

16 June 2022

Why should Health Commissioners joint commission SENDIAS services?

The IASSN have been asked to create a document to support joint commissioning conversations with Health Commissioners.

There are four main reasons why joint commissioning of Special Educational Needs and/ or Disability Information, Advice and Support Services (SENDIASs) is a must:

1. **The law** - joint commissioning is the most effective way for all to make sure they are meeting their legal responsibilities
2. **Improved health services**
3. **Improved inspection outcomes**- including Local Area SEND Inspections
4. **Improved health outcomes** –for children and young people

The Law

The 2014 Children and Families Act requires local authorities (education and social care) and health to make joint commissioning arrangements for a range of provision including advice and information. The SEND Code of Practice sets out the expectation that this advice and information should be provided through a dedicated, easily identifiable and impartial service (SENDIASs).

Children and Families act: 26: Joint commissioning arrangements

Chapter 26- Joint commissioning arrangements

(1)A local authority in England and its partner commissioning bodies must make arrangements ("joint commissioning arrangements") about the education, health and care provision to be secured for—

(a)children and young people for whom the authority is responsible who have special educational needs, and

(b)children and young people in the authority's area who have a disability.

(2)In this Part "education, health and care provision" means—

(a)special educational provision;

(b)health care provision;

(c) social care provision

3) Joint commissioning arrangements must include arrangements for considering and agreeing—

(d) what advice and information is to be provided about education, health and care provision;

(e) by whom, to whom and how such advice and information is to be provided;

The Code of Practice- Chapter 2

*2.1 Local authorities must arrange for children with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, and their parents, and young people with SEN or disabilities for whom they are responsible, to be provided with information and advice about matters relating to their SEN or disabilities, including matters relating to **health** and social care*

2.4 Information, advice and support should be provided through a dedicated and easily identifiable service. Local authorities have established Information, Advice and Support Services (formerly known as Parent Partnership services) to provide information, advice and support to parents in relation to SEN.

2.7 The joint arrangements that local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) must have for commissioning education, health and care provision for children and young people with SEN or disabilities must include arrangements for considering and agreeing what information and advice about education, health and care provision is to be provided, by whom and how it is to be provided.

Improved health services

An adequately funded SENDIASs will be able to meet its responsibilities re the provision of information, advice and support. The benefits of this to health services include improved:

- Support for parents, children and young people to understand and navigate the health system
- Training to increase knowledge of SEND law, guidance, local policy, issues and participation

- Risk of litigation and Tribunals minimised and effective partnership between service users and professionals established
- Empowered children and young people and their parents raise issues and concerns in a constructive manner that enables early resolution of disagreements
- Maximise effect of the gathered views and wishes of children, young people and their families.
- Geographical and demographic mapping data
- Data on the nature of health enquiries - including services that feature heavily, feedback from CYP and their parents on quality, ease of access etc
- Feed into dynamic support registers/data bases
- Support at CETRs

Ofsted

Ofsted have and will continue to look at the joint commissioning arrangements of SENDIASSs. Here are some examples.

Local Area SEND Inspection 12/03/19

*'I-SAID' is the **jointly commissioned** SEN and disabilities information, advice and support service (SENDIASS). I-SAID offers impartial support, advice and representation on health as well as education and care. Typically, parents are contacted quickly within stated timescales. Parents who use I-SAID are happy with the help and support that they receive'*

Local Area SEND inspection – 09/06/20

*'The (SENDIAS) service is under considerable pressure and is not fulfilling its core functions, including its work with the children and young people themselves. The service **is not yet jointly commissioned** and is only managing the current workload through additional short-term funding.'*

Local Area SEND inspection 12/07/21

*'SENDIASS is **commissioned by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council solely**. The government's minimum standards for SENDIASS set out that this service **is jointly commissioned by education, health and social care**. In Rotherham, this is not the case.'*

Improved outcomes

Joint commissioning improves health outcomes for service users in any area.

Our [data report](#) clearly shows that services that are joint funded are better funded. A service that is closer to being properly funded will have greater capacity to fulfil their statutory responsibilities, including offering information, advice and support in relation to education, **health** and social care. Jointly commissioning a service thus helps ensure those who have, or may have a SEND, have access to information, advice and support in regards to health services they need. This is the fundamental improved outcome for children and young people with SEND. For more information about the impact of information, advice and support on children and young people you can read our [service user feedback report](#)

SEND Local Area Inspection

Wolverhampton Impartial Advice and Support Service (WIASS) is a 'lifeline' to many parents, carers, young people and schools. When these stakeholders are aware of this service, they speak of the life-changing effect on the quality of provision for young people. However, too many families are not yet aware of the service and what it offers.