

Young Epilepsy Health Services: Autism Diagnostics



Welcome to Young Epilepsy Health Services, part of Young Epilepsy which is the only UK charity dedicated to creating **better lives for children and young people with epilepsy** and related conditions. Our expertise in autism has been developed over many years as a result of the co-occurrences of epilepsy and autism in the young people we have supported.

Children and young people with developmental and social challenges sometimes require specialist support that considers all the factors which could be affecting their lives, including if they have autism. Assessment and diagnosis provide clarity around whether challenges facing a child or young person are associated with autism and delays in organising an autism assessment can be incredibly challenging for both children and their families. The aim of our autism diagnostic service is to provide a clear diagnosis within a time frame that enables the right type of support to be sourced sooner.

Our service follows best practice NICE guidelines and uses the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule Second Edition (ADOS-2)* to accurately assess and diagnose autism for children and

young people aged 3 to 25. A senior member of our highly experienced multi-disciplinary team will be identified to lead and coordinate each assessment. This means that you will benefit from a dedicated point of contact.

We are experienced in supporting children and young people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and are committed to providing the diagnosis needed to help them access the support they need to meet their potential.

**ADOS-2 The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS-2) is a standardised assessment of communication, social interaction, play, and restricted and repetitive behaviours in children. During an ADOS-2 assessment, a specialist interacts directly with the child in social and play activities.*

The Team

The team is led by our own psychologist and Head of Wellbeing RajVinder Singh Gill (MSc Ed. Psych, MA App Psych, MSc Systemic Leadership & OD who is based at Young Epilepsy.

RajVinder co-ordinates the assessments with consultant psychiatrist Dr. Matthew Fernando MBBS BSc (Hons) MRCPsych MFMLM FHEA (Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist), Member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. Dr Fernando runs regular clinics here at Young Epilepsy but is based at South London and Maudsley NHS Trust (SLAM).

Other members of the multi-disciplinary team include:

- Clinical psychologist
- Education psychologist
- Occupational therapist
- Paediatric registrar
- Play therapist
- Speech and language therapists

Key stages of assessment

1. Referrals are accepted from parents, the local authority, GP, paediatrician or consultant. Referral forms can be downloaded at:

www.youngpilepsy.org.uk/for-professionals/health-services-at-young-epilepsy

2. Receipt of the referral will be acknowledged within two working days and a member of the team will be in touch to discuss next steps.

3. Once funding has been confirmed, a member of the psychology team will contact the family to explain the process and check they are happy to proceed with the three key stages of assessment which are as follows:

- The registrar contacts the parents to obtain the child or young person's developmental history.

- The parents complete an autism diagnostic interview (ADI) which will give an indication of the likelihood of the child or young person having autism.

- The child or young person and parents will all be invited onsite to have the final part of the assessment which will last approximately three hours.

4. The diagnosis report is written.

5. A report is sent within 21 working days of the assessment being completed. This is followed up by a scheduled telephone conversation with the assessment lead to answer any questions about the report. Parents will be given guidance about next steps and options. If required, we will also signpost them to the appropriate service in their local area.

How to make a referral?

Referrals are welcomed from parents, the local authority, GP, paediatrician or consultant. Please complete the referral form and email it to:

youngpilepsy.healthservices@nhs.net

Where are we?

We are based at The Neville Childhood Epilepsy Centre in Lingfield, approximately 8 miles from M25 Junction 6. We are also easily accessible by train from London Victoria.

For further information please contact:

Young Epilepsy Health Services

St Piers Lane, Lingfield, Surrey, RH7 6PW

Tel: 01342 831203

Email: youngpilepsy.healthservices@nhs.net

www.youngpilepsy.org.uk

Young Epilepsy Health Services include:

- Autism diagnostic services
- Behavioural assessments
- EEG and video telemetry diagnostic services
- Epilepsy nurse support
- Health training for parents, carers and professionals
- Rehabilitation
- VNS clinics

