

Scottish Women's Autism Network

in partnership since 2012 with Autism Network Scotland



Health and Wellbeing for Women & Girls



SWAN: Health and wellbeing

Dr Catriona Stewart October 2015



Scottish Women's Autism Network

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Established in 2012

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Established in 2012

First meetings – what, when, how, who....?

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Conditions of engagement

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First meetings – what, when, how, who....?

Conditions of engagement – managing expectations and variable energy levels for example

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Aims

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Aims – peer support

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Aims – peer support; raising awareness (and acceptance)

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Conditions of engagement – managing expectations and variable energy levels for example; confidentiality

Aims – peer support; raising awareness (and acceptance); knowledge exchange

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Knowledge exchange

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Knowledge exchange

Areas of need

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Knowledge exchange

Areas of need

Diagnosis; education - including transitions, relationships, peer pressure, choices, future plans

Girls grow up

college/uni; employment; sexual health and safety; relationships; spectrum women as mothers
ageing

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Leaflet:

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Leaflet:

<http://www.autismnetworkscotland.org.uk/files/2012/10/SWAN-HP-Flyer-FINAL.pdf>

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(Mental Health)

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Created from minutes of SWAN meetings

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Research?

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Research?

Things have moved on in terms of awareness, but not necessarily understanding or sound knowledge base

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Things have moved on in terms of awareness, but not necessarily understanding or sound knowledge base

Crucially, adolescent girls more quickly diagnosed but are still struggling to stay in school

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Mental health problems

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Mental health problems

Experiences of autistic women as mothers is still treated as a marginal issue, but these experiences are so important not only to the women involved, but their families

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Mental health problems – school, family life, employment

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Ageing population

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Research?

Baron-Cohen et al: testosterone = raised levels of autism;
autism in women = hirsutism, PCOS etc (tomboyism)

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Autism and mothering – Cambridge again (Alexa Pohl, PhD
student + AWM)

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Scottish Autism Right-Click programme women and girls – all
areas including experiences pregnancy, labour, parenting

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NHS Scotland NES framework

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Optimising Outcomes

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NHS Scotland NES framework

Optimising Outcomes

<http://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/home/learning-and-cpd/learning-spaces/autism-spectrum-disorder.aspx>

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NHS Scotland NES framework

Optimising Outcomes

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http://elearning.scot.nhs.uk:8080/intralibrary/open_virtual_file_path/i1923n4027869t/NESD0350ASDTrainingFramework-WEB.pdf

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Future directions?

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