

Right to Choose: ASD & ADHD Assessment Pathways

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What is Right to Choose?

In England, under the NHS, you now have a legal right to choose your mental healthcare provider, including for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) assessments. This service, offered through the NHS, is free of charge.

Introduction to Right to Choose Referrals

Did you know that NHS patients have the legal right to select their mental healthcare provider? This important right allows you to explore alternative providers if the waiting time for an ADHD or ASD assessment is too long. Right to Choose, introduced in 2018, is still a relatively new system, and many patients may not be aware of these options.

Who Can Offer Right to Choose Assessments?

Several clinics across the UK offer Right to Choose ADHD and/or ASD assessments. To be eligible to provide this service, clinics must also offer the same service to the NHS in England. Private-only clinics are not eligible. Checking a provider's website is a good way to determine if they offer the services you need.

Which Providers Offer Right to Choose Assessments?

The list of clinics offering Right to Choose assessments is constantly evolving. Currently, several clinics are available, but there may be other providers worth researching as well.

Important Resources

- **ADHD & Right to Choose referrals:** [Visit the ADHD website for more information.](#)
- **ASD & Right to Choose referrals:** [Visit the National Autistic Society website for helpful details.](#)

Things to Consider About Right to Choose

It's important to note that many clinics offering these assessments can diagnose ADHD or ASD but may not provide medication titration. This means you might need a local NHS referral if medication is required to manage symptoms.

When Can You Not Use Right to Choose?

There are certain restrictions on eligibility for Right to Choose referrals. You are not eligible if:

- You require urgent or emergency treatment.
- You are already receiving care for the condition you are seeking an assessment for.
- The provider you choose cannot provide appropriate care for your condition.
- You are a prisoner or in specific secure settings such as a secure hospital or under the Mental Health Act.
- You are a serving member of the armed forces.

How to Request a Right to Choose Referral from Your GP

Have an open conversation with your GP about your concerns regarding ADHD or ASD. Your GP may suggest a referral for an official assessment. With waiting times for ADHD and ASD

assessments over two years, Right to Choose can offer faster alternatives, reducing the long wait for diagnosis and support.

What Happens After Choosing a Clinic?

Once you select a clinic, either you or your family (if the patient is a child) will need to research and decide which provider to choose. **Your GP cannot advise on which clinic to select.**

After making your choice, email or send an admin E-consult with your selection and any relevant forms to ensure an efficient referral process. The NHS standard contract (section 7.9) dictates the use of the e-RS referral system but does not require the use of a form to accompany such a referral. Your GP will make the referral by letter but will not complete forms created by the providers.

How Much Quicker Will Right to Choose Be?

The speed of the assessment depends on your chosen clinic and whether they offer medication titration. Generally, Right to Choose assessments can take anywhere from 12 weeks to 12 months—much quicker than the local NHS alternatives, which have waiting times of up to 7 years.

If a clinic offers a diagnosis but not medication titration, you may need an additional referral for post-diagnostic support, which can take up to 24 months locally.

Your GP will not initiate specialist medication and will only prescribe once the patient is stable on a dose and if the provider can meet the same standard for shared care as local NHS services.

Why Choose Right to Choose If Medication May Not Be Easily Accessible?

Many patients find that a diagnosis is sufficient for obtaining additional support from schools or employers, or they may not need medication at all for managing their conditions.

Further Questions?

If you have additional questions, a message to the surgery may provide answers. For further research, here are some helpful resources:

Information on ADHD

- [AHD UKD](#): A charity offering free advice and information on ADHD and Right to Choose referrals
- [ADHD Foundation](#): The UK's leading neurodiversity charity, offering services for those who live with ADHD, Autism, Dyslexia, DCD, Dyscalculia, OCD, Tourette's Syndrome and more
- [NHS Website](#)
- [Mind: ADHD and mental health](#)

Information on ASD

- [National Autistic Society](#): offer support and advise for autistic people in the UK and their families
- [Autism Speaks](#): Autism Speaks is dedicated to creating an inclusive world for all individuals with autism throughout their lifespan

- [NHS Website](#)
- [Mind: Autism and mental health](#)

Please note: The links used are non-exhaustive