

ADHD Policy

Referral for Assessment for Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

If you have had lifelong concerns about your ability to pay attention, and perhaps are also always 'on the go' or tend to be impulsive, you might be wondering if you have ADHD. It may be helpful to self-assess using the questionnaire at <https://add.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/adhd-questionnaire-ASRS111.pdf>

We can refer you for an assessment via any of the below 3 pathways:

- local NHS ADHD service (current waiting time more than 2 years)
- NHS 'right to choose' assessment
- Private assessment (referral letter not always required)

If you opt to have your ADHD assessment at an NHS 'right to choose' service or a private service, we strongly recommend that you make sure the assessment and diagnosis of ADHD is supervised by a consultant psychiatrist based in the UK who specialises in ADHD. This is to ensure high-quality assessment and accurate diagnosis, as provided at the local NHS ADHD service. It is your responsibility to check whether or not the 'right to choose' or private clinic you have chosen provides assessments by a consultant psychiatrist; you can check a doctor's UK medical license at <https://www.gmc-uk.org/registration-and-licensing/our-registers>. We are not able to monitor the large number of right-to-choose and private clinics which change over time and so our secretaries cannot provide this information.

It is also essential that the provider continues to offer follow-up reviews after your diagnosis and offers at a minimum annual medication reviews and follow-up.

Please keep a copy of your full ADHD assessment, which may be needed if you move from one specialist to another (and please provide an English translation if another language was used).

Shared-care prescribing of stimulant medication

Many people with ADHD manage their condition with behavioural adaptations and sometimes with formal psychological treatments. Others benefit from medications to manage symptoms. These medications are stimulants drugs (related to amphetamines), which are Controlled Drugs with potentially serious side effects. These medications must be started and adjusted by a specialist in ADHD, usually a consultant psychiatrist. Continued use requires physical monitoring (usually weight, pulse and blood pressure) and at least annual review by the mental health specialist.

Lensfield Medical Practice prescribes ADHD medications under 'shared care', which is a formal agreement between the specialist and the GP. Safe and appropriate sharing of clinical responsibility requires that we partner with local NHS providers who have clear pathways for diagnosing, managing and supporting patients with other mental health problems in addition to ADHD. **We will therefore usually be able to share care with specialists at the local NHS ADHD service only.** This allows us to be confident that ongoing use of medication is safe and appropriately supervised by a consultant psychiatrist based in the UK who specialises in ADHD. Prescribing in general practice is usually appropriate when a stable treatment dose has been established, specialist review completed (at least every year) and ongoing physical monitoring is satisfactory.

What does this mean for patients already receiving ADHD medication?

For patients already under the care of the local NHS clinic, we will continue to share care with our local mental health team and prescribe medication initiated by them when safe to do so.

For patients under the care of a private specialist, you can choose

- 1) To continue with private care (including private prescribing of ADHD medication), or
- 2) To be referred for review and transfer of care to the local NHS service, who may
 - a. accept your diagnosis of ADHD and then may initiate shared care with us, or
 - b. require re-assessment for ADHD (if they are not confident that the prior assessment was accurate and complete).

Please note that as an NHS service, we are not permitted to share care with private clinics. For more information see <https://www.cpics.org.uk/download/defining-boundaries-between-nhs-and-privately-funded-healthcare-local.pdf?ver=11735&doc=docm93jjm4n5723.pdf>

For patients under the case of 'right to choose' NHS clinics, you can also choose

- 1) to continue to receive prescriptions from the 'right to choose' clinic, if that is offered, or
- 2) to be referred for a review by, and transfer of care to, the local NHS service, as above.

For patients who have moved from outside the local area with a diagnosis of ADHD, you will require referral to the local NHS ADHD service if you want to be prescribed ADHD medications by us under a shared care agreement. As for all patients, you may also choose referral to a 'right to choose' NHS clinic or a private clinic, but note that shared care is only possible with the local NHS clinic.

If you need medication relatively quickly, you will either need to source this from your previous specialist (but note regulations regarding the quantity of controlled drugs you can carry between countries) or seek private referral to a psychiatrist in the UK.