

# Neurodevelopmental Pathway Newsletter

## April 2024

Your regular newsletter from the Neurodevelopmental Pathway for Wiltshire and Bath & North East Somerset. We provide an assessment-only service for children and young people who are showing possible signs of autism and/or ADHD and we also support children and young people who are on ADHD medication reviews.

Welcome to the latest edition of the Neurodevelopmental Pathway Newsletter. We want to provide you with regular updates from our service and ideas about how to access support for you and your child. We hope that you will find it useful.

### The name of our service

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 the assessment services for autism and ADHD within Wiltshire and B&NES came together under the umbrella of the new Neurodevelopmental Pathway, to share skills and expertise across the region to offer multidisciplinary assessment for autism and ADHD.

### Our assessment pathways

If you're looking for the date that we used to include in the newsletter, we are no longer able to provide this information. This is because we want to make sure that children and young people are offered an appropriate assessment pathway that contains the parts that are required to help us understand them. We recognise that not all children and young people require the same assessments to do this. Children and young people will now be moving at different paces depending on the assessment pathway they are following, which means we are no longer able to indicate a single referral month that is being booked in for final assessment.

We would like to continue to reassure all parents and carers that:

1. all children open to the Neurodevelopmental Pathway will continue their assessment with us
2. we are continuing to accept referrals for assessment as usual
3. these changes will not result in children waiting longer to complete their assessment journey

At your initial telephone consultation, and throughout the assessment pathway, we explain that support does not depend on a diagnosis. The follow up 'Next Steps and Information' letter (formerly called 'Telephone Assessment Report'), and this email newsletter, include a range of local and national signposting to help you ensure that your child or young person is understood and supported, wherever they are on their assessment journey.

If you would like to tell us about your experience with the service, and let us know what would be useful for you, please contact the Wiltshire SPA on 0300 247 0090 (lines open between 9am-5pm, and calls charged at a local rate).

### Meet the Team Lead

Hi, I'm Sarah Hanlon, one of the Team Leads for the Neurodevelopmental Pathway. I am a qualified Speech and Language Therapist by background and have experience working with children and young people both as part of the assessment for autism and ADHD, and as a therapist working in a variety of schools and settings. For the past three years I have been working with children and young people in B&NES, Swindon and Wiltshire. You may have spoken to me on the phone as part of an initial telephone consultation, or met me during an appointment for your child.



My book recommendation is "Speak Up" by Rebecca Burgess. It is a comic book aimed at young readers and portrays the experiences of an autistic girl in school. It is easy to read, and it is useful to read about someone who is autistic, whether or not you have a diagnosis.

If you want to see more of Rebecca's work this is a useful cartoon which explains more about what autism means:

<https://the-art-of-autism.com/understanding-the-spectrum-a-comic-strip-explanation/>

### Update from the Single Point of Access (SPA)

HCRG's Single Point of Access team (SPA) are advising families that they are in the process of moving across to digital questionnaires for ADHD assessments. If your child has been accepted for ADHD assessment and you are expecting to be sent questionnaires, please be reassured that SPA have got your details and will be in touch in due course.

### Online Information Sessions

You are welcome to attend our online sessions about the autism assessment pathway. These short sessions (about 30 minutes) will tell you about the appointments that your child will be offered as well as some helpful support and advice while your child is on the pathway. We are also running sessions about understanding emotions and behaviour.

To receive a Microsoft Teams invite to these sessions, please email [familysupport@hcrpgcaregroup.com](mailto:familysupport@hcrpgcaregroup.com) with the date of the session you would like to attend (see table below).

#### Upcoming sessions:

Topic	Date and Time (sessions last approximately 30 minutes)
<b>General information about the Neurodevelopmental pathway</b> including information about the pathway, what to expect, and what to do while you are on the pathway, and a question and answer session	Wednesday 26 June 2024 13.30
<b>Understanding emotions and behaviour</b> including understanding emotions and behaviour and advice about where you can go for more help	Wednesday 10 July 2024 13.30

### Additional information and signposting

Autism Central offers resources for parents and carers. Their "guidance" page offers information on a wide range of topics including friendships, eating, extra support at school. On their "find help" section you can access free online information sessions for families in the South West. Autism Central also offer virtual drop ins with other parents where you can ask questions. <https://www.autismcentral.org.uk/>



The ADHD foundation provides information and resources to support adults and children who may have ADHD. They have a whole range of free podcasts and guides for different challenges, such as coping with exams, and managing sibling relationships <https://www.adhdfoundation.org.uk/resources/>



The B&NES Parent Carer Forum is a voluntary group of Parents and Carers of children and young people from birth to 25 years living in BANES. Through feedback and consultations with parent carers, we work in partnership with service commissioners and providers to help advocate for and raise the voice of parents and carers. <https://banespcf.co.uk/>



The Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) can provide advice about local sources of support and information for families of children with special educational needs. [https://www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk/en/Contact\\_us](https://www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk/en/Contact_us)



Please don't forget to tell us about any address, telephone number, school, or family changes so that we can keep our records up to date. If you or your child change your mind about continuing with the diagnostic assessment you can call the Single Point of Access on 0300 247 0090 to let us know.

If you wish to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please call the number above or email us on [vcl.wiltshirespa@nhs.net](mailto:vcl.wiltshirespa@nhs.net)