

SEEKING A DIAGNOSIS OF AUTISM SPECTRUM CONDITION (ASC)

This resource is to offer you some guidance on what you can expect when seeking a diagnosis of ASC.

There are 3 different pathways for a diagnosis

- Via your NHS
- Via Right to Choose
- Pay privately for a diagnosis.

This resource is primarily going to look at getting an diagnosis through the NHS / Right to Choose. We've laid out the steps below:

Step 1: See your GP

We recommend seeing your GP first even if you are going down the privately funded route as they may have more advice. The GP will usually ask you to complete an AQ50/AQ10 questionnaire. This is a series of questions looking where you score yourself on different aspects of your life, you can find this online by searching the questionnaire name. Make some notes on why each point applies to you so that you have examples ready before your GP appointment. The GP is likely to ask more questions but having these answers ready will help you to feel a little more prepared for the conversation.

Step 2: The referral

If you are going through NHS or Right to Choose then your GP will need to make a referral. NHS waiting lists can vary depending on area, so before you choose to wait for an NHS referral or to go private, it would be worth finding out how long your local waiting list is. Should you decide to go privately your GP may need to write a referral letter to the company that you decide to use, depending on what provider you have chosen the process is usually outlined on their website. If you are unsure you can always contact the provider to find out what your GP will have to do to refer you to them so that you go to your GP appointment with all the information you need. Not all GPs will be aware of the Right to Choose route so make sure you go prepared.

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Step 3: The diagnosis

Whichever route you decide on there will be an assessment which will go over your mental health, family history and any other health conditions. There will usually be another questionnaire for you to complete before your first appointment. After the assessment they will either tell you in the appointment or send you a letter if you have been diagnosed with Autism.

A diagnosis can cause many emotions. Talking with someone, like a counsellor, can help you understand and accept the diagnosis.

Step 4: After Support

Some diagnostic services offer post diagnosis support, this might include counselling, group sessions or awareness sessions to understand what your diagnosis means to you. If this is not offered then do ask your clinician if they can recommend any services that you could receive follow up support from.

If you would like more information then here are a couple of useful links to look at:

<https://www.clinical-partners.co.uk/nhs-services/right-to-choose>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/autism/getting-diagnosed/how-to-get-diagnosed/>

To find out more or to access our services: Visit: www.autismplus-employmentservices.co.uk
Telephone: 0114 384 0284 Email: employmentsupport@autismplus.co.uk