



# Press Release

For immediate release: 16/10/2015

## Launch of New Autism Virtual Network

HOPE for Autism, in conjunction with Autism Network Scotland, is delighted to announce the launch of the new North Lanarkshire Autism Virtual Network.

An exciting opportunity to bring knowledge, experience and ideas relating to autism in one secure environment, the virtual network allows those familiar with autism to access community support and aid in the improvement of autism services. It is free to join and is open to anyone on the autism spectrum, their families and carers, and North Lanarkshire based practitioners working in the field.

Alongside the virtual network, a Facebook page will be available soon, through which members can communicate and receive local and national updates about work relating to autism.

CEO of the charity, Eileen Waugh, is delighted that HOPE can facilitate the provision of the virtual network and Facebook page.

“HOPE has the knowledge and experience to support the implementation of this network,” she said. “With an understanding of the needs of the service users, in addition to operating within the heart of the community, HOPE is very aware of what needs to be achieved.”

To access the network, simply sign up online for free membership with Autism Network Scotland and select the North Lanarkshire Virtual Network as an option in the membership form. Registration is simple and will allow members to access the secure service.

“As HOPE has responsibility for facilitating the implementation of the North Lanarkshire Autism Action Plan,” said Eileen Waugh, “the network will help to inform this work and will ensure the outcomes are driven appropriately, by input being received from all of the sectors which influence delivery of services for North Lanarkshire’s Autism community.”

---

*HOPE makes a positive difference to the lives of people affected by autism.*



In order to engage successfully with autism and those affected by it, HOPE and Autism Network Scotland intend to develop a young people's forum and a parent/carers forum. A conference is also being arranged for early 2016 to showcase the valuable work done in North Lanarkshire to implement the Scottish Strategy for Autism.

The implementation of the virtual network and Facebook page comes as a result of the North Lanarkshire Autism Action Plan and consultation with users: the result of the collaborative work of Autism Network Scotland, North Lanarkshire Council, NHS Lanarkshire, HOPE and other local autism services. This collaborative approach ensured that the views and needs of those affected by Autism were included in the decision making process.

Developed to set out how the aims of The Scottish Strategy for Autism will be achieved locally, North Lanarkshire's Autism Action Plan aims to ensure that people on the Autism Spectrum are connected to the wider community in a way that best fits each person's needs, aspirations and outcomes.

## ENDS

---

To become a member of this network you first need to join Autism Network Scotland. Membership is free and you can do this by [completing the online membership form](#). Simply choose the North Lanarkshire Virtual Network as one of your options as you complete the membership form.

---

For further information visit:

<http://www.autismnetworkscotland.org.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/AutismNetworkScotland>

Or contact:

Callum Creaney  
Senior Group Worker  
HOPE For Autism

Lynsey Stewart  
Network Adviser  
Autism Network Scotland

[Callum.Creaney@hopeforautism.org.uk](mailto:Callum.Creaney@hopeforautism.org.uk)

[Lynsey.Stewart@strath.ac.uk](mailto:Lynsey.Stewart@strath.ac.uk)

Tel: 01236 779 191

Tel: 0141 444 8145

---

*HOPE makes a positive difference to the lives of people affected by autism.*

**HELPING OFFERING PROVIDING ENCOURAGING**  
Company Limited by Guarantee No. 335769 Scottish Charity No: 033312