

Your Autism Assessment Journey

Thank you for choosing KT Healthcare, here's a run through of what to expect with us. You are taking part in an autism assessment to better understand how you think, communicate, and experience the world. This process supports clarity about whether you meet the criteria for an autism diagnosis, and provides a foundation for understanding your strengths and support needs.

1. Preparing for Your Assessment

Initial Contact:

Following receipt of your referral, we aim to process this and issue a background questionnaire **within 1 month**.

Informant Details:

- As part of the process, we ask you to name an **'informant'**, someone who can provide insights into your early development. Ideally, this would be a parent or guardian who knew you around **age 4-5**.
- If this is not possible, a partner/close friend can attend part of the assessment with you or on your behalf. In this case, we may also ask to send a short questionnaire to a family member who can share information about your early years.

Timeline: We kindly ask questionnaires are **returned within 2 weeks** so we can keep things moving smoothly.

2. Your Assessments

Pre-assessment:

Once you and your informant return both questionnaires, you are now on our waiting list. When we review your information, a clinician may be in contact to ask any further questions if needed. This will help us ensure we are the best service to assess you.

1. Developmental History (ADI-R) Assessment:

This assessment is for your 'informant'.

- It can take up to 2.5 hours.
- They will be asked questions about your development (especially around the age of 4-5) and your current experiences.
- You are welcome to attend the first part of this session, but this is no obligation.

2. Observation (ADOS informed) Assessment:

This session is just for you to attend and will be one-to-one with the clinician.

- It can take up to 1 hour to complete.
- There will be activities and questions designed to explore your communication and social interaction style.
- Feel free to make yourself comfortable (bring a drink and snacks!).
- The ADOS is a structured clinical assessment involving a range of activities, and some people find it emotionally tiring. For this reason, you are required to bring a supportive adult who can wait in reception. If you are unable to arrange this, please reach out to us at your earliest convenience.
- If anything has changed since your questionnaires were submitted that you feel may impact your ability to access the assessment safely, please let us know.

Note: All assessments will be virtual with a qualified clinician (unless agreed otherwise).

3. Decision and Outcome

Multidisciplinary Meeting:

- The clinicians who assessed you meet to review your assessment and decide if you meet the criteria for an autism diagnosis.

Outcome Call:

- The lead clinician will call you within **3-4 weeks of your second appointment** with your diagnostic outcome.
- The call may come from a 'no number' - please keep an eye out.
- If they can't reach you, they'll email to arrange a suitable time.
- If you would prefer to be emailed with a time and date to receive the outcome, this can be arranged.

4. Report

Diagnostic Report:

You should receive your final report within **4-5 weeks** of your outcome call. Please note that this timeframe may vary. It will include a diagnostic outcome, recommendations, and a formulation of your presentation. **Important to note:** The report includes general support recommendations. It does not contain specific implementation details; this ensures the report stays relevant across different settings and over time. We are unable to amend clinical content or interpretations, as the report reflects the professional assessment. All information included is accurate at the time of assessment, and we are unable to add new information after the assessment has been completed. Please also be aware that the report is a summary of the information gathered during the assessment. It is not intended to provide a word-for-word account of the assessment sessions or discussions.

Our clinical team at KT Healthcare is highly trained and experienced in carrying out autism assessments, supporting families and individuals throughout the process.

Our autism assessments strictly adhere to a code of conduct drawn from the **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines** and employ the gold standard **ADOS and ADI-R diagnostic tools**.

We are a mostly virtual service and require you/r informant to have access to a laptop/tablet/computer compatible with video calling.

We understand that approaching an autism assessment and considering whether the outcome might be a 'diagnosis' or a 'non diagnosis' can be a challenging time.

Following your GP referral:

Following receipt of your referral, we aim to process it and send a background questionnaire **within one month**. As part of this, we will ask you to provide details of an **'informant'** who can either attend part of the assessment with you or take part separately. Ideally, this should be a parent, guardian, or someone who knew you between the **ages of 4 and 5**. If this is not possible, an informant can be a partner or friend. In these cases, we would also ask to send a questionnaire about your early development to a family member, where possible.

We require the questionnaires to be completed and sent back to us **within 2 weeks**. Once we have received the questionnaires you will added to our waiting list. Your questionnaires will be screened, and a clinician may be in contact to ask any further questions if needed. This is to ensure we are the best placed service to assess you. Once you reach the top of the waiting list, we will be in touch to book **2 separate appointments**.

One appointment will be with **your 'informant'**. This appointment is up to 2.5 hours long with a specially trained clinician who will use a tool called the ADI-R. They will ask questions about your development (particularly around the age of 4-5) and your current experiences. You are welcome to attend the first part of this session, but there is no obligation to do so, and the clinician may ask to speak to your informant alone after some time. It is a good idea to bring a drink/snack and make yourselves comfortable.

One appointment will be with **you on your own**. This is **up to 1 hour long** with a specially trained clinician who will complete an observation assessment called the ADOS. Your assessment will be one-to-one with the clinician. The ADOS is a structured clinical assessment involving a range of activities, and some people find it emotionally tiring. For this reason, if you are attending in person, you are required to bring a supportive adult who can wait in reception. If you are unable to arrange this, please contact us at your earliest convenience. If anything has changed since your questionnaires were submitted which you feel may impact you accessing your assessment safely then please let us know.

Once the appointments are complete the **clinicians involved (multidisciplinary team)** will meet to decide if you meet the criteria for a diagnosis of autism using the DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health).

We realise it can be an anxious wait to hear whether you have met the criteria for autism. The **lead clinician will call you** to provide the outcome and next steps as soon as they have reached the decision. Please expect a call from a **'no number' within 3-4 weeks** from your second appointment (unless alternative communication is requested). If they cannot get hold of you they will email you to book a suitable time for a call.

You will then receive your final report including recommendations with a formulation of your presentation **4-5 weeks** after the call with the lead clinician. Please note that this timeframe may vary.

We are unable to amend clinical content or interpretations, as the report reflects the professional assessment. All information included is accurate at the time of assessment, and we are unable to add new information after the assessment has been completed. Please also be aware that the report is a summary of the information gathered during the assessment. It is not intended to provide a word-for-word account of the assessment sessions or discussions.

Please note as a **diagnostic service** our reports give reference to **general support recommendations** but do not contain specific details for how support should be implemented. This ensures the report remains accurate and relevant over time, recognising that specific individual support needs may vary in different settings and circumstances.

Reach Out



We understand that this process can feel emotionally intense or time-sensitive. Our team is here to help, please don't hesitate to reach out at office@kirsoptaylorhealthcare.com if you need guidance or reassurance during any part of the journey.

We look forward to meeting you and your young person to support understanding of their brain!