## March 2024 - Update on requests for Rotherham Neurodevelopmental Assessments under Patient Choice.

Right to choose is a legal requirement. The Right to Choose applies when a patient is referred for a first consultant led outpatient appointment if they have to wait longer than the maximum waiting times (usually 18 weeks). They can ask to request a change of healthcare Provider under Right to Choose.

The Right to Choose is different to a private referral made by a GP or by the patient, where care and treatment are privately funded and outside of the NHS.

The most recent NHS Right to Choose Guidance can be found here [NHS England » Patient choice guidance](https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/patient-choice-guidance/).

In Rotherham there are different Pathways for Adults (over the age of 18 years old) and Children and Young People (aged 5 to 18 years old) Neurodevelopmental Assessments.

**For a Children/Young Person’s Neurodevelopment Assessment in Rotherham**:

The choice (initiating the Right to Choose) of an alternative provider is available for Rotherham CYP at the point it has been determined that a full neurodevelopmental assessment (to determine diagnosis or not) is the appropriate clinical route**.**

For some time now, GPs have not been able to refer Children and Young People (CYP) for Neurodevelopmental Assessments in Rotherham. This is carried out by schools, usually by the School Special Educational Needs Coordinator. GPs cannot make referrals for CYP Neurodevelopment Assessment to Providers under Choice. However, they provide a central role in guiding carers and families to understand the pathway processes and in making an informed decision to initiate apatient’s Right to Choose.

The CYP will need to be referred to the RDaSH CAMHS CYP Neurodevelopmental pathway by their **school**  [Neurodevelopmental Assessment Pathway – CAMHS (rdash.nhs.uk)](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fcamhs.rdash.nhs.uk%2Frotherham%2Fneurodevelopment-asd-adhd%2F&data=05%7C01%7Crebecca.mcalister%40nhs.net%7C1459a68fcdca40d7551108dbdfa758a3%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638349682069018505%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=TEZU2L%2B5FdlNgidw80mV7YQlaTvsasfb34TzIWmTUho%3D&reserved=0).

Once it has been determined that a Neurodevelopment Assessment is clinically appropriate, the person would automatically be referred for their first outpatient appointment to the commissioned service provider in Rotherham for Neurodevelopment Assessments (RDaSH), unless the right to choose is enacted.

The steps to enact the Right to Choose are:

* The young person/ parent(s)/ family identify and contact their provider of choice.

NHS South Yorkshire ICB does not yet have an Approved List of Choice Providers for Neurodevelopmental Assessments but is working through the due diligence and assurance process for a number of Providers. Once this is completed, South Yorkshire intends to publish a list of approved Providers.

Until all due diligence is completed, NHS South Yorkshire is unable to provide full details of whether these Providers accept Adults or Children and Young People and what type of Neurodevelopmental Assessment they can provide.

There is a guide to help young people/ parent(s)/ family consider the options and make a choice. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-choice-framework/the-nhs-choice-framework-what-choices-are-available-to-me-in-the-nhs#getting-more-information-to-help-you-choose…>

To make an informed choice the young person/ parent(s)/family might want to ask their Provider of Choice:

* That the Provider of Choice is an NHS South Yorkshire Approved Choice Provider
* What the current waiting times with their Provider of Choice. NHS South Yorkshire do not hold any information on the current waiting times for any of the Choice Providers.
* Whether or not a Provider is able to assess for all aspects of Neurodevelopment including ADHD, ASD (or both).
* How the Provider of Choice will keep their GP informed about their care and treatment including medication.
* Options for post-diagnostic care including medication and shared care arrangements (see below)

Once a decision has been made by the young person/ parent(s)/family to enact the right to choose with a specific Provider of Choice, the young person/ parent/ family should contact the provider and confirm they wish to choose them as their NHS SY Approved Choice Provider.

The Choice Provider, with consent from the parent(s), will confirm with the relevant NHS SY Place that they are an approved choice provider and have been selected as a provider of Choice.

NHS SY Rotherham Place will contact the Rotherham Neurodevelopmental Pathway (RDaSH) and the Choice Provider to confirm the Approved Choice Provider.

The Choice Provider will contact the Rotherham Neurodevelopmental Pathway (RDaSH) to arrange the transfer of care. Only one organisation/Provider can be responsible for the care of the person – this means the children and young people cannot be on more than one provider’s waiting list.

We would expect that the Provider of Choice would inform the child/young person’s GP that they are under their care and treatment.

**Post Diagnostic Care**

Under the Choice legislation, the Provider of Choice for the first outpatient appointment (assessment) would also go onto provide the rest of your treatment (post diagnostic care).

In Rotherham, the following services form part of the post diagnostic support pathway (more information of these Services can be found on the Rotherham Local Offer)

* Post diagnostic ADHD care and support – RDaSH (this includes both medication and support)
* Post Diagnostic ASD care and support – this is provided by Rotherham Council’s Autism Information and Advice Service and the Rotherham Parent Carer Forum Family Support Service.

GPs should be aware that Rotherham shared care protocols for ADHD medication do not include Choice Providers and that Providers of Choice may expect them to enter a shared care protocol. It is a decision for GPs to take as to whether to enter into a shared care protocol with a Provider of Choice or not. GPs should make parents/carers aware of this arrangement and the impact.

Under patient choice if an NHS referral has been made and the GP declines to enter into the share care protocol treatment will continue to be provided by the Provider of Choice including the prescribing of medication – this would be funded by the NHS.

**GPs do not need to and cannot make a referral for a CYP to any Provider of Neurodevelopment Assessment for CYP.**

GPs should refer patients and parents/ carers to the guidance available on the local offer [Health and Wellbeing – Rotherham SEND Local Offer](https://gbr01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk%2Fhealth-and-wellbeing%2F&data=05%7C01%7Crebecca.mcalister%40nhs.net%7C1459a68fcdca40d7551108dbdfa758a3%7C37c354b285b047f5b22207b48d774ee3%7C0%7C0%7C638349682069018505%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=FBF0qylf7i2vydea7GXzXjqrH6PY8IDIYUAtp1m4%2Bl0%3D&reserved=0) which explains the referral pathway and the available support (which does not require diagnosis).

If a provider approaches you, as a GP, to offer Choice for a Rotherham CYP Neuro assessment, advise them to contact [syicb-sheffield.contractingteam@nhs.net](mailto:syicb-sheffield.contractingteam@nhs.net) to request an accreditation pack.

**For Adults Neurodevelopmental Assessments**

For adults in Rotherham, GPs are able to refer to RDaSH for Adult Neurodevelopment Diagnostic Assessment. GPs are required to offer their patients choice, **unless** they feel that the pathway offered by the provider is not clinically appropriate for them.

If a GP wants to make a referral to a choice provider, they are required to provide advice and guidance to support the patient make an informed decision. The patient can also of course contact the provider themselves.

There is a guide to help patients consider the options and make a choice. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-choice-framework/the-nhs-choice-framework-what-choices-are-available-to-me-in-the-nhs#getting-more-information-to-help-you-choose…>

To make an informed choice the GP and/or patient might want to ask their potential Provider of Choice:

* What the current waiting times with their Provider of Choice. NHS South Yorkshire do not hold any information on the current waiting times for any of the Choice Providers.
* Whether or not a Provider is able to assess for all aspects of Neurodevelopment including ADHD, ASD (or both).
* Options for post-diagnostic care such as a sensory assessment, an occupational therapy assessment, medication, and shared care arrangements (also see below).

The national electronic referral system (ERS) does not show mental health providers. Therefore, there is a particular challenge for Neurodevelopment Assessment providers in that GPs do not know the full repository of who has contracts with ICBs in England and is, therefore, open to choice.

NHS South Yorkshire does not yet have an Approved List of Choice Providers for Neurodevelopmental Assessments but is working through the due diligence and assurance process for the following Providers:

* ADHD 360
* Psychiatry UK
* Evolve
* Clinical partners
* Mind Professionals
* Problem Shared
* Oakdale Therapies Ltd

Until all due diligence is completed, NHS South Yorkshire is unable to provide full details of whether these Providers accept Adults or Children and Young People and what type of Neurodevelopmental Assessment they can provide.

If a provider confirms to the GP (in writing) that they have an NHS contract (with an Integrated Care Board) for the type of assessment required, a referral to this provider can be made without prior approval of NHS South Yorkshire.

Once the provider invoices NHS South Yorkshire, we will then be able to check whether they are known to us as a provider who have a qualifying contract with another ICB, and if not we can hold the invoice whilst we ask the provider to send us this information to verify their position. Once we verify them, we can add them to our list of ‘known’ providers. The hope is that in the coming months we will have a public facing process where we can list these providers (with their consent) to support patients and / or GPs make referrals.

**Post Diagnostic Care**

Under the Choice legislation, the Provider of Choice for the first outpatient appointment (assessment) would also go onto provide the rest of the treatment (post diagnostic care).

In Rotherham the Rotherham Adult Neurodiversity Support Service (RANSS) provides non-specialist post diagnostic care. Further information on this Service can be found at [RANSS booklet for practitioners (yourhealthrotherham.co.uk)](https://yourhealthrotherham.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/RANSS-booklet-for-practitioners-3.pdf)

GPs should be aware that Rotherham Shared Care protocols for ADHD medication do not include Choice Providers and that Providers of Choice may expect them to enter a shared care protocol. It is a decision for Primary Care colleagues to take as to whether to enter into a shared care protocol with a Provider of Choice or not.

Under patient choice if an NHS referral has been made and the GP declines to enter into the share care protocol treatment will continue to be provided by the Provider of Choice including the prescribing of medication – this would be funded by the NHS.