

*These notes refer to the Autism Act (Northern Ireland)
2011 (c.27) which received Royal Assent on 9th May 2011*

Autism Act (Northern Ireland) 2011

EXPLANATORY NOTES

COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS

Section 2 - Autism Strategy

Section 2 requires the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (“the Department”) to prepare and publish a strategy on autism within 2 years of the passing of the Act and following consultation with the other Northern Ireland departments. All departments in the Executive are placed under an obligation to implement any part of the strategy for which they are responsible.

In order that the strategy be comprehensive, the Act requires the Department to seek information from the 5 Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland on the prevalence of autism in their areas. The Trusts are placed under an obligation to provide the information so requested. Furthermore, the Northern Ireland departments are required to co-operate in the preparation of any strategy. The strategy is intended to be a living document, and Section 2 therefore requires it to be kept under review and updated by the Department at intervals of 7 years or less. The Minister is required to lay a report before the Assembly every 3 years.