

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) - assessments



Who can make an assessment?

ADHD is a medical diagnosis that can only be made by a suitably qualified medical professional.

In Cambridgeshire this is provided for the NHS by the Community Pediatric Team for primary school-aged children and the child psychiatrist (CAMH) for secondary school age. The process is clearly defined.

If an assessment has been done by a private clinician, this should be submitted to the community paediatric department for inclusion in the Medical advice.

How is an assessment made?

Prior to any assessment parent carers will be asked to complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) and at a later stage will be sent questionnaires to complete. The EHA is to show what support around behavior management has already been accessed: from a family worker or through attendance of a recognised parenting course (e.g. Triple P). This is a required part of the process as the mainstay of managing children with ADHD is through behavioural strategies and most parents find support in this area helpful. School will then refer to community paediatrics or CAMH with relevant and required information. Where the referral information is assessed as showing an evidence of potential ADHD, the parent and child will be invited to attend a clinic.

Since Covid, the assessment happens over video or over the phone, with the parent, most often without the child. The clinician will make a summary assessment of what they see and hear about the child. They will then consider whether there is a clinical diagnosis of ADHD. If so, for primary school-aged children, the clinician will then refer to CAMH for ADHD management. Sometimes the child will be invited to undertake a QB test to look at their ability to concentrate.

Post diagnosis support and options for medication

Within CAMH, parents will be offered ADHD-information sessions (currently run online). If after having applied these ADHD specific strategies parents feel there is a need for ADHD medication, they can request this, and the child will then be offered an appointment to consider medication.

Free Pinpoint Workshops

Pinpoint offer free ADHD and ASD workshops. These are open to all parent carers of children with or without a diagnosis. You can find out more on our website: pinpoint-cambs.org.uk under Events.