

NatSIP update: HoSS event 19th October 2015

NatSIP is a unique national partnership of professionals and voluntary organisations working with children and young people with sensory impairment (SI) and their families. The purpose of NATSIP is to improve outcomes for children and young people with SI, closing gaps with their peers, through joint working in services for these children.

NatSIP is funded through voluntary contributions, affiliation subscription and grants from government. We are the strategic partners for DfE to support their work for CYP with SI. Currently we are half way through a one year contract as a SEND delivery partner until March 2017.

Details, published guidance and outcomes from the NatSIP workstreams in the contract and the work programme can be found on the NatSIP website: www.natsip.org.uk

Summary of the contract with DfE

The NatSIP contract with DfE outlines the delivery support which we provide to early years providers, schools and post-16 providers to improve outcomes for CYP (0 to 25yrs) with SI.

As requested within the overall framework of improving outcomes we will:

- promote effective practice and give the workforce access to quality training materials
- improve the specialist advice and input into SI EHC assessments and plans
- recognise and harness technology for CYP with SI to improve accessibility and outcomes.

We will do this by:

1. developing a comprehensive and online set of resources and a training offer around best practice for sensory impairment for the front line workforce. These resources will be based on strategies developed with NatSIP partners in SI organisations about 'what works' and evidence gathered through NatSIP outcomes benchmarking.
2. improving the knowledge and skills of the specialist professionals working with CYP with SI so that they can support non-specialised staff to improve the quality of teaching and learning and achieve better outcomes for their learners. We will produce new CPD resources for people working in early years, schools and specialist settings. We will analyse current and future needs for the professionals for training and support in this area.
3. building upon emerging evidence of SI EHC assessments and plans. We will update and refine existing guidance. Working with specialist sensory support professionals and families and young people we will deliver exemplar guidance of good EHC plans for VI, HI, and MSI for each of the different range of settings from early years to further education.
4. establishing a national advisory group for SI technology to draw together the expertise in the sector and produce validated 'what works' guidance. We will produce an innovative assessment tool based on current cutting edge practice in using technology to support learning and make sure this is available for professionals across all settings. We will also produce updated guidance on the use of technology in meeting Equality Act duties.

Some key outcomes to date which might interest HoSS:

- 104 LA services submitted data for NatSIP Outcomes Benchmarking collection exercise
- OnLineTraining for front line staff: HI and VI courses updated, 16 tutors trained across 13 LA areas, 18 more tutors in training. (Course tutors recruit to and deliver to a minimum of 12 course participants each)
- MSI/deafblind course running in Kent and Newcastle
- Negotiations over language requirements for apprenticeships for deaf people
- 22 NatSIP events published

Some of the key challenges emerging:

- Reaching delegates for events - people don't know what they don't know and they are being offered a lot of workforce development at the moment
- Updating the NatSIP website to reach a wider audience
- Qualified Teachers for Sensory Impairment may have played a keyworker role in the past. In the new world of commissioning things are different
- Emerging and changing policy and keeping the busy workforce up to date
- The partnership model of work depends upon willing engagement and trust

NatSIP work is wider than the contract with DfE and we try to respond to issues across the sector. This engagement is often stimulated through the HoSS email forum discussions and has included:

- Innovation projects
- Commissioners (local and join commissioning arrangements)
- A NatSIP presence at conferences and events – raising awareness for SI within SEND and promoting successful partnership working
- SI service reviews
- HoSS email forum moderation
- Working with the other DfE SEND contract holders

There is no doubt that working in partnership is a very good thing. Through the team work and trust we have established NatSIP is becoming a recognised 'brand' within the SI sector. We still need to reach further.

We would be grateful if HoSS are able to

- **join in our research and working groups**
- **help publicise our programme and events through your networks and direct those working with CYP with SI to NatSIP. We will, in turn, ensure that specialist SI teachers are central to developments across SEND.**

Thank you all for your support of NatSIP!