

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) **assessment – Referrals and Medication**

As a practice we are committed to supporting patients with neurodevelopmental diagnoses, both children and adults.

We are writing this to explain the situation with regards to ADHD and Oxfordshire NHS services, whilst being mindful of the distress that the current situation is causing many of our patients. This is a complex area which is often misunderstood. This policy sets out the practice's policy on acknowledging diagnosis and taking over treatment where requested.

This document is based on national and local guidance, specifically [NICE guidance](#). Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) can affect many aspects of a person's life. However, diagnosis is complex and requires a specialist, usually a consultant psychiatrist to do this.

GPs (General Practitioners) are not able to make a diagnosis of ADHD and a referral is needed to an ADHD specialist. If an ADHD diagnosis is subsequently made by the specialist, they may choose to offer medications to help manage the symptoms. These medications are potentially dangerous and therefore require careful monitoring by a specialist.

Adults

The Adult NHS ADHD service in Oxfordshire is provided by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (OHFT), unfortunately they have paused taking new referrals from 5th February 2024, due to long waiting lists and overwhelming demand.

If you believe you are presenting with symptoms of undiagnosed ADHD, you can still request an ADHD Assessment. You will need to complete an Adult ADHD Self-Report Scale (ASRS) Questionnaire and if the questionnaire indicates a referral is necessary then one can be arranged through "Right to Choose".

The ASRS questionnaire can be sent to you following a medical request using the online form on our website. [Long Furlong Medical Centre - contact us online](#)

For Further Information on Right to Choose see below.

Children

The paediatric NHS ADHD service is also provided by Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust (OHFT) but referrals are made through the child's school – teachers / SENCOs (Special Education Needs Co-ordinator).

As of May 2024, the waiting time for assessment was around 6 years.

What should happen

A patient's GP (or school in the case of a child) should refer the patient to the NHS ADHD service where the patient is assessed.

The NHS ADHD service is commissioned to assess, diagnose, start medication, titrate the medication to the appropriate dose and provide post-diagnostic reviews. The specialist will also remain responsible for arranging an annual review which includes a review of your ADHD symptoms, your medication, and a physical assessment.

Once an established dose of the appropriate medication has been established, we may take on responsibility for on-going prescribing and monitoring under a “shared care agreement” with the NHS service specialist, however responsibility for prescribing and monitoring remains with the specialist. This SCA is a carefully crafted, well-established and pre-arranged agreement with defined responsibilities for both the NHS specialist and NHS GP. This is essential as it provides the NHS GP with prompt access to a specialist in the event of any concerns or problems.

What is happening now.

We understand that, often in desperation and because of a lack of local NHS provision, patients are seeking assessment from either private providers or “Right to Choose” providers.

Private providers

You need to be aware that should you choose to be referred to a private provider, and a diagnosis is made, we will not be able to prescribe ADHD medication or arrange monitoring. This is because the private providers may not be able to offer the same follow-up or monitoring as NHS specialists. As a practice, we will not enter into a shared care agreement with a private provider and will not be able to prescribe any recommended treatment on NHS prescriptions. Getting the ADHD medication must all be done through the private provider, and you should check on the costs of ongoing treatment including prescribing and yearly reviews.

Private providers each have their own referral process and you should refer to their websites for more information. We may need information from you in order to complete a referral to a private provider on your behalf. Failure to respond to a request for information about your referral in a timely manner, will result in your referral request being cancelled.

Where does that leave us?

Whilst some private or Right to Choose specialists try to unilaterally impose a shared care agreement (SCA) on the NHS GP, none have been pre-arranged with Long Furlong Medical Centre. (Only those locally agreed (by BOB ICB) with specific providers for Adults will be considered.)

We believe that without a SCA, patients and GPs alike are left vulnerable. GPs cannot be expected to take on additional medico-legal risk because of a lack of NHS specialist provision, and patients should not be left without the care they need due to a lack of comprehensive NHS funding.

Everyone at Long Furlong Medical Centre is sympathetic to the plight of our patients who have been forced down a private or ‘right-to-choose’ route because of the situation in Oxfordshire.

However, we have all carefully discussed the situation, weighed up the needs of all our patients and concluded that, with regret, we cannot absorb more unfunded work because of the failings of other parts of the NHS service.

To that end, we will not be entering into SCAs, nor taking over the prescribing of ADHD medications, from any private provider or a Right to Choose provider who has not been quality checked by the local commissioner (BOB ICB).

We understand that this will be upsetting for those concerned but with the current state of primary care it is an inevitability for which we apologise.

This is our final decision, and further complaints should be made to your Member of Parliament or the BOB (Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire) ICB 'planned care team': bobicb.plannedcare@nhs.net

Everyone at Long Furlong Medical Centre sincerely hope that the local services commissioned to provide ADHD care are improved as soon as possible.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) **assessment** **Right to Choose**

Information on alternative referral options for ADHD assessment.

If you are based in England under the NHS you now have a legal right to choose your mental healthcare provider and your choice of mental healthcare team, this includes for referrals relating to ADHD assessment.

This service is offered through the NHS and is free.
Introduction to Right to Choose referrals.

Did you know NHS patients now have a legal right to choose their mental healthcare provider? This important right means that, for instance, should you decide the waiting time for your ADHD assessment is too long, then you can choose an alternative provider to suit you.

Right to Choose within mental health is a relatively new scheme (since 2018) and as such, many patients are not aware of the options.

Who can offer Right to Choose assessments?

There are a number of clinics throughout the UK that can offer Right to Choose ADHD and/or ASD assessments. To become a Right to Choose clinic provider, the clinic must supply the same service to the NHS somewhere in England, they cannot be a private only clinic.

The provider's website is usually a good place to start to find out if they offer the service you need.

Which providers offer Right to Choose assessments?

This list of providers is constantly changing.

ADHD Assessment Providers

For more information on ADHD & Right to Choose referrals, the [ADHD UK website](#) has some useful information.

Things to consider about Right to Choose

It is important to note that many of the clinics mentioned in this leaflet can offer diagnosis but are rarely able to offer medication titration.

This means that you may be able to obtain a diagnosis with the named clinics, but often you will need a local NHS referral (as mentioned above) should they find that you need to start medication to control your symptoms.

When can you not use Right to Choose?

There are some restrictions on which patients are eligible for a Right to Choose assessment and the below is a list of the reasons you would not be eligible:

- You need urgent or emergency treatment – this is often not relevant as there are rarely times when this type of referral is considered urgent but is still worth noting here.
- You already receive care and treatment for the condition you are seeking an assessment for.
- The organisation or clinical team you've chosen does not provide the right care for your condition.
- You are a prisoner or on temporary release from prison.
- You are detained in prescribed accommodation such as a court, secure training centre, immigration removal centre or young offender's institute.
- You are detained in a secure hospital setting.
- You are detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended in 2007.)
- You are a serving member of the armed forces.
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Process for requesting a Right to Choose referral from your GP

Talk to your GP, have an open and frank conversation about why you think you have ADHD and/or ASD. Talk about any and all mental health concerns you might have. The goal is to help you with your issues and the conversation often will be wider than just the query of ADHD / ASD.

Following that conversation your GP may suggest a referral for an official assessment.

What happens when I have chosen my clinic?

For all Right to Choose referrals, the patient, or their family if a child, will need to research and select a clinic themselves, it is not something the GP can advise on. Once you have chosen which clinic you would like to have your assessment with and obtained the relevant forms, please complete an online form (Admin) confirming who you have chosen and forward any forms. Please ensure any forms that are required

to be completed by/for the patient are enclosed with this email together with the GP forms. This will enable us to process the referral efficiently.

Why would I choose a Right to Choose referral if I cannot easily obtain medication that way?

Many patients feel a diagnosis would be enough to request further support / considerations from school or employers and some patients may not require medication for these conditions at all.

“Right to choose” for Adults – New Information Nov 2024

Locally the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire West (BOB) Integrated Care Board has only approved and quality-checked the following providers for adult ADHD assessments.

- Psychiatry UK <https://psychiatry-uk.com/>
- Modality LLP <https://www.modalitycommunityservices.com/>
- Skylight Psychiatry <https://www.skylightpsychiatry.co.uk/>
- **Psicon:** <https://www.psicon.co.uk/>

This list of providers is constantly changing so you may want to discuss this after you have contacted the GP.

There are separate shared care agreements that have very recently been agreed with these “Right to Choose” providers for adults, such that once the appropriate assessment, initiation and stabilisation of medication (usually after at least 12 weeks) has been made that may mean that we are able to prescribe the medication. An (at the least) annual review will need to be done with the provider for us to be able to continue prescribing under the shared care agreement.

For Children there is not yet an agreed shared care agreement (SCA) with any provider so, as above, we would be unable to provide any medication.

What if I have more questions not answered in this leaflet?

Often questions can be answered with by contacting the surgery but if you cannot wait or you would like to look into this further yourself first, please see below a list of websites and resources, to help you on your Right to Choose journey:

Information on ADHD

- [ADHD UK](#): 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](#)