ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder) assessment

Individuals cannot self-refer for this assessment. The Neurodevelopmental Service only accepts referrals from GPs.

Provided at the Neurodevelopmental Service
This assessment is for a person aged 17 or over who is having very significant problems with their social relationships and coping with day-to-day experiences and changes.

What the session will cover
We will try to do the following:

- To assess the person's social skills and social understanding.
- To understand the problems the person has with managing daily experiences and coping with change.
- To compare the level of difficulties with the diagnostic criteria for Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

What will happen in the assessment
We will initially send you two appointments to complete the assessment. We ask you to fill in some questionnaires to bring along to your first appointment, which a family member or friend can help you with if necessary. These will look at your experiences and behaviour patterns.

Over the two appointments, you will meet with a clinician who will talk with you about your difficulties now and the way these problems have developed over time. They will ask lots of questions covering areas such as:

- The way you communicate
- Your behaviour
- Your relationships
- Your life experiences
- How you spend your time
- Your mental health
- Your sensory responses

If you have had any bad experiences it will be important to hear about them, even if you think you have recovered well.

We will ask whether you are facing any risks or whether the way you feel or behave puts you or others at risk. This will include talking about any support you have from other services.
It is important for us to get lots of information about your development throughout your life. Where possible, it is therefore very useful for us to speak to a parent or somebody who cared for you as a child. If this is not possible, we can talk to another relative or a friend who has known you for a long time. We will ask your permission before contacting anyone. A separate appointment will be arranged to talk to this person, which you can also attend if you wish to. Alternatively, it may be possible to speak to them by phone if they cannot attend an appointment. If available, school reports can also provide valuable information about any difficulties you had as a child.

Sometimes we will need to include an additional observational session with other members of the team and if this happens the assessment will take longer and we will need to arrange more appointments with you. We will only do this when we need the results to help us with a diagnostic decision.

Once a decision has been reached, a final appointment will be arranged to tell you the outcome of the assessment. Dependent on the outcome, the clinician will tell you about any services that they feel would be useful for you to access next. If you have received a diagnosis of ASD they will tell you about the post-diagnostic support we offer in the neurodevelopmental service. This includes education groups and one-to-one support with our therapists, where appropriate.

**Assessment clinicians**
Our assessment will be completed by clinicians with additional training and experience in this area including autism assessment tools. We have developed a standard way of doing this assessment so the background of the clinician does not affect what is covered.

**Training for excellence in the NHS**
Sometimes we will also have trainees and students observing us in the sessions so they can learn about our work and develop their skills. This is a very important part of their training, but if you would prefer not to have them in a session please let us know when you arrive for the appointment.

**Practical arrangements**
We currently offer assessments at our bases in Coventry, Rugby, Nuneaton and Stratford-upon-Avon. When you arrive for your session, please check in at the reception desk and a member of the team will meet you there. We are happy for you to include someone to support you at any part of the assessment process.

**Childcare**
Unfortunately, we are unable to offer any childcare provision. We have found that children can be a distraction in an assessment and we want to concentrate on the person being assessed. We cannot talk as openly about the difficulties you are experiencing if we have youngsters listening. If your childcare arrangements fall through at the last minute, please let us know and we will decide with you whether it is best to rearrange the appointment.
How to arrange an assessment
Please see your GP to discuss the possibility of a referral to our service. They may ask you to fill in a brief questionnaire to get more information about your difficulties. After we have received your referral we will write to you to confirm that you still wish to go ahead with the assessment. You will then be added to our waiting list and we will write to you with details of your appointment when one has become available.

The Adult Neurodevelopmental Service team

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