

GETTING ASSESSED · 3.2

Autism Assessment in Adults: A Modern Clinical Picture

How adult autism assessment works in the UK in 2026, including the NICE pathway, the gold-standard tools, and what to expect from the assessment and the months that follow.

FOR

Adults considering an autism assessment

AUDIENCE AGE

18+

REVIEWED

17 May 2026

PART OF

The NeuroFX resource library

IN SUMMARY

Autism Assessment in Adults: A Modern Clinical Picture

What the assessment involves

- **Built on the NICE CG142 standard.** A NICE-aligned assessment includes a detailed developmental history, a structured clinical interview, a sensory profile, and information about how you function across multiple settings.
- **Gold-standard tools where appropriate.** The ADOS-2 is a structured observational assessment. The ADI-R is a developmental interview, usually with a parent or someone who knew you as a child. NeuroFX uses both in standard adult autism assessment.
- **Two to three sessions, sometimes more.** Most adults find the developmental history the most searching part of the process. The clinician is looking at a lifelong pattern rather than a current set of symptoms.

How adults get to assessment in the UK

- **NHS via GP referral.** The default route. Waiting times for adult autism assessment frequently exceed two to four years in many NHS regions.
- **Right to Choose for autism is more limited.** Right to Choose in England applies primarily to ADHD and general mental health pathways. Adult autism access through this route is variable; ask your GP what is available locally.
- **Private assessment with a CQC-registered provider.** Self-funded, faster, and to the same NICE standard. NeuroFX offers private autism assessment for adults using both the ADOS-2 and the ADI-R.
- **Combined assessment where both pictures fit.** Many adults arrive thinking it is one of ADHD or autism, and find the accurate picture is both. Combined assessment looks at both conditions together rather than in sequence.

How we can help

- **NICE-aligned adult autism assessment.** Full clinical interview, ADOS-2, ADI-R where a developmental informant is available, sensory profile, and differential diagnosis review.
- **Bring developmental history.** Old school reports, parental memories, photos and recollections of childhood routines. The more concrete the evidence, the more complete the clinical picture.
- **Post-diagnostic support is part of the package.** Reports cover not just the diagnosis but practical next steps: workplace adjustments, sensory accommodations, signposting to autistic-led peer networks, and support for any co-occurring conditions.
- **Combined ADHD and autism assessment.** Where a dual picture is suspected, NeuroFX offers combined assessment that looks at both conditions in the same pathway.

WHEN TO SPEAK TO A PROFESSIONAL

Speak to your GP if the pattern has been persistent across more than one area of life and dates back to childhood. NHS routes start there. NeuroFX offers private adult autism assessment where waiting is a barrier. Seek same-day help via 111 (or 999 in an emergency) for any mental health crisis, including thoughts of self-harm or disordered eating in crisis.

SOURCES

NICE CG142; DSM-5-TR; Lord et al. 2012 (ADOS-2); Rutter et al. 2003 (ADI-R); Lord et al. 2022 (Lancet Commission); Russell et al. 2022

NEXT STEPS**Speak to NeuroFX**

Private ADHD and autism assessment for adults and children aged 6 and upwards.
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