

Autism Information



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What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that affects how people perceive the world and interact with others. People with autism see, hear and feel the world differently to other people. If you have autism, you have autism for life; autism is not an illness or disease and cannot be 'cured'. Often people feel that having autism is a fundamental aspect of their identity.

How to be referred for assessment

If you are concerned that your child may have autism, please approach your GP for referral to a Community Paediatrician. Across Cumbria we have a very experienced team of Community Paediatricians that can explain the assessment process.

What happens after the referral?

The paediatric consultant will look at the referral in detail. If the paediatrician feels that your child would benefit from an assessment, you will be sent an age-specific questionnaire. This should be completed by you with as much detail as possible and brought to your first appointment so that the paediatrician can build up a picture of your child's strengths and needs.

What happens at the appointment?

Your appointment with the paediatrician will last for approximately one hour, during which time you will be asked all about your child's birth history and developmental progress. The paediatrician will examine your child and observe them whilst they play. The paediatrician will also try and engage and interact with your child. At the end of the appointment, the paediatrician will discuss their thoughts with you. If there is a possibility that your child may be on the autistic spectrum, the paediatrician will ask for a school report (if appropriate for your child's age) which will describe how your child is learning and interacting socially with their peers. Sometimes the paediatrician will request assessments and reports from other therapists, such as speech and language therapy. If it is appropriate to do so your child may be referred for full assessment by the multi-agency assessment team.

What happens after the assessment?

After the assessment you will receive a brief report explaining the outcome of the assessment and you will be given the opportunity to discuss the findings. Regardless of the outcome, the paediatrician will discuss with you individualised support for you



and your child according to their needs.

Contact Us

West Cumbria

Workington Community Hospital
Park Lane
Workington
CA14 2RW
Tel 01900 705080

Carlisle and Eden

Springboard Child Development Centre
Orton Road
Carlisle
CA2 7HE
Tel 01228 608112

South Lakes

Kinta House
Helme Close
Kendal
LA9 7HY
Tel 01539 718150

Furness

Atkinson Health Centre
Market Street
Barrow-in-Furness
LA14 2LR
Tel 01229 409628

Confidentiality

‘The Trust’s vision is to keep your information safe in our hands.’

We promise to use your information fairly and legally, and in-line with local and national policies. You have a right to understand how your information is used and you can request a copy of the information we hold about you at any time.

For further information contact the Information Governance Team on 01228 608998 or email Information.Governance@cumbria.nhs.uk

Feedback

We appreciate and encourage feedback, which helps us to improve our services. If you have any comments, compliments or complaints to make about your care, please contact the Patient Experience Team.

Email: PET@cumbria.nhs.uk Tel: 01228 602128 Freephone: 0800 633 5547

If you would like this factsheet in another language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio, please call:

01228 603890

E: communications.helpdesk@cumbria.nhs.uk

Or write to Engagement and Communications
Voreda House | Portland Place | Penrith | CA11 7QQ



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