

Right to Choose

A gentle guide to ADHD and autism assessments

If you live in England and are registered with a GP, you have a legal right to choose which NHS approved provider carries out your ADHD or autism assessment. This is called Right to Choose.

It is free, funded by the NHS, and can mean a shorter wait. This guide walks through how it works, at whatever pace feels right for you.

What Right to Choose is

Right to Choose applies in England only. The provider you choose must hold an NHS contract somewhere in England, so it is not the same as going private. Many providers work online, so you do not need to live near them.

Anyone registered with a GP in England can ask to use it, though each provider has its own criteria, for example around age or other support needs. Your GP can talk this through with you.

Why it matters in Derbyshire

Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust does not assess adults for ADHD, and suggests speaking to your GP about a referral through Right to Choose.

The local adult autism service does exist, but waits have been reported at around a couple of years. For many people in Derbyshire, Right to Choose is the main way to be assessed without a very long wait.

How it works, step by step

1 Choose a provider

Look at a few provider websites. Check that they accept Right to Choose referrals for adults, whether they are currently taking referrals from Derbyshire, their waiting times, and whether they offer ongoing care or medication if needed.

2 Talk to your GP

Book an appointment and explain that you would like a referral under Right to Choose, naming the provider you have chosen. You may be asked to fill in a short questionnaire. It can help to bring a few notes about everyday examples, as it is easy to go blank in the room.

3 The referral is sent

Your GP sends the referral through the NHS e-Referral Service. A GP can decline on clinical grounds, but not because of cost or because the provider is not local. If you are declined, you can ask for the reason in writing.

4 Your assessment

The provider will be in touch, usually with questionnaires first, then an assessment that is often by video call. Afterwards you receive a written report.

5 Afterwards

If you are diagnosed with ADHD and choose medication, the provider may start and adjust it. Later, your GP may be asked to take over prescribing under a shared care agreement. Practices decide this individually, so it is worth asking your GP about it early on.

What has changed in 2026

From April 2026, NHS England asked local health boards to agree yearly limits with each Right to Choose provider, covering how many assessments they can offer and the funding available. A provider can still accept your referral and add you to its list, but it may need to pause or delay appointments to stay within its limit.

At the time of writing, no restrictions had been reported for Derby and Derbyshire, but the picture changes often. Checking a provider's website before you see your GP can save disappointment.

Providers to explore

Psychiatry-UK

psychiatry-uk.com

Adult ADHD and autism assessments.

ADHD 360

adhd-360.com

ADHD assessments. Check its age criteria directly.

Clinical Partners

clinical-partners.co.uk

Adult ADHD assessments.

Problem Shared

problemshared.net

Adult ADHD assessments.

Fewer providers offer autism assessments than ADHD. Lists change often, so please check each provider's own website for their current position.

If things feel stuck

If your GP declines and you feel it is not for clinical reasons, you can contact the Derby and Derbyshire Integrated Care Board's patient experience team. If that does not resolve it, NHS England can be reached on 0300 311 22 33.

ADHD UK has free, clear guidance on Right to Choose, including a look up for your local area. You do not need to pay anyone for a letter or template.

ADHD UK Right to Choose guide: adhduk.co.uk/right-to-choose

Waiting can be hard, and this process can feel like a lot. Please go gently with yourself. You are welcome at our group whether you are diagnosed, waiting, self identifying or simply wondering.

This guide is for information only and is not medical or legal advice. Information checked September 2026.