

Thinking About Paying for a Private Health Assessment or Support?

FAQs for Parents and Carers

Introduction

We understand that waiting times for some NHS assessments and therapies — especially for neurodiversity — are longer than they should be. While we're working to improve this, some families may be thinking about paying for a private assessment or support.

This guide is here to help you understand what to consider if you're thinking about using a private provider.

Q: What should I look for in a private assessment?

A: Make sure the assessment follows [NICE guidelines](#) (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence). These are official recommendations used across England to ensure assessments are safe and based on evidence.

Q: How do I know the professionals are qualified?

A: Check that they are registered with:

- [GMC](#) (General Medical Council) – for doctors
- [HCPC](#) (Health and Care Professions Council) – for other professionals like psychologists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, and specialist nurses.

Q: Can I stay on the NHS waiting list if I go private?

A: Yes, you can stay on the NHS waiting list even if you choose to pay for a private assessment.

Q: Do I need to tell the NHS if I've had a private assessment?

A: Yes, it's helpful to share the results with the NHS. They won't repeat the assessment unless there's a clear medical reason to do so.

Q: Will a private assessment help me get seen faster by the NHS?

A: No, having a private assessment won't move you up the NHS waiting list.

Q: What happens after a private assessment—how is treatment managed?

A: Any treatment or support recommended by the private provider must be based on evidence and recognised guidance. You'll need to pay privately for treatment until the NHS can offer an appointment and discuss what they can offer.

Q: Why might the NHS offer something different from the private provider?

A: NHS services are based on what is clinically appropriate and what they are funded to provide. They may not be able to offer everything a private provider recommends.

Q: My child has ADHD and is getting medication privately. Can the NHS take over the prescription?

A: No, the NHS can't automatically take over providing the medication. You'll need to continue paying privately. If you want NHS care, your GP will need to refer you, and you'll join the NHS waiting list.

Q: What is Shared Care for ADHD treatment?

A: Shared Care means your child's treatment is managed jointly by your GP and a specialist (which could be a private provider). The GP may agree to continue prescribing medication after the specialist starts it—but this depends on the GP's decision.

Q: Can I part-pay for treatment—some NHS, some private?

A: No, you can't mix NHS and private funding for the same treatment. More information about this is available on the One Devon website.

Q: Why won't my GP agree to Shared Care?

A: GPs don't have to enter Shared Care agreements. If you're paying privately, you'll need to continue doing so unless your GP agrees to take over. Always check with your GP first to see if they're willing to arrange shared care and what their fees might be.