

Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity Bill: Scoping Work Analysis 2022

Easy Read

February 2023

A new law about Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity

What we have learned from talking to others in 2022



About this report.

In 2022 the Scottish Government held public events about a new law called **The Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity Bill**. These events are called **consultations**.

A **consultation** is when the Scottish Government ask people what they think about something. Some events were face to face and others were on-line

They wrote a report of the work they did between May and July 2022.

The report was written by:

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This is an easy read version of the report.

Some harder words in this report are in **bold**. You can find a list of these words and what they mean at the back of the report.

You can find a list of the organisations who took part in the consultation at the back of the report.



The Scottish Government Autism and Learning Disabilities Team held events in Scotland between May 2022 and July 2022



We asked people what they thought about a new law for Learning Disability, Autism and **Neurodiversity. (The Bill)**



We asked a mixture of people from:

- **disabled people- led organisations (DPO's)**
- national charities
- smaller charities
- people with learning disabilities
- **neurodivergent** people



This would help Scottish Government to understand what things are hard for those people.



It would also help us to think about how to make things better for people.



It was important that a new law should involve the people that it would affect.



The Scottish Government know that people with different disabilities have different ways to describe themselves.



The Scottish Government have tried to respect this. We know it might not be how some people like to be described.



When we talk about autism and **neurodiversity** – we use **identity- first language** like:

- autistic person
- **neurodivergent** person



When we talk about learning disabilities we use **person-first language** like:

- person with a learning disability



We use these because this was what most people we worked with said they wanted.

For some people **neurodivergence** means people whose brains work differently from most others.



This would include for example:

- people with learning disabilities
- autistic people
- people with ADHD
- people with dyslexia or dyspraxia



We will keep checking with people to make sure we use language that is inclusive and respectful.



This report is about what we learned from the questions we asked.

We asked the questions at the events we held.



The information we have reported comes from 986 things people told us.



Most of the comments were from **neurodivergent** people.



Some comments were from family and carers of **neurodivergent** people.



We looked very carefully at the information before reporting on it.



We talked about having a **commissioner** of Learning Disability and **Neurodiversity**.

We asked the 18 different organisations we worked with about this.



Some thought it was a good idea.

Others did not think it was a good idea.



People who took part agreed that the **Bill** should include people without a formal diagnosis.



They thought people waiting for a diagnosis should be able to get the support they needed.



They thought people should not have to wait a long time to get a diagnosis.



A lot of people thought it was good that the Bill covered a wider range of **neurodiverse** people.



Some people thought this was not a good idea.

They thought this would mean some people would not get the support they need.



Some people thought it was important to name conditions in the **Bill**. This would mean those people with those conditions would get the support they need.



People thought it was important to use language connected to the **social model** of disability.



People were happy with words like **neurodiversity** and **neurodivergence**.



They said the language needs to be as inclusive as possible but able to adapt to change.

Some people with learning disabilities did not like the words like **neurodiversity** and **neurodivergence**.



We found **5** things that were the most important to all the people who took part.



1. They think people are more likely to be discriminated against if they are:

- autistic people
- people with learning disabilities
- **neurodivergent** people



People from these groups need protection from discrimination.

They need to be more included and be valued.



2. People think that the **Bill** must include a wide range of **neurodivergent** people.

This should include people who have not had a diagnosis.



They thought conditions should be named in the **Bill**. These could include things like:

- **ADHD**
- **dyspraxia**
- **dyslexia**



3. People think the best way to stop discrimination is to teach and train people. This should be for **public bodies** and **neurodivergent** people.



It should also include awareness, training and understanding of:

- the needs of people with learning disabilities
- the needs of autistic people
- human rights



4. People think that the **Bill** should make it law that:

- person centred support is used in all the different ways people get support
- people get support throughout their life



5. People said it is important that the **Bill** works with:

- laws and services that already exist
- the work of **public bodies** and the effects of that work on **neurodivergent** groups



This would include:

- the Equality Act 2010
- the National Care Service Bill
- existing **commissioners**



In the workshops we asked how Scottish Government can be better at hearing from people with lived experience.



Talking about this means we know we need to:



- talk to people at events in their own communities
- work with schools
- communicate in different ways and languages
- give regular information out about how the **Bill** is developing



There are some areas we know need to do more work on.

We will do this with our panels made up of:



- people with lived experience
- **stakeholders**
- professionals



We will also look more at these things during a formal meeting in 2023. This is called a **consultation**.



The things we will look at are:

- what the **Commissioner's** job would look like if we had one
- agree what **neurodiversity** and **neurodivergence** mean
- find ways to include others that we have not talked to yet and ask them to join our Advisory Panels
- do more work on the **Bill** and its connections to human rights law in Scotland



What the words mean

ADHD	A condition that means a person can be restless and find it hard to concentrate.
Bill	A proposal for a new law.
Commissioner	A person who would be in charge of the new law about Neurodiversity.
Consultation	When the Scottish Government ask people what they think about something.
Disabled Led People organisations (DPO's)	Organisations that are run by disabled people for disabled people.
Dyspraxia	A condition that means a person finds it hard to coordinate movement.
Dyslexia	A condition that means a person finds it harder to read and spell.

Identity first language	When you describe a person by putting their condition or disability before the person.
Neurodiverse	a way to say that everyone's brain works differently from another.
Neurodivergent	Having a brain that works differently from the average person
Person first language	When you describe a person by putting the person first before their disability.
Public bodies	Any organisation set up by Government or local Government
Social model of disability	Understanding that people are disabled by the barriers in society, not by their disability.
Stakeholders	Someone who has an interest or concern in something.

Organisations who took part.

Organisation	Dates	Online or In-Person
Autistic Mutual Aid Society of Edinburgh (AMASE)	21/06/22 and 14/07/22	Online
Down Syndrome Scotland (DSS)	26/04/22, 03/05/22, 04/05/22, 06/05/22, and 11/05/22	Online
Autism Understanding Scotland (AUS) and Scottish Ethnic Minority Autistics (SEMA)	14/06/22, 16/06/22, and 30/06/22	Online
Scottish Commission for Learning Disability (SCLD)	14/06/22	Online
Inspiring Scotland	Unknown	Online
Association for Real Change (ARC) Scotland	27/06/22 and 04/06/22	Online
Genetic Alliance UK	26/07/22	Online
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Hub Scotland	28/06/22	Online
People First (Scotland)	09/06/22 and 23/06/22	Online
Learning Disability Assembly	17/06/22	Online
Autistic Knowledge Development	28/06/22 and 01/07/22	Online
Scottish Transitions Forum, Divergent Influencers	11/07/22	Online
ENABLE Scotland	21/05/22	Online
National Autistic Society (NAS)	18/05/22 and 30/05/22	Online
Scottish Autism	10/05/22 and 25/05/22	Online
Scottish Women's Autism Network (SWAN)	12/05/22	Online
Autism Rights Group Highland (ARGH)	19/05/22	Online
Autism Initiatives	21/07/22	In person



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