

Patient information

ADHD Primary Care Connect

Preparing for your ADHD assessment

This leaflet explains what will happen before, during and after your ADHD assessment, and how you can prepare.

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Delivered by



Brighton and Hove
Federation



What happens next



Your referral

Once your referral has been sent by the GP, you will receive a **text message from NHS No Reply** to confirm that we have received it.

This usually happens within 2 weeks of your referral, but can take longer.



Your Care Coordinator

Within the next 2 weeks, your NHS Care Coordinator will contact you to introduce themselves and explain what happens next.

You will receive a **text message from NHS No Reply to complete 2 forms**. If you prefer a paper copy, please let the NHS Care Coordinator know.



Things you can do while you wait

Use this guide to help you prepare and look after yourself while you wait.



Your NHS Care Coordinator is your main point of contact. They will give you their contact details directly.

About the forms you need to complete



Before we can book your appointment, we will ask you to complete two forms.

- We ask you to complete these as best you can
- Do not worry if you cannot answer every question
- Completing as much as possible helps you and the clinician understand your experiences and prepare for your appointment
- You may need to speak to others and gather information ahead of completing the forms which your NHS Care Coordinator can support you with.

1

Form 1: ADHD Self-Report Scale

- This form has 18 short tick-box questions about ADHD symptoms in adults
- It helps us understand what you are experiencing now

2

Form 2: Your developmental history

- This form asks about what you can remember about your childhood, school life and early development
- ADHD begins in childhood, so this information is important for your assessment
- If possible, it can help to include information from someone who knew you well as a child



We will arrange your ADHD assessment after you submit both Form 1 and Form 2.

Appointment reminders



Once your appointment has been booked, you will receive text reminders from NHS No Reply.

- You will receive a reminder one week before, the day before and on the day of your appointment
- If you need to change or cancel your appointment, please follow the instructions in the text message or contact your NHS Care Coordinator directly
- Please do not contact your GP practice about appointment changes, as they are not able to rearrange assessment appointments



We look forward to seeing you.

If you need to make changes to your appointment, please follow the instructions on the text message you receive or speak to your NHS Care Coordinator.

Things you can do while you wait



Waiting for an ADHD assessment can feel difficult.

It can bring up lots of feelings, and that is completely normal.



You do not need to do everything at once.

To help you prepare, you may find it useful to:

- write down examples of how ADHD traits affect your daily life
- ask someone who knows you well if they can help with background information
- keep a note of any questions you want to ask at your assessment



To look after yourself while you wait:

- if you feel restless, try moving your body in a way that feels manageable
- if you feel overstimulated, try reducing noise, light or other sensory input
- if you forget to eat or drink, try setting reminders or keeping water and easy snacks nearby
- if forms feel difficult, take your time and answer honestly in your own words



Your NHS Care Coordinator remains your first point of contact at this stage.

About your appointment



Who will see me?

Your assessor will be an NHS Clinician. They may be observed by an NHS Trainee with your permission.



How long is the appointment?

Your assessment will usually last **up to 90 minutes**.

Please arrive on time, otherwise the appointment may need to be rearranged if there is not enough time remaining to complete an assessment fully.

We understand that timekeeping can be difficult and will try to be flexible where possible.



Support available

You are welcome to bring someone with you for support, especially someone who might be able to assist you if needed. If you need anything else ahead of the day, **you can discuss this with your NHS Care Coordinator**.



How can I prepare?

You may find it helpful to keep the rest of the day free after your assessment, so you have time to process and rest afterwards.

On the day please:

- Eat and drink something before the appointment
- Take prescribed medication as usual
- Avoid highly caffeinated drinks (including energy drinks), alcohol and street drugs, as these can lead to overstimulation

During your appointment



The NHS Clinician will carry out the assessment to decide whether you meet the criteria for ADHD.

They will talk through some of the questions in the forms and will ask:

- Why you have come for an assessment
- What you hope to gain
- Difficulties you have experienced
- What has led you to think you may have ADHD
- Examples of how your experiences as a child and adult may have affected your life

They need to cover specific areas so they can make a careful and balanced decision. This sometimes means they may guide the conversation, interrupt, or move on to another topic. This is about making sure nothing important is missed, not about rushing you.

Please take your time and feel comfortable asking questions. You are welcome to:

- Move around / stretch
- Fidget, including the use of fidget or sensory items that help you feel comfortable.
- Ask for a break at any time



Important:

You will not receive a diagnosis within this appointment. You will have a follow-up appointment within 3 weeks to discuss your assessment report.

Your follow-up appointment



In this appointment, you will discuss your assessment report with your assessor and receive your own copy.

A copy will also be shared with your registered GP practice.

Before this appointment, the assessor will have reviewed all the information provided, including the forms you completed. Sometimes this is discussed with other clinicians to make sure the right decision is reached.

During this appointment, the assessor will:

- Explain the outcome
- Talk through how the decision was made
- Discuss next steps

This means any ongoing support or treatment can be coordinated properly.



If you feel anything in the report is inaccurate, you can ask for it to be reviewed.

What happens after your diagnosis

If you are not diagnosed with ADHD

Not getting a diagnosis does not mean you're on your own.

We will continue to be there for you. The team will talk through next steps and signpost you to local support services and resources based on your needs.

If you are diagnosed with ADHD

There are various resources and support that may be available to you. Your Care Coordinator will help you decide on what to try based on your needs. This may include:

- Local support groups and further information about ADHD
- Online resources
- Wellbeing services and community organisations
- Information about reasonable adjustments at work, education and in daily life



You will have the opportunity to ask questions in this appointment.

After this appointment, you can still contact your NHS Care Coordinator for further support and guidance.

Medication

If medication is suitable for you within this service

A GP or clinical pharmacist with specialist ADHD training will discuss the options with you. Where it is safe and suitable, the service can decide to prescribe medication, support you to start it safely and periodically follow up with you to check how well it is working.

Once the right medication and dose have been agreed and are working well for you, your GP may take over your regular prescriptions and monitoring, with continued support from the specialist team. This is known as shared care.

If you start medication, we will work with you to make sure it is safe and working well. We will also ask you to:

- attend your medication reviews
- complete health checks such as blood pressure, pulse or weight
- tell us about changes in your health or any side effects you experience
- tell us about any other medicines or supplements you take
- take your medication as agreed with your clinician

If any of this is difficult or complicated, please let us know so we can discuss what support may help.

Support available

Assessments can be unexpectedly tiring and may bring up strong feelings or memories.

If you feel very distressed after your appointment, we recommend speaking to a trusted person.

- Feeling unable to cope?
- Worried you may hurt yourself or somebody else?
- Experiencing suicidal feelings?



For immediate help

If your life or someone else's life is in immediate danger, **please call 999** or go to the Accident and Emergency Department (A&E) at your local Hospital.



Your NHS Care Coordinator will talk you through local options.

You can get support in different ways depending on your preferences.

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