



Exploring ADHD: Before-Diagnosis Leaflet for Adults



<https://adhdandautism.org/>

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This leaflet was created by the Adult Team at CAAS, with input from neurodivergent adults and staff. It aims to provide inclusive, helpful information based on over 25 years of experience and community insight. We hope that this is helpful for those who want to know about the autism diagnosis process and what it might mean for them.

Why have an assessment?

You, or perhaps people around you, might be wondering why you might want to go through the assessment process- especially if the GP has told you it may be long time of waiting. Some people find seeking an ADHD diagnosis can offer clarity, validation, and a deeper sense of self. Many people spend years being told that they are 'too much' or 'lazy' and a diagnosis can bring relief and self-acceptance.

It may help explain behaviours, leading to better coping strategies tailored to ADHD. A formal diagnosis can allow access to medication, reasonable adjustments and other support. **Follow the QR code on the front page or visit our website for more information.**

Top tips at appointment

- **You can take someone with you** – if you wish to take someone with you, please let the service know in advance.
- **Prepare notes** – it can be useful to write notes about your experiences in life, you might find it helpful to use the profile in this leaflet.
- **Learn about yourself** – it can be useful to learn about autism through websites, social media and look at what coping strategies are suggested to support people. You don't need to wait for a diagnosis to start looking for support or information.

What to expect in the appointment

At the appointment, a practitioner will talk with you about your childhood and current experiences. But every service does things a little differently, if the process hasn't been explained it's a good idea to contact them.

There are two main pathways for ADHD diagnosis for individuals living in NWL: CNWL Adult ADHD Service & the right to choose approved provider NHS Harrow Health. You can find more information on these via the QR code or website link.



1

Visit GP and ask for referral to Adult ADHD Service. Referral Made.

2

Questionnaires about you and your childhood. You and someone who knew you as a child to complete.

3

Clinical assessment for ADHD. You will likely receive your results at the assessment.

4

Feedback report, treatment & medical options discussed.

“A diagnosis is only a piece of paper. It does not come with support, guidance, or understanding. Those were down to me to seek out. The diagnoses were the gateway though, and I truly do not know where I’d be without one.” - Tom

You can read more personal stories on how people found the assessment process on our website: adhdandautism.org/get-involved/your-stories/

After the appointment

You may receive your outcome of the assessment at the end of your appointment or later e.g. via a letter. You may also receive a report outlining your strengths and differences and the practitioner's conclusions. If anything in the report seems missing or incorrect, you can contact the diagnostic service to let them know.

If the practitioner suggests further support like medication, you may need to arrange this through the service or GP if you're interested.

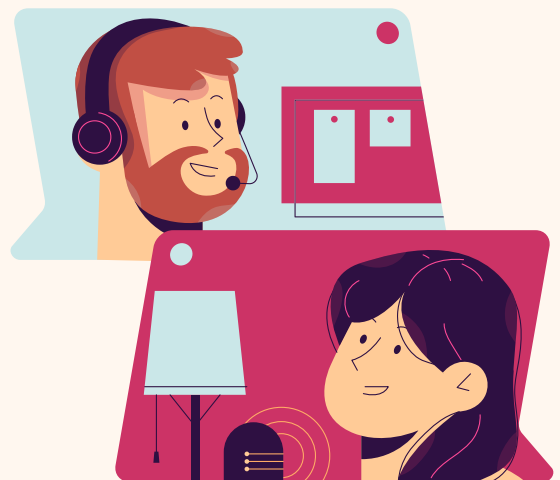
Received a Diagnosis?

You may have received a diagnosis with a subtype and you can read more about this on our website, via the QR code. After receiving a diagnosis, you can explore medication options if you wish.

CAAS ADHD services are available whilst you are on the waiting list and after diagnosis. Contact us for more information.

Didn't Receive a Diagnosis?

It may be confusing for you if you haven't received a diagnosis but were expecting to. It might be helpful to speak to your GP to explore other possible explanations.



Places of support whilst waiting

We understand that waiting for an ADHD assessment can take a long time, but you're not alone. There are places you can turn to for support in the meantime:

- **Mental Health Support** – You can speak to your GP or scan the QR code to find helplines and services available right now if you need mental health support.
- **CAAS Resource Board** - We have an online page that lists all the support we know of in the local area, this board can be accessed via our website.
- **CAAS Support** - We offer support whilst you are waiting for an assessment, including
 - Personalised task support
 - Social groups
 - ADHD Groups - open to those waiting as well as those diagnosed



Scan the QR code or visit our website to find out more about our groups and explore our resource board detailing external support around the local area:
adhdandautism.org/services/adults

