



How to access our service

We accept referrals from GPs and other health and social care professionals as well as self-referrals.

We ask individuals to complete the AQ50 screening questionnaire to help us decide whether an assessment would be useful for individuals. If we are able to offer an assessment we will write to the individual providing further information about the assessment process and how long they may need to wait to be seen. (A copy of the AQ50 screening questionnaire and referral form can be obtained from our Team Administrator.)

We provide assessments in various locations across Derbyshire and try to be flexible to meet individual needs.

For individuals who are not comfortable with arranging appointments, we are happy to liaise with a nominated person who can do this on their behalf.

Enquiries

If you have any questions please contact:

Dr Charmian Round
Clinical Psychologist & Clinical Lead

Paula Merchant
Team Administrator

Telephone: 0300 1234574
Email: dhcft.autism@nhs.net

If you have any concerns or complaints, please contact:

Patient Experience Team
Albany House
Kingsway
Derby
DE22 3LZ

Telephone: 01332 623751
Email: dhcft.patientexperience@nhs.net



Derbyshire Adult Autism Assessment Service

Service Information

Autism Assessment Service
St Andrews House
201 London Road
Derby
DE1 2SX

Telephone: 0300 1234574



What is Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?

There are a number of terms used to describe the Autism Spectrum including Autism, High Functioning Autism, Atypical Autism, Pathological Demand Avoidance, Asperger's and neuro-diversity. The Department of Health and other organisations use the term 'autism' as an umbrella term for all these conditions, including Asperger Syndrome and we will do the same in this leaflet.

People with autism experience core difficulties which are common across the spectrum, these include:

Social Interaction: People may struggle to make and keep friends and maintain social and intimate relationships. They may have difficulty expressing their emotions and needs.

Social Communication: People may find it difficult to understand and use tone of voice, facial expression, body language and the unspoken rules of language like turn taking, when to interrupt and when to stop talking. They may take things literally or misunderstand what others say. Some jokes may be difficult for people to understand.

Social Imagination: People may have difficulty recognising other's feelings. They may have difficulty understanding other people's behaviour and understanding how they may respond to the things people say or do. They may find it difficult to understand a situation because they are fixed on small details and miss some of the more important bits that others might notice.

People with ASD may have difficulty planning and organising their day, getting started on a task, doing more than one task at a time, moving between tasks or knowing what to do with their time.

Restricted Repetitive Patterns of Behaviour, Interests or Activities: People may have a strong desire to stick to familiar activities and find change or unexpected situations difficult. They may have very strong interests and know a lot about one subject.

OTHER NEURODEVELOPMENTAL CONDITIONS

There are a number of other neurodevelopmental conditions such as: ADHD, Social Pragmatic Communication Disorder, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia. Whilst these may present alongside ASD we are not currently commissioned to assess and support these conditions.

HOW COULD A DIAGNOSIS BENEFIT ME?

Receiving a diagnosis of ASD can give individuals, their friends and family a better understanding of the person's needs and abilities. It could also provide an alternative explanation to common misdiagnoses, such as personality disorder.

A diagnosis should enable individuals to access support so that they can manage the difficulties they experience. This support might include an assessment of need by their Local Authority or the provision of reasonable adjustments in the work place. Appropriate support, guidance and advice can help prevent mental health conditions that are commonly experienced by people with ASD. If individuals do experience associated mental health conditions, an appropriate diagnosis will help to inform how best to work towards recovery.

A diagnosis can also help individuals identify their unique strengths and abilities rather than seeing their differences as difficulties alone.

WHAT DOES THE DERBYSHIRE ADULT ASD TEAM DO?

The multi-disciplinary team provides diagnostic assessments for adults aged 18 years and over who are suspected of having ASD, do not have a learning disability and have given their consent. The service covers the whole of Derbyshire and occasionally people outside of the county if they lived in Derbyshire at the time they were initially referred.

We also provide a follow up appointment and advice about local services which are available to adults who have been diagnosed.

The team also provides training and consultancy to other health professionals working for Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

We are **not** currently commissioned to provide support for post diagnostic health needs.

