Australian Government

National Autism Strategy

National Autism Strategy 2025–31:

Review of Autism Assessment and Diagnosis Processes

Status:

Complete

Related Actions from the First Action Plan:

- *Commitment 11, Action 1* – Consider opportunities in current training and professional development programs to better support the assessment and diagnosis of autism.
- *Commitment 12, Action 1* – Review Australian and international resources available to support professionals, educators, researchers, Autistic people, and families and carers to navigate autism assessment and diagnosis processes.
- *Commitment 12, Action 2 (a)* – Review existing resources and scope the development of pre- and post-diagnosis information packages for individuals and families and carers.

Who

Government funded Healthcare Management Advisors who partnered with Amaze.



Community engagement

400 people and organisations, including **143 Autistic people**, participated in extensive community engagements with service providers, researchers, and the Autistic community.



What they did

- Reviewed and assessed training and professional development resources supporting autism identification, assessment, and diagnosis across Australia and internationally.
- Evaluated resources and scoped the development of pre- and post-diagnosis information packages that can be used by Autistic people and their families and carers.

What we learned

- **Professional resources** for autism screening and assessment should incorporate lived experience and be co-designed with Autistic professionals and the Autistic community.
- **Professional training** should be comprehensive, neurodiversity-affirming and include how autism presentation may be influenced by intersectionality.
- **Assessment tools** need further research to ensure they are neurodiversity-affirming, culturally sensitive, and inclusive, including for First Nations Autistic people.
- **Information and resources for the Autistic community** should be co-designed with Autistic people to ensure they are affirming, inclusive across life stages, and reflect diverse and intersectional experiences.

Challenges

- Training access is limited by strict eligibility requirements, limited number of courses, low awareness, and lack of mandatory expectations to complete.
- Gaps exist in professional and community resources, including limited options and referral pathways, limited diversity in autism presentations, and lack of neurodiversity-affirming, accessible information.

Next steps

- Findings directly informed design of Commitment 12, Action 2 (b) – Improving the Autism Assessment and Diagnosis Process Grant Opportunity.
- Up to **$455,000 over one year** from 2025-26 has been committed to develop, in co-design with the Autistic community, pre- and post-diagnosis resources for the Autistic community and build their capacity to navigate supports and services.
- Reframing Autism will deliver the project, in partnership with the University of Melbourne Neurodiversity Project and the League of Autistic Psychologists and Affirming Colleagues Australia.

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