

## Care Pathway: Autism Spectrum Health Care Pathway (0-18y)\*

\* 18-25y refer to BASS Autism services for adults via GP

<p><b>Pre-Referral</b></p> <p>Recognition of symptoms that suggest concern about possible social communication and interaction difficulties including autism spectrum disorder. (Take account of potential different understanding when English is not the first language, and cultural differences. Offer support as appropriate)</p>	<p>Useful weblink:  <a href="http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism-spectrum-disorder">http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism-spectrum-disorder</a> (Click on identification tab)</p>	<p><b>Communication and Information</b></p>
<p><b>Referral via Single Point of Entry</b></p> <p>Depending on symptoms of concern, refer to a member of the autism team, in line with their referral guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary problem language – Speech and Language Therapy service</li> <li>• General concerns about social communication and interaction - Community Paediatric service</li> <li>• Concerns about mental health - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service</li> <li>• Moderate to severe learning disability - Specialist service for children with Learning Disability</li> </ul> <p>All referrals should be accompanied by detailed information about the symptoms of concern (see website at pre-referral )</p>	<p>Referral criteria for all services can be found at: <a href="http://cchp.nhs.uk/">http://cchp.nhs.uk/</a></p>	
<p><b>Assessment</b></p> <p><b><u>Initial Appointment (and any other appointments gathering and reviewing information) - A1</u></b></p> <p>This team member is the assessment lead professional unless or until another is identified later in pathway</p> <p>More information needed – gather this; Other team members needed—make referrals</p> <p>Possible outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not autism spectrum disorder. Refer to appropriate pathway or service or discharge.</li> <li>• Watchful waiting</li> <li>• Decision to undertake Autism Diagnostic assessment with informed consent from parents/ carers and child/young person, as appropriate</li> </ul>		

**Decision to undertake Autism Diagnostic Assessment - A2**

The timescale of the assessment will be discussed with parents / carers.

Additional information to help make a decision regarding assessments can be found at:

<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism/autism-overview#content=view-index&path=view%3A/pathways/autism/deciding-on-assessment-for-possible-autism-in-children-and-young-people.xml>

NICE guidelines state “Start the autism diagnostic assessment within 3 months of the referral to the autism team”

Signpost family to appropriate sources of information, including National Autism Society, Bristol and South Glos Parents and Carers Forum and Bristol Autism Support (links in interventions section below).

Involve appropriate community support e.g. Autism Independence, or Somali link workers.

**Complete Autism Diagnostic Assessment - A3**

**Standard assessment:**

This should include

- Developmental, medical, social and family history and current functioning information from parent or carer and physical examination of the child / young person
- Gather information from educational setting
- Observation at educational setting, clinic or home

**Complex assessment:**

In more complex presentations, further assessments may be necessary to clarify the diagnosis and needs of the child or young person.

**Diagnostic meeting - A4**

Possible outcomes:

- Diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder ( and description of strengths and needs)
- Alternative diagnosis
- Description of strengths and needs (not autism spectrum disorder)

Action plan identifying appropriate support to meet needs

*Professionals: see associated clinical guideline for more details of both types of assessment*

Elements to complete a diagnostic assessment:

<http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism/recognising-possible-autism-in-children-and-young-people#content=view-index&path=view%3A/pathways/autism/the-autism-diagnostic-assessment-for-children-and-young-people.xml>

*Professionals: See associated clinical guideline for diagnostic meeting, profiling and report writing.*

*Identified strengths and needs can inform outcome planning for individual children and young people.*

*Consider cultural and language support needs where English is not the first language.*

<p><b>Intervention</b></p> <p><b><u>Management and support following diagnosis - A5</u></b> (including all follow up appointments in children or young people with an autism spectrum diagnosis)</p> <p>A 6-8 week post-diagnosis appointment will be offered to parents/carers/ young people where a diagnosis has been made, with one of the diagnostic team.</p> <p>Many children and young people with an autism spectrum diagnosis do not need routine follow up appointments with doctors or therapists, and follow up will be agreed with families on an individual basis.</p> <p>Much of the support, signposting and intervention will occur in the educational environment, or through parent and community support groups.</p> <p>There are some specific health issues associated with autism spectrum disorder which may need additional assessment and management. These include sleep difficulties, coexistent ADHD, sensory processing difficulties, language disorder and mental health problems. The arrangements for this will be agreed with families on an individual basis.</p> <p>Sometimes these may develop at a later stage. Children or Young People can be referred to specialist health services in line with the referral criteria.</p>	<p>NICE Guidelines on support and intervention can be found at:  <a href="http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism/recognising-possible-autism-in-children-and-young-people#content=view-index&amp;path=view%3A/pathways/autism/management-and-support-in-children-and-young-people-with-autism.xml">http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism/recognising-possible-autism-in-children-and-young-people#content=view-index&amp;path=view%3A/pathways/autism/management-and-support-in-children-and-young-people-with-autism.xml</a>  and  <a href="http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism/autism-overview#content=view-index&amp;path=view%3A/pathways/autism/interventions-for-behaviour-that-challenges-in-children-and-young-people-with-autism.xml">http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism/autism-overview#content=view-index&amp;path=view%3A/pathways/autism/interventions-for-behaviour-that-challenges-in-children-and-young-people-with-autism.xml</a></p> <p><i>See also wider Bristol and S.Glos system pathways (work in progress).</i></p> <p><b><u>Agencies and support networks:</u></b></p> <p>National Autistic Society:  <a href="http://autism.org.uk/">http://autism.org.uk/</a>  Findability (Local offer Bristol):  <a href="http://www.findabilitybristol.org.uk/">http://www.findabilitybristol.org.uk/</a>  Local offer ( South glos):  <a href="http://www.southglos.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/care-and-support-children-families/local-offer/">http://www.southglos.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/care-and-support-children-families/local-offer/</a>  Bristol Autism Support:  <a href="http://www.bristolautismsupport.com/">http://www.bristolautismsupport.com/</a>  Autism Independence ( currently specialising with Somali families):  <a href="mailto:hello@autism-independence.org">hello@autism-independence.org</a>  Bristol Parent Carers:  <a href="https://www.bristolparentcarers.org.uk/">https://www.bristolparentcarers.org.uk/</a></p> <p><i>Bristol and S.Glos parent information leaflet (in development)</i>  <i>Bristol and S.Glos school info doc (in development)</i></p> <p>BASS Autism services for adults for 17+:  <a href="http://www.awp.nhs.uk/services/specialist/autism-spectrum/">http://www.awp.nhs.uk/services/specialist/autism-spectrum/</a></p>	
<p><b>What Next?</b></p> <p><b>Transition to adult services</b></p> <p>Relevant specific specialist health transition to comparable health services will be agreed with families on an individual basis.</p>	<p>Information on transition in autism can be found at:  <a href="http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism/autism-overview#content=view-node%3Anodes-transition-to-adult-services">http://pathways.nice.org.uk/pathways/autism/autism-overview#content=view-node%3Anodes-transition-to-adult-services</a></p> <p>BASS Autism services for adults (from age 17y)  <a href="http://www.awp.nhs.uk/services/specialist/autism-spectrum/">http://www.awp.nhs.uk/services/specialist/autism-spectrum/</a></p> <p><i>See also wider Bristol and S.Glos system pathways (work in progress).</i></p>	