Right To Choose

Fact Sheet on Right to Choose for Autism & ADHD assessments

Working together for SEND families

What is Right to Choose?

Right to Choose allows families in England to ask for their child to be referred to a different NHS provider or service for some types of healthcare. This leaflet explains how Right to Choose works for Autism and ADHD assessments.

How does it work for Autism and ADHD?

Right to Choose (RTC) lets you choose where your child has their first NHS outpatient appointment, including for Autism or ADHD assessments.

A RTC referral can only be made by a GP to very specific providers. Providers:

- Have an NHS contract in England for this service
- Must be led by a consultant or a mental health professional.
- Must comply with NICE guidelines; click here for a link to our checklist.

Before you choose a provider, check:

Families should research all providers before deciding which they would like to use. You may want to consider:

- If appointments are online or in person
- The waiting times of each provider
- If ongoing treatment/medication is included. See the medication section for more information.

You can not be on two waiting lists

Right to Choose is a legal right within the NHS in England that allows you to choose your provider for certain services. You can usually only be on one NHS waiting list for the same service at a time.

If you decide to switch, you will be removed from your current waiting list. There is a template letter here you can take to your GP to support a discussion about using Right to Choose.

Quick answers

What is it?
The 'Right to Choose' lets you choose where your child has Autism & ADHD assessments within the NHS.

Who can use it?
Families on an NHS waiting list in England.

What does it do?
Lets you choose a different provider, often with shorter wait times.

What doesn't it do?
It does not guarantee ongoing support after assessment.

Things to know

- You can only be on one NHS waiting list at a time.
- Switching providers means leaving your current list.
- Some providers do not offer medication.
- Shared care (where your GP takes over treatment after initial prescribing) is not guaranteed.
- Local NHS services may not act on recommendations from your chosen provider.

Right To Choose providers

You can find providers on the BNSSG Remedy website or ADHD UK (covering both Autism and ADHD).

Not all providers offer the same services, especially medication, so please read the medication section on the next page carefully.

Do I have to pay for Right to Choose services?

No, RTC services are paid for by the NHS. Medication (if recommended) may be included but not all providers offer this. It is important to check this before choosing a provider.

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How long will it take to receive an assessment?

Each provider has different waiting times. Check their website or contact them directly for the latest information. Toward the end of the financial year, funding for RTC assessments can become limited. This means providers may pause offering new paid assessments for a short time. This is a temporary situation, and services usually resume at the start of the new financial year in April when funding is refreshed. If you are waiting at this time, it may take a little longer, but the process will begin again as soon as funding becomes available.

What happens before, during and after an assessment?

The provider will ask for information about your child, their developmental history and information in connection with any setting (educational, social, familial) your child may attend.

During the assessment, they may ask questions, do simple tasks, and watch how your child learns and communicates. You might be asked for examples from earlier childhood. Every provider is different, so check what will happen, how long it takes, and what to bring.

After, you will get a report explaining your child's strengths and needs. It may include recommendations for support at home, school, or from health services.

Medication

Some providers offer medication as part of their service, while others do not. If they do not, you may be referred back to local NHS services and your GP may be asked to take over prescribing medication (called shared care), but this is not guaranteed and local services may review the assessment or complete a new assessment before agreeing to prescribe any medication.

Getting more help

Support recommended in your report may not automatically be provided by local services. If your child needs additional support, you may wish to consider requesting an EHC needs assessment. You can get advice from your local Parent Carer Forum and SEND and You. Details are on the back page.

Good fit for you?

- Your child is on a long NHS waiting list and is waiting for an assessment.
- You would like to speed up access to an Autism or ADHD assessment.

Also consider...

- The provider you choose may not prescribe medication.
- Recommendations from an independent clinic may not be accepted by local NHS services.
- Shared care arrangements for medication are not guaranteed.
- Local NHS services may not act on recommendations from your chosen provider.

Check carefully

- Some providers do not offer ADHD medication, and your GP might not agree to take over treatment after an assessment.
- Check this carefully before deciding which provider to use.

Right to Choose

Further support and information

Working together for SEND families

Key Contacts

Bristol Parent Carers	Click for website here Email: info@bristolparentcarers.org.uk
Bristol Local Offer:	Click for website here
North Somerset Parent Carers	Click for website here Email: admin@nspcwt.org
North Somerset Local Offer	Click for website here
South Gloucestershire Parent Carers	Click for website here Email: team@sglospc.org.uk
South Gloucestershire Local Offer	Click for website here
Sirona Care and Health	Click for website here
ICB	Click for website here
SEND and You	Click for website here
Autism Central	Click for website here



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Bristol Parent Carer Forum Shaping the Future Together

NORTH SOMERSET PARENT CARERS WORKING TOGETHER

SGPC South Glos Parent Carers

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