

ADHD and Autism Information for GPs

ADHD and Autism: Policy on Prioritisation for Diagnostic Assessment or Medical Review

The waiting list for a diagnostic assessment or medical review can be long and sometimes patients need to be seen before these times. To ensure waiting times are fair, please find below the criteria outlining how we prioritise referrals and the evidence required.

Criteria

The patient has an important academic or career-relevant vocational exam to take within period of the waiting list time ('A' Levels, repeat GCSE's, university exam, apprenticeship). Client should see learning support service in first instance and confirm that university is not able to provide assessment and support strategies.

The client is at risk of losing a place on an educational programme.

The client is in a current legal process involving care proceeding for their child (not divorce/child-custody proceedings) and this is felt to relate to ADHD/Autism symptoms (diagnosed or undiagnosed).

The client is in a legal proceeding involving the collection of evidence by the police or judiciary services and their neurodivergence including communication difficulties are likely to impact quality of evidence.

Client has recently been able to successfully control substance misuse and is considered to have a window of suitability to assess and treat.

Evidence

Letter from their educational provider to confirm that difficulties with attention, handing in work or finishing work will likely lead to failing.

Letter from educational institute.

Copy of relevant document from social services.

Evidence of previous substance dependency and rationale from clinical team.

Criteria

There is a clear and unequivocal clinical reason given by a consultant psychiatrist within BHFT (or in the case of an inpatient, only where a decision on long-term hospital placement rests on the presence or absence of ADHD/Autism) why ADHD/ Autism assessment is crucial to management. This would not apply unless the consultant plans to continue to manage the client's overall mental health.

Formal safeguarding or MARAC process has requested priority.

Client is a care leaver (adult who spent time in care under the age of 18. Such care could be in foster care, residential care (mainly children's homes) or other arrangements outside the immediate or extended family) and a prioritised assessment/medication is considered essential to support future educational or employment prospects.

Evidence

Letter from Consultant.

Referral from Safeguarding.

Clear evidence of this status in GP or BHFT records OR letter from appropriate professional.

The following are not reasons for prioritising ADHD / Autism assessment/ treatment:

- Patient is acutely unwell, in mental health crisis, or presenting acute risks (the ADHD/ Autism service are unlikely to be able to make substantial change in this in short-term).
- Patient has had a private assessment, but it does not meet minimum quality requirements to be accepted directly to prescribing clinic (ADHD only).
- Second opinion.
- Complaints about waiting list.
- Patient is stable on medication not available in the UK.
- Moving out of area and wanting to be seen before move.
- Being a staff member or NHS employee.

Prospect Park Referrals

We have an agreement with Prospect Park to provide one autism assessment per month for clients where potential autism is contributing to the challenges in placement or who are awaiting diagnosis to support discharge planning. Prospect Park refer these clients directly to admin team.