



19 December 2017

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Our Ref: FOI 2764

Thank you for your request concerning Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) assessments.

Your request has been considered and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000.

**Question:**

**I am requesting the following information for the year 2016/17 (i.e. the year ending 31 March 2017). Please provide a breakdown of this data by i) adults and ii) children and young people (under 19s).**

- 1. In your area, how many people with possible autism who were referred for a diagnostic assessment had the assessment started within 3 months of their referral? Please provide this information as a number and as a percentage.**
- 2. What was a) the median and b) the longest wait for the start of the diagnostic assessment?**
- 3. Out of those who received a diagnosis of an autistic spectrum condition in 2016-17, what was the median time from referral to final diagnosis?**
- 4. Out of those who received a diagnosis of an autistic spectrum condition in 2016-17, what was the longest time from referral to final diagnosis?**
- 5. How many people were referred for an assessment in the year 2016/17, but have not yet received a diagnosis as of 1 October 2017? Please provide this information as a number and as a percentage.**
- 6. As of October 2017, what is the current waiting time from referral to the start of the diagnostic assessment?**
- 7. As of October 2017, what is the expected waiting time from referral to a final diagnosis of autism?**

**Answer:**

We provide integrated health and social care across community and inpatient settings, caring for people across Hertfordshire, Norfolk and North Essex with mental health and learning disabilities.

In Hertfordshire and North East Essex services we perform autism assessments but they are not co-ordinated as a separately funded and monitored service. When assessments are completed, they are integrated within our normal clinical work. Assessments are often completed as part of a much larger team level intervention and would be completed by the psychologists but could also have the Psychiatrist's input.

In addition, Hertfordshire services are split between Learning Disability, Adult Mental Health (AMH) and Child Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) services. If the person has a learning disability, then they would be referred to LD, otherwise they would go to AMH or CAMHS.

It is not possible to identify assessments through the electronic patient record system used in these regions.

To supply this information for North East Essex alone would involve reviewing every referral over the past year and to carry out this task would exceed the appropriate cost limit of £450.

For example in 2016/17 there were 85 ASD referrals just to our North East Essex IAPT service. This would mean looking at each record manually to confirm that there was an autism assessment and the outcome of the assessment. It is estimated that it would take approximately 15 minutes to manually review each individual record to extract, collate and analyse all the information you are requesting, i.e. 21.25 hours @ £25ph = £531.25.

Hertfordshire referrals to the LD, AMHS and CAMHS would significantly increase this number and cost.

Under section 12 of the FOIA a public authority only has to comply with a request for information when the cost of compliance does not exceeds the appropriate limit or when the cost of compliance is met by the applicant.

We are able to provide you with adult data for our Mid & West Essex Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Assessment Service who take referrals from primary care for individuals who at the point of referral, are not open to secondary care i.e. Mental Health (Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust) or Learning Disability (Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust) services. This service is commissioned separately and the electronic patient recording database used allows us to identify the information requested.

Please see attached pdf. Absolute Section 40(2) - Personal Data<sup>1</sup> has been applied and redactions made where there were low referral(s) to a specific service. This is because by releasing this information individual(s) could be identified and constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (1998).

Should you require further clarification or wish to discuss payment, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please find enclosed an information sheet regarding copyright protection and the Trust's complaints procedure in the event that you are not satisfied with the response.

Yours sincerely

*Sue Smith*

**Sue Smith**  
**Information Rights Officer**

Enc: Copyright Protection and Complaints Procedure Information Leaflet.

If you would like to complete a short survey in relation to your Freedom of Information request please scan the QR code below or click [here](#).



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<sup>1</sup> Absolute Section 40(2) - Personal Data has been applied to the names of Sole Traders. This is because by releasing this information could identify individual(s) and constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act (1998).