FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

NHS
Providing NHS services

Asking your GP for an assessment

Right to Choose is a legal right, not a favour. Once your GP agrees an assessment is needed, you decide which NHS provider carries it out; for autism, ADHD or both.

What Right to Choose means

- Once your GP agrees an assessment is clinically appropriate, you choose which NHS-contracted provider carries it out, anywhere in England.
- A legal entitlement under the NHS Choice Framework, not a local policy.
- Only your GP can refer. Schools can provide supporting evidence, but cannot refer.
- There is no cost to your family. Right to Choose providers are NHS-funded.

Before the appointment

1. Complete a screening questionnaire: AQ-10 or CAT-Q for autism traits, SNAP-IV for ADHD. Not diagnostic, but standardised evidence.
2. Bring a short evidence pack: school reports, SENCO notes, nursery observations, any previous assessments.
3. Write down specific examples from home, school and clubs. GPs look for difficulties in more than one setting.
4. Know the provider you want, and which pathway suits your child's age.

Already waiting elsewhere? If you have waited longer than 18 weeks, or been told you will, you have a legal right to change provider. Ask your GP to transfer the existing referral rather than start again.

What to say in the room

"I'd like to request a referral for an autism/ADHD assessment. I'm exercising my Right to Choose to be referred to Paloma Health, an NHS Right to Choose provider."

If your GP is unsure they can refer outside your area:

"Under the NHS Choice Framework I have the right to choose any provider holding an NHS standard contract with any ICB in England. That choice isn't limited to a local approved list."

Before you leave, ask your GP to confirm which pathway they have referred to, check your child's name, date of birth and address, and confirm the referral has been submitted.

If your GP says no

1. Ask for the clinical reason for the refusal in writing, for your records.
2. Clarify it is not an Individual Funding Request: no special funding approval is needed.
3. Ask for a short follow-up with the Practice Manager.
4. Contact your ICB's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if the referral still isn't processed.

Assessments at Paloma Health

NICE-compliant autism and ADHD assessments for children and young people across England, free to your family. **Autism:** ages 2–18 — remote (8–18), or hybrid with an in-person observation in Exeter (2–18) or Norwich (6–18). **ADHD:** remote, ages 8–18. **Combined:** ages 8–18, remote or hybrid.

Free guide, GP letter templates and screening tools at **paloma.health**.

Service provided by:
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