

ADHD Assessment Referrals – Important Update (From April 2026)

Dear Patient,

We would like to inform you about an important change to how ADHD assessments are accessed through the NHS.

What has changed?

Due to very high demand across the NHS, new rules have been introduced by **NHS Thames Valley Integrated Care Board**.

From **April 2026**, Adult patients (aged 18 and over) can only be referred for an ADHD or Autism assessment if **specific criteria are met**.

This applies to:

- Local NHS ADHD services
- Right to Choose providers

Why has this change been made?

- There has been a **very large increase in demand** for ADHD assessments
- Local NHS services have become **overwhelmed and, in some cases, paused**
- The NHS is now prioritising patients who are **most likely to benefit from treatment (including medication)**

Who can be referred?

To be referred, patients must:

- Have **significant difficulties affecting daily life**, and
- Be likely to **benefit from ADHD treatment (including medication)**

In addition, patients will need to provide **clear written evidence** showing how ADHD symptoms are having a serious impact, for example:

- Difficulty staying in work or education
- Problems managing a long-term health condition
- Significant caring responsibilities being affected
- Involvement with support services (e.g. safeguarding or probation)

Who may not be referred?

Unfortunately, this means some patients **may not meet the criteria**, including those:

- Seeking a diagnosis mainly for understanding or reassurance
- With milder symptoms that are not causing significant day-to-day impact
- Not considering medication as part of treatment

We understand this may feel disappointing, and we will always aim to explain decisions clearly and sensitively.

What support is available?

If a referral is not appropriate, support is still available. This includes:

- Advice on managing ADHD symptoms day-to-day
- Access to local NHS Talking Therapies
- Support from national organisations and charities
- Online resources via the NHS “Stay Well” website

Organisation	Contact details
Oxfordshire Adult ADHD Service	Website: https://oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/oxon-adult-adhd/
NHS Oxfordshire Talking Therapies	Website: https://oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/oxon-talking-therapies/ Telephone: 01865 901 222
ADHD UK	Website: adhduk.co.uk/support
ADHD Adult UK	Website: www.adhdadult.uk
National Autistic Society	Website: www.autism.org.uk
Rethink	Website: www.rethink.org
Stay Well	Website: https://staywell-bob.nhs.uk/adhd/

Our role as your GP practice

We are required to follow NHS guidance when making referrals. If you feel your situation is exceptional, we can review this with you and consider whether further information may support a referral.

Further information

If you are concerned about availability of an assessment through Right to Choose, you can contact the NHS Thames Valley Patient Advice and Complaints Team.

Phone: 0300 561 0250

Email: scwcsu.palscomplaints@nhs.net

Post:

Patient Advice and Complaints Team (PACT)

Ground Floor, Mallard Court

Express Park

Bristol Road

Bridgwater

TA6 4RN

Website: www.thamesvalley.icb.nhs.uk/contact-us/complaints-and-compliments