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| Date: 26 April 2018 |  |

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RE: HEALTHWATCH CALDERDALE TESTIMONIAL

You have my permission to use the following testimonial in promotional and media work.

Healthwatch Calderdale carried out a thorough investigation into services for adults with autism spectrum conditions during 2017. They visited all our Calderdale Asperger’s Groups including two evening meetings, to discuss their project with members, and promote the survey and case studies they were collecting. The survey and request for case studies were also shared with the wider group by email and many members took part. This made them feel listened to, as if their experiences and opinions mattered and that sharing them may help effect change and improvements to services.

The resulting report was comprehensive and the case studies personalised the issues caused by lack of services and support. There was already an awareness and an acceptance of many of the issues but it needed an independent agency to highlight them and press for action across all services. The report has been discussed at the highest level with the Calderdale Health and Well-Being Board, and the Calderdale Autism Strategy Group has incorporated the recommendations into their Action Plan to progress.

Changes are happening already with a newly commissioned diagnostic assessment service which aims to bring the 2 year waiting list down to the NICE recommended 3 months, and a pilot Autism Hub has just been launched to provide information, advice and support through one-to-one and group work.

We are grateful to Healthwatch Calderdale for the time and effort they put into the research and report, which highlighted individual struggles and ignited action to improve services and support for people on the autism spectrum.

Yours sincerely

Dawn Collins Carers Development Worker