

Freedom of Information request 179-12

Request

1. How many adults you have with a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder (any, although if there are separate statistics for Asperger's, HFA, LFA, they would be appreciated) in your area;
2. How many children;
3. What diagnostic services are available to a) adults and b) children;
4. What agencies or teams you have that work with autistic people, provide support/services, strategise, etc.
5. An email address/website for each of these agencies or teams where possible.
6. What the typical process should be for an adult in your area first asking their GP for an assessment for autistic spectrum disorder to receiving a diagnosis/support.

Response

1. NHS Borders does not hold information on the number of adults with a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder. NHS Borders only maintains records of those patients currently accessing our services. While information may be available in individual case notes, there is no central database from which to draw the information. In addition, many individuals are not in contact with NHS Borders services.

2. As above.

3. Adults who also have a learning disability are assessed and diagnosed by the Borders Learning Disability Service.

For adults without a learning disability, the initial assessment is carried out by the Adult Community Mental Health teams, with onward referral to the Regional Autistic Spectrum Disorder Consultancy Service based in Edinburgh for confirmation of the diagnosis.

For children and young people under the age of 17, the assessment process is informed by the SIGN guidelines – i.e. a detailed multi-disciplinary assessment providing a holistic picture of the individuals strengths and vulnerabilities in a number of settings. This will involve as a minimum a detailed developmental history focusing on possible features of ASD and associated neuro-developmental disorders, questionnaire screening for associated neuro-developmental disorders such as ADHD, a school or nursery observation by a member of the team, OT screen and often an individual assessment of the child by a senior OT, a speech and language assessment and, in all cases, a detailed individual assessment of the child by the whole Borders Autism Team. In addition, most members of the team have been trained in the ADOS, and we use a video taped assessment of the ADOS, rated by the whole Borders Autism Team, in about a third of our assessments. One of our team members (the Associate Specialist) is training to become a ADOS trainer.

4. The NHS Borders Learning Disability Service provides assessment, management, therapies and advice as well as promoting independent living skills and employment support.

The Regional Autistic Spectrum Disorder Consultancy Service provides diagnosis and assessment, liaison with the local services who are working with individuals and their families and advice on management and post diagnostic support for individuals and their carers.

For children and young adults under the age of 17, NHS Borders Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) utilises a multi-disciplinary team to diagnose ASD. The Team includes a consultant child and adolescent psychiatrist, an associate specialist in child and adolescent psychiatry, a senior speech and language therapist, a senior occupational therapist, a clinical psychologist, a music therapist and a senior teacher. In addition, the team liaise closely with paediatric colleagues (EYCAT for under 5's, and further paediatric investigations as required for older children)

5. There is information on the NHS Borders website at nhsborders.org.uk about some of our mental health services.

There is not currently any information on the NHS Borders website about the Learning Disability Service. The service can be contacted at:

Learning Disability Service
West Grove
Waverley Road
Melrose
Tel: 01896 824583

There is not currently any information on the NHS Borders website about the CAMH service. The service can be contacted at:

CAMHS
Andrew Lang Unit
Selkirk
TD7 4LJ
Tel: 01750 23715

Information about the Regional Autistic Spectrum Disorder Consultancy Service is available on the NHS Lothian website at <http://www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/Services/A-Z/LearningDisabilities/ClinicalServices/SpecialistLearningDisabilityServices>

The Regional Autistic Spectrum Disorder Consultancy Service is based at:

65 Morningside Drive,
Edinburgh,
EH10 5NQ
Tel: 0131 446 6805

6. The GP may make an initial assessment prior to agreeing to refer to one of the specialist services. Once a referral has been made, the patient will receive an appointment letter for the relevant service. An assessment will be carried out as set out in the responses to questions 3 and 4. Following assessment, there may be onward referral to any other relevant NHS service or one of the range of support services within the NHS or in the voluntary sector depending on individual need.

If you are not satisfied with the way your request has been handled or the decision given, you may ask NHS Borders to review its actions and the decision. If you would like to request a review please apply in writing to, Freedom of Information Review, Communications, Performance & Planning, NHS Borders, Newstead, Melrose, TD6 9DA or foi.enquiries@borders.scot.nhs.uk.

The request for a review should include your name and address for correspondence, the request for information to which the request relates and the issue which you wish to be reviewed. Please state the reference number **179-12** on this request. Your request should be made within 40 working days from receipt of this letter.

If following this review, you remain dissatisfied with the outcome, you may appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner and request an investigation of your complaint. Your request to the Scottish Information Commissioner should be in writing (or other permanent form), stating your name and an address for correspondence. You should provide the details of the request and your reasons for dissatisfaction with both the original response by NHS Borders and your reasons for dissatisfaction with the outcome of the internal review. Your application for an investigation by the Scottish Information Commissioner must be made within six months of your receipt of the response with which you are dissatisfied. The address for the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner is, Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, Fife.

12 July 2012