



**Dr J and colleagues
Consultant Psychiatrists**

Regus, Cromwell
house, Lincoln, LN67YT

www.drsj.co.uk

secretary@drsj.co.uk

Tel: 01522 454 373

Service Specification for a Autism Diagnosis Service

Key Service Outcomes

- Provision of a high-quality service for the diagnosis of Autism in both Children and adults.
- To provide an assessment by a consultant-lead mental health professional with specialist training and knowledge of Autism.
- To refer patient, following diagnosis of Autism, back to the NHS Service to provide post-diagnosis treatment and support, if needed, such as, community mental health, social and occupational services where appropriate.

Service Scope

- Providing a specialist autism service to patients of all ages, and registered with a GP
- Referrals are accepted from:
 - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
 - Primary Care – either General Practitioner or a Primary Care Mental Health Worker
 - Any Secondary Care Mental Health Service

 - Student Mental Health Services
 - Prison Mental Health Services (at time of release) or Probation / Offender services



- Referral Criteria
 - Presentation to a Primary or Secondary Care mental health service with no previous diagnosis, but with signs and symptoms of Autism dating back to childhood and currently suffering significant psychological, social, and/or educational impairment.

Service Delivery

- The team would comprise:
 - Several Consultant Psychiatrist and psychologists
 - several Administrators
 - In-house counselling and psychological treatments available but would require separate funding approval, if needed.
- **The Service will be provided both via remote video consultation or face to face consultation according to patients choice.**
- Referral process
 - All referrals can be sent through to the above address.
 - All non-urgent referrals are discussed at a weekly meeting and either placed on a waiting list, or further information may be requested. In the first instance, patients are contacted by phone and encrypted email letters sent to arrange an appointment. This is to reduce the number of no-shows. In all cases the referrers will be informed of the decision by encrypted email
- Assessment process:
 - All assessments include:
 - A specialist diagnostic assessment.
 - A full psychiatric assessment, assessment of comorbid conditions, and assessment of psychological needs.
 - Completion of the widely used Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ)-10: self-reporting screening questionnaire
 - All assessments take place with the service user present but also:
 - Where appropriate another current significant other, usually a partner/spouse/parent
 - Assessments, therefore, will consist of a combination of self-reporting history, corroborative history, and clinical assessment. This helps ensure an accurate diagnosis and formulation of psychosocial needs.



- ○ During a comprehensive diagnostic assessment, enquire about, and assess:
 - Core Autism signs and symptoms (difficulties in social interaction and communication, stereotypical behaviour, resistance to change or restricted interests, and, strengths) that were present in childhood and have continued into adulthood
 - Early developmental history, if possible
 - Behavioural problems
 - Functioning at home and in the community (for example, in education or in employment)
 - Past and current physical and mental health problems
 - Other neurodevelopmental conditions
 - Hyper- and hypo-sensory sensitivities
 - Carry out direct observation of core Autism signs and symptoms, especially in social situations; including observation of risk behaviours and safeguarding issues
 - All assessments will be written up in a comprehensive letter to be sent to the referrer and patient, with consent.
- Management
 - Following completion of the assessment, if Autism is confirmed, a personalised Care Plan to meet the specific service user's needs will be discussed.
 - A personalized plan should be based on an assessment of needs, taking into account the person's strengths, skills, mental and physical impairment, family and social context and any post-diagnostic support that the person and their family and carers need.
 - The plan will cover:
 1. Which interventions, support and timescales are most appropriate for the person; these include clinical interventions and social support, such as, support in relation to education, employment, or housing.
 2. Preventative action to address triggers that may provoke challenging behaviour.
 3. Any further interventions for identified coexisting conditions.
- Discharge planning
 - The service users will usually be discharged from the Service either to NHS Primary Care or another NHS Mental Health Service, as appropriate. Comprehensive discharge letters will be completed with the appropriate personalized Care Plan included, according to NICE guidelines.

Autism Diagnosis Service



Specification

**Dr Salwan Jajawi
MRCPsych.**

Consultant Psychiatrist

1st February 2024