

**Request for information under the Freedom of Information Act Reference 2024.486**  
**Released 5 April 2024**

Thank you for your email dated 19 March 2024 requesting information regarding autism waiting times.

Please find detailed below a summary of your original request together with our response.

**Original request:**

**1. The median length of time from referral to autism services to receiving an autism assessment from Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust for children.**

The waiting time from GP referral to initial assessment is 12 to 18 months – strategies given and appropriate support given. A diagnosis can be given if enough MDT information to meet the DM5 criteria. They are then referred to the autism pathway if a MDT approach is required. A single clinician assessment is 2 years and a joint assessment is 3.5 to 4 years. The assessment required is decided upon meeting the child and discussing what is appropriate with parent/guardian.

**2. The median length of time from referral to autism services to receiving an autism assessment from Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust for adults.**

Non-complex ASD assessments provided by Psicon is 49 weeks  
Complex ASD assessments provided by Sinclair Strong is 36 weeks

**3. The median length of time from referral to autism services to receiving the final outcome of an autism assessment (i.e. a positive or negative diagnosis) from Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust for children.**

Please see our response to question 1. If the child has a single assessment, there will be a face to face or telephone feedback in 8 to 12 weeks.

**4. The median length of time from referral to autism services to receiving the final outcome of an autism assessment (i.e. a positive or negative diagnosis) from Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust for adults.**

We do not record this conversation rate, therefore we do not hold the information requested for question 4.

**5. The conversion rate of autism assessments to autism diagnoses through Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust for children.**

From July 2023 to February 2024, for children, the average autism assessment to autism diagnosis rate was 94%.

**6. The conversion rate of autism assessments to autism diagnoses through Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust for adults.**

Psicon – 80% diagnosed for this financial year (to end Feb 24)  
Sinclair Strong – 37% diagnosed for this financial year (to end Feb 24)

Chair John Goulston Chief Executive Mairead McCormick  
Trust HQ Trinity House, 110-120 Upper Pemberton, Eureka Park, Ashford, Kent TN25 4AZ

**7. What support and further referral is routinely offered to children who receive an autism diagnosis through Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust.**

When a child is diagnosed, their medical report details what support may be appropriate for the child in terms of some direct advice as well as signposting to local and national services. We have an associate practitioner/ social prescriber who completes a telephone call 6 weeks post diagnosis to discuss the medical report and advise on appropriate next steps for the family. We are not commissioned to deliver further post diagnostic support

**8. What support and further referral is routinely offered to adults in who receive an autism diagnosis through Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust.**

Providers who undertake the clinical assessment offer an opportunity for the patient to discuss and ask for any information or clarity of any questions they may have. The providers also offer post diagnostic advice, providing support and sign posting to the individual about understanding the condition and how it relates to them. This sign posting covers many areas and sources such as websites, local or national organisations, apps or books and covers information on autism, self-help websites, mental health difficulties, therapy, education and workplace, student/educational support.

Further referrals would be individual to the patient.

**9. What support and further referral is routinely offered to children who undergo an assessment for autism through Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust but do not receive a diagnosis.**

We are implementing a behavioural strategy clinic pre-diagnosis to help manage symptoms. Information on what a family can receive without a diagnosis can be given in the Nurse-Led Assessment and we also provide a lot of information on our website too:

<https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/community-paediatrics/>

**10. What support and further referral is routinely offered to adults who undergo an assessment for autism through Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust but do not receive a diagnosis.**

Providers who undertake the clinical assessment offer an opportunity for the patient to discuss and ask for any information or clarity of any questions they may have. The providers also offer sign posting which covers many areas and sources such as websites, local or national organisations, apps or books and covers information on self-help websites, mental health difficulties, therapy.

Further referrals would be individual to the patient.

**11. What standardised tools are currently used by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust for the screening and/or triage of children who seek an autism assessment.**

We use Social Communication Questionnaire (SCQ) – evaluates communication skills and social functioning in children, Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS) – identifies the presence and severity of social impairment within the autism spectrum and differentiates from that in other disorders.

**12. What standardised tools are currently used by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust for the screening and/or triage of adults who seek an autism assessment.**

Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ 50)

Self-report questionnaire to measure autistic traits in adults

Empathy Quotient (EQ)

Self-report questionnaire to measure empathy in adults.

Patient and observer screening forms

Offer both a narrative and a scoring system to understand potential symptoms of ASD.

This incorporates the Relatives Questionnaire (RQ) completed by an observer and the Ritvo Autism Asperger Diagnostic Scale (RAAD) a self-report questionnaire.