Neurodevelopmental Assessment Service (NDAS) Review

October 2021

Summary for children and young people

Thank you to all the children, young people, and their families who told us what they thought about NDAS. We have used what you said to plan a better assessment service.

What is NDAS?

The neurodevelopmental assessment service is also called NDAS. The professionals in the NDAS team assess and diagnose children and young people who may have neurodevelopmental disorders.

The team includes these professionals:
- Community Paediatricians
- Speech and Language Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Clinical and Assistant Psychologists
- Specialist Nurses

Sometimes a diagnosis (the name for the difficulties) may be given, but not always.

Neurodevelopmental difficulties can affect children and young people's development. Difficulties may be found with things like:

- Looking after yourself
- Remembering things
- School work
- Organising things
- Getting on with other people
- Friendships and relationships
- How you feel about yourself
- Understanding and speaking with others
- Making sense of the world around you

What you are good at and what you have more trouble with may change as you get older. Some difficulties last longer and are more of a problem. This may be part of a disorder.

Disorders which may be diagnosed can include:

- o Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- o Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- o Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD)
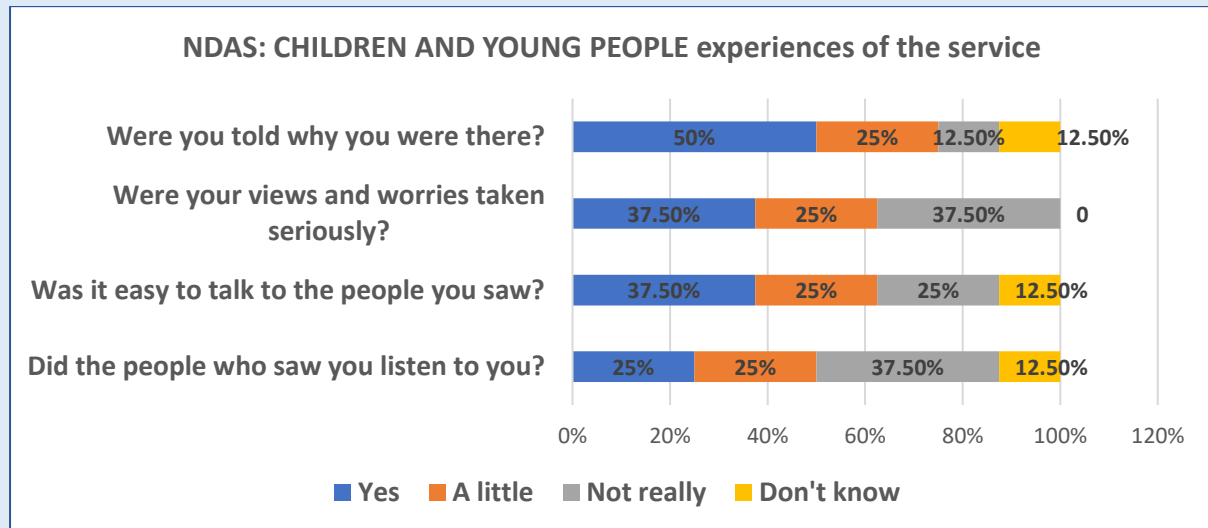- o Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

What was the NDAS review about?

The review looked at what the service is like just now, and how we can improve it. We wanted to know more about what is needed from NDAS and how we can make the service better. We asked lots of people what they thought. This included children, young people, parents, carers, school staff, health staff and others.

People told us-

Most people didn't think NDAS was a good service. More children and young people thought it was good than parents did.

Children and young people mostly thought they could talk with the people they saw at NDAS, and their views and worries were taken seriously. Less children and young people thought they were listened to.

NDAS: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE experiences of the service

Question	Yes	A little	Not really	Don't know
Were you told why you were there?	50%	25%	12.50%	12.50%
Were your views and worries taken seriously?	37.50%	25%	37.50%	0
Was it easy to talk to the people you saw?	37.50%	25%	25%	12.50%
Did the people who saw you listen to you?	25%	25%	37.50%	12.50%

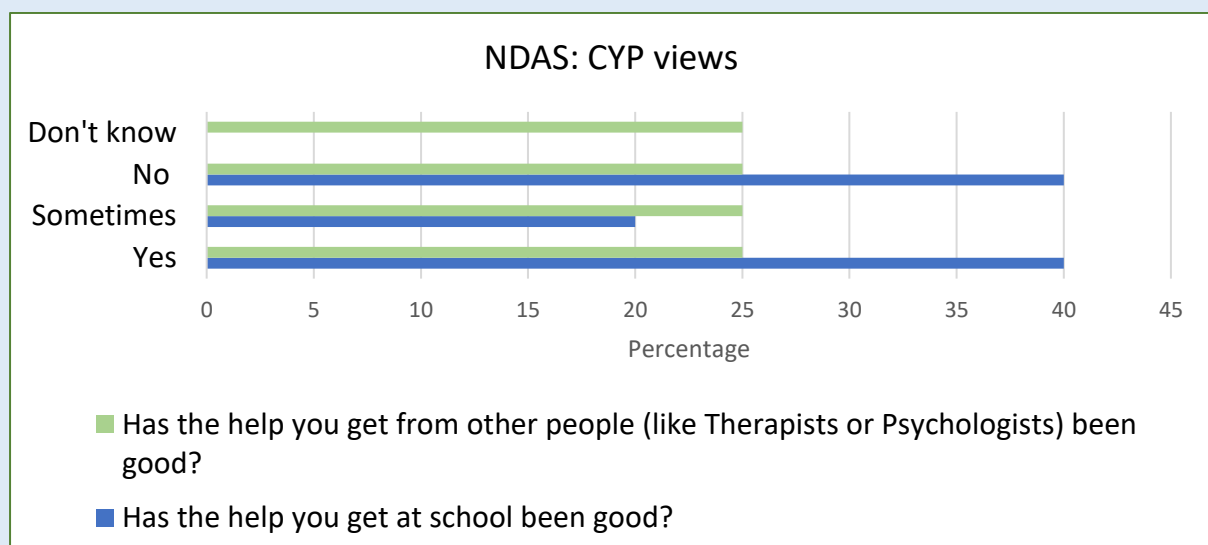Comments from children and young people included-

'They were nice' (13-18-year-old)

'Patronising and not approachable' (13-18-year-old)

'Some adults think they understand when they really don't' (5-12-year-old)

'At my NDAS assessment nobody took my problem seriously' (13-18-year-old)

Most children and young people thought the support they got at school was good, at least some of the time. They were less sure about the support they got from people like Psychologists and Therapists.

NDAS: CYP views

Response	Has the help you get from other people (like Therapists or Psychologists) been good?	Has the help you get at school been good?
Don't know	25	
No	25	40
Sometimes	20	25
Yes	25	40

(Percentage)

■ Has the help you get from other people (like Therapists or Psychologists) been good?

■ Has the help you get at school been good?

Comments included-

'People listen to me' (5-12-year-old)

'Guidance don't listen, always busy' (13-18-year-old)

'The school try to support me but sometimes I still can't get things done (finish an assignment on time, get enough questions done, etc)' (13-18-year-old)

Nearly everyone wanted-

- Shorter waiting times.
- To be told what to expect and what was happening (before, during and after the assessment).
- Better support and help.

What we need to do now-

- Make sure that we listen properly to children, young people and their families
- Look into how we can make the waiting time for an assessment shorter
- Communicate with and support children, young people, families and professionals before, during and after the assessment
- Make sure we have the right people in the NDAS team so we are doing the best we can
- Improve how we do things- like our processes and systems

We are now thinking about these things with senior people in NHS Highland and Highland Council so we can have the service you need and want.

Kayrin Murray, Principal Officer Allied Health Professionals, Highland Council   nhsh.nds@nhs.scot