



13 July 2018

Information Rights & Compliance Team
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Our Ref: FOI 2897

Thank you for your request concerning adults with a suspected diagnosis of Asperger Syndrome or a type of high functioning Autism.

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

1) Please provide copies of your referral criteria and/or referral guidance for General Practitioners (GPs), who wish to refer for formal diagnosis, an adult with a suspected diagnosis of Asperger Syndrome or other type of High Functioning Autism.

We are a large Mental Health (MH) and Learning Disability (LD) Trust that covers four counties; Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Essex and Buckinghamshire with responsibility for Acute and Rehabilitation MH services, Children & Adolescent MH services, Community Services, Older People MH services, LD Assessment & Treatment, LD Continuing Care with two LD Forensic Medium Secure Units and one LD Forensic Low Secure Unit.

The below explains the referral guidance across all our localities.

For more information on our learning disabilities services please use this [link](#) to our website.

- Hertfordshire teams accept referrals from GPs or other health professional requesting a diagnostic assessment for Autistic Spectrum Disorders.
- North Essex Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) teams accepts referrals from GPs or other health professional.
- Mid & West Essex teams only accept referrals from GPs. We have attached some documentation around our processes which you may find helpful.
- Norfolk teams provide services for people with learning disability and autism as part of an integrated pathway with Norfolk Community Health & Care Trust (NCHC) and, for autism without learning disability, Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust (NSFT). Referrals will, in the first instance, be made to NCHC who provide the Community Specialist Health Learning Disabilities teams or NSFT's Neuro developmental disorder team.
- For needs in Buckinghamshire these assessments are conducted by [Oxfordshire Health](#).

2) Please provide copies of your assessment process for an adult who has been referred by their GP with a suspected diagnosis of Asperger Syndrome or other type of High Functioning Autism. Please ensure this covers timescales from referral to initial assessment, initial assessment to end diagnosis, and the procedure for assessment such as which Health Care Professionals are involved and at what stages.

- In Hertfordshire individuals are seen for an initial assessment in the community teams and where indicated join a waiting list for a specialist Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) assessment from trained psychologists. Waits are long and vary from a few months to 24 months.
- North Essex timescales vary from individual to individual and complexity of assessment needed.
- Mid & West Essex timescales from accepted referrals being returned from the advocate navigators to assessment is around 6 weeks, the pathway timescales from referrals being accepted to assessment is around 14 weeks. Assessments are mostly carried out by Clinical Psychologists with some joint assessments with Psychiatry as necessary. The advocate navigators offer pre & Post diagnostic support.
- Norfolk will support where a person requires enhanced community support or inpatient assessment and treatment services. Community learning Disability Psychiatry is provided by HPFT and work as part of an integrated community team with NCHC.

3) Please provide details of any post-diagnosis support that your organisation offers or has commissioned for adults with a diagnosis of Asperger Syndrome or other type of High Functioning Autism.

- Hertfordshire County Council would provide post diagnosis support.
- North East Essex (NEE) IAPT is not commissioned to provide post diagnosis support.
- Mid & West Essex post diagnostic support by advocate navigators can involve support with employment, housing, benefits and appeals, social links, access to appropriate services, education, voluntary work and needs assessment (Care Act 2014).
- Norfolk will support where a person requires enhanced community support or inpatient assessment and treatment services. Community learning disabilities psychiatry is provided and we work as part of an integrated community team with NCHC.

4) Please provide any other information which relates to your organisation complying with its obligations under the Autism Act 2009 and the associated Statutory Guidance.

As a Trust our assessment process is in line with the Autism Act & Strategy and NICE guidelines.

Should you require further clarification, 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

Sharon Farrell

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](#).

