating is comfortable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Padding is used to make hard chairs more comfortable. 		
<p>Staff are made aware of body maps in settings where physical contact may be necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many autistic individuals are sensitive to other people touching them anywhere at all. Body maps inform those they interact with which areas (if any) are acceptable to touch. • Gently encourage service users to indicate where they do not wish to be touched if no body map is available. 		
<p>Clear signage and visuals are in place indicating hazardous surfaces. (e.g., hot, wet, delicate, unstable etc.)</p>		 <p>An illustration showing a doctor with blonde hair, wearing a white lab coat and a stethoscope, standing and examining the back of a patient. The patient is a man with dark hair, wearing a yellow long-sleeved shirt and blue trousers, sitting on a grey chair. The background is a light blue gradient.</p>