KENT COUNTY COUNCIL AUTISM PATHWAY

AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER

ADD  ODD  Specific Learning Difficulties
Depression
ADHD  Anxiety
Auditory Processing
Autistic Spectrum Disorder
Sensory Integration Disorder
Gifted  Developmental Co-ordination Disorder
OCD  Tourette's
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The Kent Adult Autism Pathway Overview

Stage 1 – Initial concerns
Initial concerns may be around difficulty in social interaction and social communication interactions; rigid and repetitive behaviours; significant levels of difficulty in daily functioning. Speak to your GP or other professional you may be involved with. The GP or professional will discuss whether you may have autism.

Stage 2 – Gathering information/Initial screen
GP carries out an initial screening and completes the AQ10 form if the possibility of autism has been identified. Some level of self-assessment may be required – this is from the person affected or people/family who know them well. The GP will use the information obtained in the screening process to determine if a diagnostic assessment is required.

Yes – assessment required
GP refers to the CCG commissioned providers to carry out the diagnostic assessment.

No – assessment is not required
Alternative options for support are explored with the person affected and their families. Signposting to services is provided.

Stage 3 – diagnostic assessment
ASC identified
Specialist providers offer the person a social care assessment. Person centred plan will be developed identifying support and interventions. A Carers assessment will be offered. Signposting and support to the services and support available is provided. Information on support is provided.

ASC not identified
Signposting and support to other services which have been identified as appropriate.

Stage 1 Supporting information
What is autism?
How does autism affect people?
How can I find out more about autism?
What to do if you have initial concerns about autism.

Stage 2 Supporting information
Do I need to have a diagnosis?
What is the process for identification and diagnostic assessment?

Diagnostic assessment
How can I get a diagnosis?
Diagnostic process in Kent provided by the Clinical Commissioning Groups. What support can be expected after the diagnosis?

Post-diagnosis support
What support can be expected after the diagnosis?
What happens if autism is not diagnosed? Ongoing support and longer term needs after diagnosis. Information, advice and signposting. Specialist information, advice and support.
## Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADHD</td>
<td>Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADOS</td>
<td>Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) provides accurate diagnosis and assessment of autism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AQ10</td>
<td>A quick referral guide for adults with suspected autism who do not have a learning disability (Autism Spectrum Quotient)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASC</td>
<td>Autism Spectrum Condition</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASD</td>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAF</td>
<td>Common Assessment Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAMHS</td>
<td>Children and Mental Health Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCG</td>
<td>Clinical Commissioning Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-morbidity</td>
<td>When two disorders or illnesses occur in the same person at the same time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCO</td>
<td>Diagnostic Instrument for Social and Communication Disorders is a diagnostic tool for assessing <em>autism</em> in children and adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSM-5</td>
<td>The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders is the handbook used by health care professionals in the United States and much of the world as the authoritative guide to the diagnosis of mental disorders. 5 refers to the version number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EHCP</td>
<td>Education, Health and Care Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>EHN</td>
<td>Education and Health Need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>General Practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Functioning / High Ability</td>
<td>People with ASC who do not have a learning disability but have a high level of need associated with their autism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAPT</td>
<td>Improving Access to Psychological Therapy (Therapy and Counselling)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intervention</td>
<td>Action taken to improve a condition or situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>Intelligence Quotient – measures a person's level of intelligence</td>
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<tr>
<td>KCC</td>
<td>Kent County Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>KMPT</td>
<td>Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>ND</td>
<td>Neurodevelopmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHS</td>
<td>National Health Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>SALT</td>
<td>Speech and Language Therapist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAPT</td>
<td>Specialist Assessments and Placements Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCD</td>
<td>Social Communication Disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEN</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SENCo</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEND</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs and Disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLaM</td>
<td>South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safeguarding</td>
<td>Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights, and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRP</td>
<td>Specialist Resource Provision</td>
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What is the Kent County Council (KCC) Autism Pathway?

The KCC Autism Pathway describes the route an adult with possible autism and their family/carers can expect to follow from when concerns are first noticed. The pathway document details what happens for assessment, diagnosis, support and longer term needs and support.

There are a range of neurodevelopmental conditions which fall within the autism spectrum. For the sake of consistency in this document, the term ASC will be used as an umbrella term for all the categories listed below:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- High Functioning Autism
- Higher Ability Autism
- Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC)
- Asperger Syndrome
- Autistic Spectrum Difference
- Pervasive development Disorder
- Semantic Pragmatic Disorder
- Social Communication Disorder (SCD)

The main focus of the document will be to describe the KCC pathway for higher ability adults on the autistic spectrum who do not have a learning disability.

What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability. Psychologists and Psychiatrists use the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) as the criteria for diagnosing ASC and the related diagnosis of Social Communication Disorder (SCD). You can find out more about this at: [http://www.autism.org.uk/DSM-5##criteria](http://www.autism.org.uk/DSM-5##criteria)

Autism affects the way a person communicates and how they experience the world around them. Autism is described as a spectrum condition. This means that while people with autism, including Asperger’s Syndrome, share certain characteristics, they will be highly individual in their needs and preferences.

Some people with autism are able to live independent lives but others may face additional challenges, including learning disabilities and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which affect them so profoundly that they need support in many areas. The condition affects everybody differently and people with autism, just like people everywhere, have all sorts of individual personalities, tastes, outlooks and beliefs.
How does autism affect people?

In the case of autism, the typical problems are difficulties with communication and finding it hard to be flexible – sometimes including having sensory difficulties which restrict what people are able to do. The difficulties autism creates are described in a variety of different ways, so different descriptions may be used in different places but they all relate to the same condition.

Social communication and interaction

Autism can make it much harder for someone to talk to and socialise with other people. Exactly how much depends on the individual but generally almost everyone with autism finds social communication a struggle to a greater or lesser degree.

People with autism often talk in a less ‘conversational’ way than non-autistic people – speaking to ask for what they want or thinking aloud about their interests, but not chatting for the sake of chatting. They can also find it difficult to understand implication, hints or irony, and can take instructions very literally.

Autism often involves difficulties in listening and/or concentration skills: a person with autism can sometimes seem either unresponsive or easily distracted because of sensory issues or because their social ‘presence’ isn’t as responsive to other people as the average person.

People with autism can often find it difficult to read another person’s facial expression and body language which can make them seem oblivious or callous. In reality, they have simply missed or misread the signals. The real problem is that autism interferes with both the ability to notice and interpret other people’s feelings and also the ability to sense them.

The latter skill is technically described as ‘social imagination’: a person who has problems with social imagination can have a hard time understanding that someone else might have a different perspective from them - or if they know it in theory, they may still struggle to imagine what it might be.

People with autism are often described as lacking empathy but this can be misunderstood. Actually, it’s not that people with autism can’t ‘feel for’ others; in fact, some autistic people say that they feel so strongly for others that they seem uncaring because they freeze up, or feel overwhelmed. It can be hard for a person with autism to tell what someone else is feeling, or if they do, how to respond appropriately.

Restricted, repetitive behaviours and sensory issues

People with autism may be prone to developing rituals. They can get very attached to doing things the same way each time and can get extremely upset if their routines are disturbed. As well as being inclined to rules and rituals, it’s common for a person
with autism to have difficulty processing the information that their eyes, ears, noses, muscles and skins are sending to the brain.

These sensory issues are basically a question of certain senses being either hyper (or over) sensitive or hypo (or under) sensitive. Highly sensitive hearing is common, for instance, meaning that certain noises (like dogs barking or babies crying) are unbearable; likewise, a lot of people with autism get obsessed with spinning objects or flashing lights, which can be a sign of highly sensitive vision.

If a sense is ‘turned up’ in a person with autism, they will be vulnerable to getting overstimulated and having a meltdown; if it’s ‘turned down’, they may engage in odd-looking behaviours to shake it up.

Sensory issues can also cause difficulties in basic care. Food issues are very common with autism. Part of the problem may be about flexibility and anxiety in the face of the unfamiliar; it can also be that they either hate or adore particular textures. For instance, one person may eat nothing but soup and smoothies because the chewing sensation unsettles them, while another may want nothing but raw fruit and veg because they can’t get enough of the crunch.

Some people with autism may only have mild sensory issues, if any. For others, it’s an ongoing strain because it’s hard for them to be comfortable outside a highly controlled environment.

**Mental health issues**


The presentation of depression and anxiety can differ to that in the general population and can act as a cause for a change in behaviour or functioning. The presentation of these conditions at the same as ASC can be easily missed and the behaviour of the person attributed to the ASC itself. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder can be diagnosed in approximately a quarter of children with ASC.

Repetitive and routine-bound behaviours may be attempts to reduce anxiety levels, while challenging behaviours e.g. aggression and self-injury may be a response to increased anxiety levels. Although not necessarily a mental health problem, sleep difficulties are very common.

Diagnosis of psychotic illness can present particular challenges, needing to be differentiated from the eccentric beliefs and vivid fantasy life which may form part of a person’s ASC. Misdiagnosis of ASC as a psychotic disorder can occur, leading to
long-term treatment with antipsychotic medication with limited benefit and the potential for significant side effects.

**Long term conditions with ASC (co-morbidities)**

A high number of people with ASC also have another medical or psychiatric condition. This is called ‘comorbidity’, and the conditions are often called ‘comorbid’ conditions. This means the conditions are present at the same time in the same person.

Comorbid conditions can appear at any time during a person’s development; this could be in childhood, adolescence or adulthood. Sometimes these comorbid conditions have symptoms that affect how well ASC therapies and interventions work. So it may be beneficial to identify the conditions and treat them separately.

Examples of conditions co-morbid to autism spectrum condition are:-

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Bipolar disorder
- Developmental co-ordination disorder
- Gender dysphoria
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- Tourette syndrome
- Sensory problems
- Nonverbal learning disorder
- Sleep disorders

Children are likely to present with ADHD whilst depression is common amongst young people and adults with ASC.

**How can I find out more about autism?**

If you are looking for information about ASC, you will find that this is readily available particularly online. Key websites are detailed below which will help you begin the process of getting more information.


http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs/local-offer-your-voice

http://www.autism.org.uk/ (National Autistic Society)

http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Autistic-spectrum-disorder/Pages/Introduction.aspx
What to do if you have initial concerns about autism

If you are experiencing one or more of the following signs or symptoms, you may want to consider assessment for possible autism:

- Persistent difficulties in social interaction
- Persistent difficulties in social communication
- Stereotypic (rigid and repetitive) behaviours, resistance to change or restricted interests; and one or more of the following:-
  - Problems in obtaining or sustaining employment or education
  - Difficulties in initiating or sustaining social relationships
  - Previous or current contact with mental health or learning disability services
  - A history of neurodevelopmental condition (including learning disabilities and ADHD) or mental disorder

(Autism spectrum disorder in adults: diagnosis and management (2012) NICE guideline CG142)

There are screening questionnaires on line that can be completed which measure autistic traits in adults. These are not definitive tests and do not provide a diagnosis but can be used to help indicate the likelihood of ASC.

If you are concerned about the score after taking the tests, you should speak to your GP.

Websites providing ASC tests are detailed below:-

http://docs.autismresearchcentre.com/tests/AQ10.pdf
http://aqtest.net/

Do I need to have a diagnosis?

ASC traits can be mistaken for other conditions and vice versa, so a professional assessment would be advised to ensure an accurate and valid diagnosis is provided and to ensure that the right support is made available.

Some specialist help is available for those people who have been diagnosed. There is also a range of support available for people who are not diagnosed or choose not to be diagnosed. To find out more about the support available please see page 20.

What is the process for identification and diagnostic assessment?

Within Kent, diagnosis for ASC is provided through health. Clinical Commissioning Groups commission a range of providers who carry out the diagnosis and assessment for adults who are suspected as having ASC.
How can I get a diagnosis?

If you have initial concerns and think you may need a diagnosis, you should first contact your GP. The GP will complete an assessment with you to decide if a referral to a specialist such as a Psychologist is needed to carry out a diagnosis.

If a specialist referral is required, a range of different providers across Kent have been commissioned by CCGs to carry this out.

If you have been highly evidenced as likely to have ASC but would find it too difficult to contact the GP yourself, some support may be available from other professionals you are involved with. Community Mental Health Teams are more likely to be involved in referrals to the diagnostic clinic if the person is deemed to have moderate to severe mental health co-morbidities.

If a person exhibits behaviour which places them at risk of offending, then onward referral to the local forensic service for assessment may be required.

The process for diagnosis through a referral to a specialist will vary depending on the part of Kent a person lives in.

If you live in any of the following districts: Ashford, Canterbury and Coastal, South Kent coast or Thanet – the South Kent Coast (SKC) and Thanet process applies.

If you live in Dartford, Gravesham, Swanley or Swale - the North Kent (NKCCG) CCG process applies.

If you live in any of the following districts: Maidstone, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge and Malling or Tunbridge Wells – the West Kent CCG (WKCCG) process applies.
South Kent Coast, Thanet, Ashford and Canterbury CCG process

Diagnostic process

If a referral to the specialist is required, the GP will complete the Adult East Kent Autism and ADHD referral form. The GP is the primary care provider and links with the Clinical Commissioning Group locally which commissions such services.

Referral acceptance criteria – in order to be accepted for a referral to South London and Maudsley NHS Trust clinic (SLaM) the following criteria applies:-

- Adults aged 17.5 years and over (to include transitional clients)
- Adults without a learning disability.
- Adults for whom assessment for concurrent mental health problems has been undertaken by the individual’s local community mental health team, where appropriate.
- Adults whose local GP and mental health team are aware of the onward referral.

Who can diagnose autism?

Referrals for diagnosis are made by the GP or Community Mental Health Team to the neurodevelopmental diagnostic service provider – South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM). The adult neurodevelopmental clinic reviews the referral to determine if the referral criteria have been met.

The review of the form will include a patient’s questionnaire and completion of psychometric tests (e.g. Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders (DISCO); Autism Quotient (AQ); and the Cambridge Behavior Scale to inform and assist with the diagnosis.

You can find out more about these tests at:-
http://www.autism.org.uk/disco;
http://docs.autismresearchcentre.com/tests/EQ.pdf

What happens at the assessment?

A psychologist will generally be the professional providing the diagnostic assessment. It is preferable to have a family member present at the interview who has knowledge of your childhood and stages of development.

The assessor will ask a series of questions from a specific autism questionnaire. You will receive a report with a series of recommendations after the assessment has been completed.
How long will I have to wait for a diagnosis?

A response to the initial referral must be confirmed within 2 weeks and an initial assessment date offered. The initial assessment will aim to be completed within 3 months of the referral letter but will be dependent on levels of demand. There will be a maximum of 4 weeks from completion of assessment to the provision of a written report with recommendations.

What happens after the assessment?

Following the completion of a Recommendation Report, copies will be provided to you and the GP or Community Mental Health Team (CMHT) who made the referral, which will enable you to be referred to the most appropriate service to meet your needs.

Where a positive diagnosis is made this may lead to a referral to the KCC Adult Social Care Team if appropriate for assessment and your GP will be informed. If appropriate, the KCC Autism Team will provide specialist information and advice, community care assessments; short term interventions, skills training and support services.

Specialist information and advice

KCC offer follow up advice and information provided by a specialist information officer for people who are newly diagnosed. The Officer is able to discuss ASC and what it might mean for you after your diagnosis. They will be able to advise on support available and sign post to relevant organisations as required.

If concurrent mild to moderate mental health problems are identified then you will be referred into Primary Care Mental Health Services, e.g. Therapy and Counselling (IAPT).
North Kent CCG diagnosis process

Who can diagnose autism?

North Kent CCG have commissioned The Psicon Group to carry out diagnostic assessments for adults who may be living with ASC. If the GP decides that a specialist referral is needed, they will refer you to Psicon including your completed AQ10 and Cambridge Behaviour scales.

If you have a co-morbid mental health condition, your GP will refer you to the appropriate mental health services.

Where a positive diagnosis is made this may lead to a referral to the KCC Adult Social Care team for assessment if this is appropriate. The KCC Adult Social care team will provide a support service, community care assessment, short-term interventions and skills training.

How long will I have to wait for a diagnosis?

The initial assessment will aim to be completed within 3 months of the referral letter but will be dependent on levels of demand. There will be a maximum of 4 weeks from completion of assessment to the provision of a written report with recommendations.

If you are referred for assessment, you can expect a flexible service with clinical hours as follows:–
Monday:  08.00 – 20.00
Tuesday:  08.00 – 16.30
Wednesday: 08.00 – 16.30
Thursday: 08.00 – 20.00
Friday:  08.00 – 18.30

Saturday appointments and home visits can be made by arrangement where required.

The service is based in Canterbury and will expand to have clinics in Medway, Swale, Dartford, Swanley and Gravesham areas.
West Kent CCG diagnostic process

How can I get a diagnosis?

West Kent CCG have commissioned the Psicon Group to undertake ASC diagnostic assessments for adults. If your GP decides that a specialist referral is needed they will refer you to Psicon including your completed AQ10 and Cambridge Behaviour scales. Assessments are carried out in Tonbridge or Canterbury.

If you have a co-morbid mental health condition, your GP will refer you to South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM) ASC service based at the Maudsley Hospital in South London for a diagnostic assessment. Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT) can also refer you to this service.

Referrals to the SLaM service require prior funding approval by West Kent CCG out of area treatment panel which is administered by the Mental Health Placements Team at the South East Commissioning Support Unit.

What happens at the assessment?

A psychologist will generally be the professional providing the diagnostic assessment; they may also have an assistant to write notes. The assessor will pose questions specific to the diagnostic tool they are using. It is preferable to have a family member present at the assessment, someone who has knowledge of your childhood and stages of development.

How long will I have to wait for a diagnosis?

The initial assessment will aim to be completed within 3 months of the referral letter but will be dependent on levels of demand. There will be a maximum of 4 weeks from completion of assessment to the provision of a written report with recommendations.

What happens after the assessment?

Following the completion of an assessment report, copies will be provided to you and the GP or CMHT who made the referral, which will enable you to be referred to the most appropriate service to meet your needs.

Where a positive diagnosis is made this may lead to a referral to the KCC Adult Social Care Team if appropriate for assessment and your GP will be informed. If appropriate, the KCC Social Care Team will provide specialist information and advice; community care assessments; short term interventions; skills training and support services.
Specialist information and advice

KCC offer follow up advice and information provided by a specialist information officer for people who are newly diagnosed. The Officer is able to discuss ASC and what it might mean for you after your diagnosis. They will be able to advise on support available and signpost to relevant organisations as required.

Where concurrent mild to moderate mental health problems are identified then you will be referred into Primary Care Mental Health Services, e.g. Improving Access to Psychological Therapy Service (IAPT)

The diagnostic assessment provider may also recommend individual or group therapy/treatment provided by SLaM, this would be subject to funding approval by West Kent CCG.
What happens if autism is not diagnosed?

Although you may not receive a diagnosis of ASC, you may still have a range of needs relating to communication, social and emotional understanding and behaviour.

Sometimes, not having a clear diagnosis can be equally difficult for the person, their family and carers to come to terms with. If you are not diagnosed with ASC, you may still be referred or signposted to other support services if you have other identified needs. The services you may be signposted to include ‘Live it Well’ services, Therapy and Counseling (IAPT), information services or KCC Adult Social Care.

Further information on these services can be found by visiting the following websites:
http://livewellkent.org.uk/
https://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/information-and-advice/pcpts
http://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health

What happens if I don’t agree with the outcome of the diagnostic assessment?

If you don’t agree with the outcome of the assessment, the following organisations will be able to offer advice on what to do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who to contact</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| West Kent CCG, SKC and Thanet CCG, Ashford CCG and Canterbury Coastal CCG | South East Commissioning Support Unit  
Customer Services Team  
Phone: 03000 424244  
Email: secsu.complaints@nhs.net |
| Swale CCG               | Phone: 03000 424 901  
Email: swccg.complaints@nhs.net |
| DGS CCG                 | Phone: 03000 424 901  
Email: dgsccg.complaints@nhs.net |
Ongoing support and longer term needs after diagnosis

KCC provide a specialist social care team for adults with autism – who are diagnosed or who are considered ‘highly probable’. The team is called the Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC) team.

Adult Social Care Autistic Spectrum Conditions Team

How to contact the Adult Social Care ASC team:

Telephone: 03000 418100
Text relay (Deaf and speech impaired people): 18001 0300 333 5540
Email: sensoryandautism@kent.gov.uk

The team provide a range of services:

Advice on diagnosis

Advice and support to help you determine if you need to be referred for a diagnosis of autism and how to go about doing this.

Information, advice and signposting

Information and advice on autism and other neurodevelopmental conditions, specialist resources for autism, equipment, benefits, housing support, employment. The team can advise on other relevant services and refer onto other services and sources of support.

Care Act (social care) assessment

This needs assessment will help you as a person with ASC to look at any difficulties you are experiencing in your day to day life; consider your strengths and develop ways to reach your personal goals. You can find out more about the Care Act and how this governs the assessment process at:


Support planning

Support plans are developed to you as a person with ASC identify the support you need and how this can be provided. This could be through help from family and friends or if you meet set eligibility criteria, through a personal budget (funds provided by the Local Authority to fund a person’s assessed support needs). A range of different services can be provided, such as support to help you learn independence skills or apply for supported living accommodation.
ASC Enablement Service

A specialist ASC assessment by an Occupational Therapist can help you as a person with ASC learn strategies and new skills to improve your independence. A Sensory Needs assessment can be carried out to help identify particular sensory issues. Specialist equipment may also be provided such as squeeze jackets or weighted blankets to help reduce every day difficulties and stresses.

Links to specialist ASC support services

The team have strong links to other specialist ASC services such as the Advocacy for All peer support groups; and specialist advocacy services provided by SEAP. You can find out more information on these services on pages 20 and 21 of this document.

Raising awareness of other services/joint working

The team work with other social service teams and agencies to help raise their understanding of ASC in order for them to better support individuals with autism.

Carers’ assessments

Supporting or caring for someone with autism can be difficult at times. The team can provide information and advice to carers, refer on for assessments and support services.

Who can get help and support from the ASC team?

Help and support is available from the ASC team if you live in Kent and are aged eighteen years or older. Support is also available for young people aged 17 if they have been assessed as being in transition to adult services. You can find out more about transition in the Children and Young People Autism Pathway document (link to be added when confirmed)

Additionally if you apply for help and support, you must:

- Already be diagnosed with high functioning Autistic Spectrum Condition (including Asperger’s Syndrome) but not have a learning disability**,
- or have a suspected Autistic Spectrum Condition - ideally this should be supported by your GP and evidenced by other reports and assessment such as SEND or a psychological report.
National policy and guidance and support for people with ASC

Reasonable adjustments

The Equality Act 2010 (EA) says changes or adjustments should be made to ensure a person can access the following things if they are disabled:

- education
- employment
- housing
- goods and services like shops, banks, cinemas, hospitals, council offices, leisure centres
- associations and private clubs like the Scouts and Guides, private golf clubs and working men clubs.

The Equality Act says a disability is a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

These are referred to as reasonable adjustments. Adjustments only have to be made if it’s reasonable to do so. The definition of reasonable depends on things like:

- the type of disability
- how practicable the changes are
- if the change asked for would overcome the disadvantage a disabled person and other disabled people experience
- the size of the organisation
- how much money and resources are available
- the cost of making the changes
- if any changes have already been made.

What do people or organisations have to do?

The Equality Act puts employers under an obligation to make reasonable adjustments in relation to the following:

1. Provisions, criteria or practices, including company policies – organisations may have to change the way things are done.
2. Change physical features, such as the layout of and access to workplaces, e.g. providing ramps and stairlifts
3. Provision of auxiliary aids, including providing information in an accessible format such as Braille, large print or email

Where any of the above place a disabled person ‘at a substantial disadvantage’ the employer has to take any steps that are ‘reasonable in all the circumstances’ to prevent that disadvantage occurring.
If someone doesn’t cooperate with their duty to make reasonable adjustments, the Equality Act says it’s unlawful discrimination. You can ask the person or organisation to make the necessary changes. If they refuse, you can make a discrimination claim under the Equality Act.

Further information can be seen on the following websites:-

https://www.gov.uk/rights-disabled-person/employment

SPELL – National Autistic Society framework

What is the SPELL framework - SPELL stands for Structure, Positive approaches and expectations, Empathy, Low arousal, Links.

SPELL is The National Autistic Society’s framework for understanding and responding to the needs of children and adults on the autism spectrum. It focuses on five principles that have been identified as vital elements of best practice in autism. It also emphasises ways to change the environment and approaches adopted to meet the specific needs of each person with ASC.

The SPELL framework recognises the individual and unique needs of each adult and emphasises that planning and intervention be organised on this basis. The SPELL framework can be applied across the autism spectrum, including Asperger syndrome.

Further information on SPELL can be seen on the following website:-
http://www.autism.org.uk/spell

Support with preparing for times of change

Times of significant change can be difficult for all people but can be especially so for those with autism or additional needs. The professionals working alongside you and your family will identify ongoing and new needs prior to the change and should ensure support arrangements are in place.

Below are some points of change that may need special consideration:

- into further education
- to independent living
- to training or employment
- to adult services

The following are options to consider when preparing for change:-
• prepare well in advance, even several years beforehand for a move to further education, training or employment
• ensure that people with autism have enough information to make informed choices
• arrange advance visits. Take photographs that can be used to create a booklet to talk about and rehearse the new situation
• ensure information on strengths, difficulties and effective support is shared in advance with all those who will be in contact with the person
• plan the first weeks following change very carefully and ensure the person has a ‘buddy’ and named member of staff or work colleague to support them
• ensure any unstructured times during the day are well planned and that the person has a 'safe-place' to go to e.g. for break and lunch
• use structured approaches to conversations

Other times of change that may need careful consideration and possibly specialist support include:

• moving to a new home
• moving in or out of hospital care
• change in family circumstance
• bereavement

As a person with autism, you are encouraged to discuss these changes with the professionals you are most in contact with (e.g. GP, social worker, support worker or college learning support staff).

They will work alongside you and your family to plan actions to help you through the changes. They will also be able to signpost to any other specialist support where relevant. Information on specialist support available at these times of change can be found on the Kent Local Offer - http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/special-educational-needs

Specialist information, advice and support

People with autism have a right to access appropriate support to help with communication, social and behavioural needs including autism from the first early concerns through to assessment and on-going support. The level and type of support will depend on the individual needs of the person and their family and this may change over time.

Specialist ASC Services

There are a range of private or third sector organisations who provide support and services for people with ASC. The type of support provided includes specialist advice, social and peer groups and awareness raising.
You can find out more information about the full range of services on the following websites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Autistic Society</td>
<td><a href="http://www.autism.org.uk/">http://www.autism.org.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent Autistic Trust</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kentautistic.com/">http://www.kentautistic.com/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy for All</td>
<td><a href="http://www.advocacyforall.org.uk/">http://www.advocacyforall.org.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Kent Advocacy for All ASC Peer Support Groups**

Peer support groups for adults with high functioning Autism and Asperger’s Syndrome. There are 11 groups across Kent who hold monthly meetings. The topics are selected by group members. Topics include:-

- shared interests
- social skills
- relaxation
- ASC related topics
- human rights
- problem solving

Additional activities provided by the groups include:-

- book club
- sports activities, e.g badminton
- assertiveness workshops
- social events
- lunches out
- bowling
- stables
- film club

**Eligibility Criteria:-** People with high functioning Autism and Aspergers who are aged over 18 years.

**Available:** Generally, Monday to Friday, but some weekend activities are arranged as well as evenings too.

**Referral:** Service can be accessed directly by service users. It is an open referral system.

**Cost:** There may be a cost if activities chosen by the service user have a charge.

**Further information:** [http://www.advocacyforall.org.uk/self.php#autism](http://www.advocacyforall.org.uk/self.php#autism)
Kent Advocacy

**Advocacy** means supporting and enabling a person, who is otherwise unable, to speak up for themselves (to self-advocate) or to speak up on the person’s behalf. It means supporting people to take more control about decisions over their lives and to make informed choices.

- Advocacy is about making sure people’s voices are heard and listened to.
- Advocacy is about finding the person’s views, wishes and aspirations and putting these across to the people who need to know.
- It’s about making sure people can make their own choices in life and have the chance to be more independent. This does not mean doing everything by themselves but it means being in more control of their lives about decisions relating to them.
- Advocacy is independent, issue based, time-limited and free at the point of request.

Kent Advocacy is a central hub taking on all advocacy referrals in Kent, for both statutory and non-statutory advocacy. They provide the following:

- Independent Mental Health Advocacy
- Independent Mental Capacity Advocacy
- Independent Care Act Advocacy
- Health Complaints Advocacy
- Community Advocacy

The hub is managed by a prime provider working with a range of advocacy partners, with specialisms to support people with varying needs, including (but not exhaustive to) older persons, people with dementia, deaf/ deafblind, physical disability, learning disability, autistic spectrum conditions.

The main provider, seAp, is an experienced provider of advocacy and advocacy-related training in the UK, with specialism to support people with ASC. Training is provided in-house by seAp.

**Available:** Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm, except public holidays

**Eligibility criteria:** The eligibility criteria for statutory advocacy are framed by legislation. The criteria for non-statutory advocacy is the need for advocacy support which is identified during discussion with the service user and their family or representative.

One of the advocacy partners has a specialism in supporting people with autism. However, the service is not exclusive to named conditions, rather the partners will accept any referral for advocacy and the support will be provided by the most appropriate partner(s).
Referral: People can access community advocacy directly and more information can be found on how to refer can be found on the website. Some statutory advocacy referrals can only be made by heath or social care professionals.


Kent Supported Employment (KSE)

Kent Supported Employment (KSE) team offers a bespoke specialist supported employment service for people with disabilities and disadvantages. KSE are part of the Skills and Employability team within Kent County Council- Education and Young Peoples Services. Supporting people to find training, work experience and sustained paid work. Also supporting young people/adults with a disability/disadvantage to source, obtain and sustain apprenticeships.

Available: Our main hours are Monday to Friday but we also support clients in work at other times and at weekends when needed.

Eligibility criteria: KSE are able to professionally support service users aged 16 and over (no upper age limit) with a disability/disadvantage to prepare, find and sustain paid employment. 5% of our clients have disabilities including physical, brain and sensory disabilities the remaining 95% of our clients, either have a learning disability and/or are on the autistic spectrum.

Additionally KSE have contracts with special schools across Kent to support with transition and positive progression routes into employment. Our main contract requires clients to have a care manager.

Referrals: Referrals need to be made via a care manager or a school that has a contract with KSE.

Further information: [http://www.kent.gov.uk/jobs/helping-disabled-people-into-work](http://www.kent.gov.uk/jobs/helping-disabled-people-into-work)

Information, Advice and Support Kent (IASK)

IASK provides a free and confidential, information, advice and support service, for parents who have a disabled child or a child with special educational needs. They also provide this service to children or young people aged up to 25 who have special educational needs or a disability.

Trained staff can provide impartial legally based information and support on educational matters relating to special educational needs. They also provide impartial information and support relating to social care.

The aim is to empower parents, children and young people to fully participate in discussions and make informed choices and decisions. It also aims to empower them to feel confident enough to express their views and wishes about education and future aspirations.
The service can:
- give time to discuss issues and explore options;
- help prepare for and support at meetings with the local authority or setting, school or education provider;
- explain educational processes and procedures;
- provide information about other agencies and processes including social care and short breaks;
- help with writing letters and completing forms;
- signpost to other sources of information

Available:- Helpline service Monday to Friday 9.00 – 5.00 all year round (except for national holidays)
24 hour email service and voicemail facility
All calls and emails are responded to within 2 working days

Eligibility:- available to anyone with a suspected disability or special educational need. However, we provide information to anyone who rings and will signpost as necessary. Any parent who believes their child has a disability or special educational need.

Referral:- Parents, children and young people can access the service directly, they do not need a referral.

Further information:- www.kent.gov.uk/iask
Helpline number 03000 41 3000

Primary Care Social Work Service (PCSW)

What is the Mental Health Social Work Service?

The team is a Kent wide social work team which works with individuals aged 17-65 experiencing mental distress and social care issues. The service aims to support people to take control of their lives again, maximising their well-being and quality of life. The service is just one part of the primary care offer of support.

Who do the team work with?
- The team works with the Live Well community well-being service and the wider community to achieve a joined up response to the needs of individuals.

What do the team do?
- Offers a service to individuals experiencing mental distress where there is a social care need
- Provides a service county wide for Kent County Council
• Will assess using eligibility determination (Care Act 2014) to identify social care needs and work with the individual and their family network to agree a care and support plan
• Works in collaboration with the individual and their family to agree a plan
• Works closely with the Kent Enablement and Recovery Service and third sector strategic partners to help identify services or resources that will support individuals to manage their distress
• Provides the investigating officer function for safeguarding enquiries. The team will also take the lead for self neglect cases providing coordination and collaboration with other services and providers
• Will provide support and signposting to carers
• Will provide social care support for individuals leaving secondary care mental health services who continue to have identified on-going social care needs.

**Eligibility:** Care Act eligibility criteria applies – there needs to be an appearance of social care need in relation to mental distress.

**Referral:** Referrals accepted from everyone. Telephone: 03000 422356 or email: MHSocialWorkPrimaryCare@kent.gov.uk

**Further information:**- www.kent.gov.uk/careandsupport
www.livewellkent.org.uk

**Kent County Council Local Offer**

Provision for autism in Kent is described in the Local Offer. A local offer gives young people with special educational needs or disabilities and their family’s information about what support services will be available in their area. The name 'local offer' was given by the government.

Every local authority must talk to young people with special educational needs or disabilities and their families to find out what sort of support and services they need. There will be many different types of services that young people may need, including support services in school and services in their local community.

Young people and their families may also have ideas about what leisure activities should be available, and what services are needed to help young people move towards independence in adulthood.

Every local authority must have a local offer that is available on the internet and must make sure that people without access to the internet can also see it. The local authority must tell young people and their families how they can find out more about the local offer. The local authority will then decide what services to make available.

A local offer should also include information about what transport services are available for young people with special educational needs or disabilities and if there is any help available to pay for these services.
Short Breaks

Service: Short Breaks services are for those young people who need extra support to be able to join in with other people the same age.

Short breaks services are aimed at families with a disabled child or young person. This is because of the extra effort and stress that being the parent of a disabled child can bring.

The term Short Breaks is used to cover the following services and activities:-

- Short Breaks
- Family Day/Short Breaks
- Short breaks activities
- After School Clubs
- School Holiday Clubs
- Domiciliary Care Agencies

Types of short breaks in Kent include:

- weekend clubs during term time
- school summer holiday clubs
- overnight stays (with an approved foster carer or in a residential unit)
- daytime stays (with an approved foster carer or in a residential unit)
- support in the home.

Some short break activities in Kent are specifically aimed at meeting the needs of disabled children and young people. These are sometimes called targeted services. This group of services includes play schemes and clubs run by charities or volunteers. See page 32 of this document for details of how to access information on providers of the schemes.

IMAGO have been commissioned by KCC to provide short breaks/clubs and activities across the county. Further information on the services they offer can be found at the following link:-

http://www.imago.community/Young-People/Short-Breaks-Service

Some short break activities in Kent are specifically aimed at meeting the needs of disabled children and young people. These are sometimes called targeted services. This group of services includes play schemes and clubs run by charities or volunteers and Kent County Council supports these organisations with grants.

You don't need a social worker to refer you to these services - you can approach them directly. However, they may have their own criteria that you will have to meet.
There are a small number of young people who have needs that require a lot of support to be able to have a short break. These might be young people with complex health needs, or behaviours that challenge services. Activities for these young people are sometimes called **specialist services**.

The specialist services provided are:
- overnight stays in a residential unit
- short stays with an approved foster carer
- specialist school holiday play schemes
- term time fun clubs
- direct payments (a way of funding families to make their own short break arrangements)
- personal health budgets (like a direct payment, but for meeting health related needs).

**Referral:** To get any of these specialist services you will require an assessment of need by a social worker or health care professional. If the assessment shows that this is the right kind of service for your family, you will then need to be referred by a professional.


**Eligibility:** Available for children and young people aged between 5 and 25.

**Further information** -
Specialist Mental Health Services

There are a range of health intervention services which are available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Live Well</td>
<td><a href="http://livewellkent.org.uk/">http://livewellkent.org.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary and Secondary MH services</td>
<td><a href="https://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/">https://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapy and Counselling (IAPT)</td>
<td><a href="https://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/information-and-advice/pctps">https://www.kmpt.nhs.uk/information-and-advice/pctps</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maudsley Hospital</td>
<td><a href="https://www.national.slam.nhs.uk/services/camhs/camhs-autism">https://www.national.slam.nhs.uk/services/camhs/camhs-autism</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Universal KCC services providing support, information and advice

Details of universal services provided by Kent County Council which can be accessed by or are particularly relevant to adults on the autistic spectrum and their families are listed below.

**Adult Community Services**

Provide assessment to adults over the age of 18 who have a physical disability (includes conditions such as head injuries, ADHD, Asperger’s) or who are aged over 65 years. Provision of services can include, information and advice, safeguarding, day services, respite, domiciliary care packages (including enablement) respite, residential provisions, supported living, extra-sheltered housing (55 plus only).

Referral to other organisations (including Intermediate Care Teams, advocacy, Independent Mental Capacity Assessments and peer support groups). Referrals to KCC benefit advisors (eligible for complex cases and if ongoing service in place). Carry out continuing health care (CHC) assessments.

**Available:** Monday to Friday 9.00 – 5.00 pm. Out of hours service is available at other times. Contact: 03000 419191

**Eligibility criteria** – eligibility for services is determined through an assessment completed under the Care Act - http://knet/directorate/SCHW-documents/Documents/Eligibility Criteria Decision Form.docx
http://knet/directorate/SCHW-documents/Documents/Eligibility criteria determination for the cared.docx
For people aged 18 or over.

**Referral:** Referral is via contact with the Adult social care referral team: contact: 03000 416161. Service users can refer directly or referrals can be made by other organisations or people.

**Cost:** If a service is put in place after the assessment, service users will have a financial assessment to determine if they will have to contribute towards the service.
Details of the KCC charging and financial assessment policy can be found on the following websites:


Care Navigators

Care Navigators are commissioned by Kent County Council through Voluntary Organisations. Care Navigators help people who need advice and support to self-manage their well-being and long term conditions and help link people up with local community based support services. The service plays a significant role in improving people’s well-being.

Available: Monday to Friday, 09.00 to 5.00 p.m. There is one Care Navigator in each of the 12 Kent districts and an additional 7 based in Kent hospitals.

Eligibility criteria: Service is predominantly aimed at 55 years and over.

Referral: Accessed by self-referral or via other professional


Homecare/Domiciliary Care

Care provided in an individual’s home following an assessment of need:
- Personal Care
- Support that promotes wellbeing and self-care of the person
- Support that promotes safeguarding
- Escorting and Social Activities
- Cleaning and support around the home
- Supporting Person Centred Planning and Delivery
- Double Handed Care

See section 2.1 within the specification below for full details: http://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0010/18892/Home-care-specification.pdf

Available: The service will be commissioned to meet the person’s needs, with care and support being delivered between 7am and 7pm being considered Social Hours and that from 7pm to 7am Unsocial Hours. Public Holidays will be considered Unsocial Hours.

The service will operate 365 days per year (366 on leap years) and Providers must respond in a timely and flexible manner to diverse requirements.
Providers must ensure that an out of hours contact is available to provide advice, information and support to Care Workers and persons outside of office hours but within the hours of service provision.

**Eligibility criteria**: Social Care Health and Wellbeing Staff complete a needs assessment to identify eligible social care needs. The people who are able to access this service will be:

- Adults assessed by Case Management as being eligible for Home Care
- From all groups including Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Physical Disabilities, those with Mental Health problems, Older People, and People with Dementia.
- It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list. This may also include the transition of children to adulthood.
- Ordinarily resident and living in Kent

See section 2.8 within the specification below for full details:  

**Referral**: Referrals can be made directly using the Adult social care contact referral route or via other professionals or agencies.

**Cost**: People receiving a service may have to pay a contribution towards their care package depending on their financial situation (see KCC Charging and Financial assessment policy – http://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support/paying-for-care/charges-for-care-and-support)

**Further information**:
http://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?adultchannel=0  
http://knet/Change/Pages/Adults-home-care.aspx

Home care providers will all have individual websites also.

**Kent Shared Lives**

If full-time residential care (or other more formal care services) aren't for you, but managing life in your own home is causing you problems, you could benefit from what we call 'Shared Lives'. Shared Lives is available to adults with all different kinds of needs, such as older people, people with disabilities, people with mental health problems or people with dementia.

You would be sharing the home of a chosen host – this could be a single person, a couple or a whole family. You could:

- be part of a family
- bring your own things
- be supported in your hobbies, interests and activities.
- It's somewhere safe and supportive for you to stay at the times that suit you, whether it's for a few hours during the day or evening, overnight, for a weekend or even longer.

When staying with your hosts you would become part of the local community and always be sure of having company and opportunities to make new friends, while keeping your own independence.

Shared Lives is regulated by the Care Quality Commission. We always make sure you're happy with your chosen host family before you start, and we check regularly to make sure everything is all right.

**Available:-** Long term (24/7); Short term – respite, overnight stays, weekends, weeks etc.

Day service – Up to 5 hours of support, anytime of day, evening weekend. Set days and number of allocated days. Service runs throughout the year with no exceptions.

**Eligibility criteria:-** Need to be eligible for case/care management input and assessment to determine if the person is appropriate for the service, e.g. service not always appropriate for people who are challenging or wakeful during the night, who cannot be managed with telecare service. Must be aged 17½ or over.

**Referral:-** Self-referrals accepted but person must have a social care assessment and identified need to access the service.

**Further information:-** Read our [easy read Shared Lives user guide (PDF, 642.5 KB)](http://knet/Change/Pages/Adults-Shared-Lives.aspx) for more information.

### Supporting Independence Service

The Service is a 24 hour, seven days a week Service. It takes into account the Service User's preferences and aspirations and puts them at the centre of their care support process by identifying their needs. Service Users may then make choices about how and when they are supported to live their lives. This approach gives eligible Service Users more freedom, choice and control over the type of care and support that they receive.

The Service is purchased for a single Service User on a one to one basis or for two or more Service Users on a shared Service basis. In either case the Service is delivered in the home of the Service User or within the community, as required.

**Available:-** The Service is a 24 hour, seven days a week Service as required to meet the individual's assessed needs.
Eligibility criteria:- Social Care Health and Wellbeing Staff complete a needs assessment to identify eligible social care needs. The people who are able to access this service will be:

- Adults or Children assessed by Case Management as being eligible for Social Care
- From all needs and age groups including Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Physical Disabilities, those with Mental Health problems, Older People, and People with Dementia.
- It should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list. This will also include the transition of children to adulthood.
- Ordinarily resident and living in Kent

Referral:- The SIS contract can only be referred to by Care Managers through the Access to Resources Team following the purchasing protocol.


Support, information and advice for carers

There is a range of support available for people who are carers. Details of the types of support available are listed below.

Carers are also entitled to request a Carers Assessment which is an assessment to help identify the support you need.

The Adult Autism team can arrange for a Carers Assessment to be carried out if this is required or you can contact the local carer’s organisation. Further details on carer’s assessments can be seen on the website below.


Carers Support - Ashford

Carers Support provides Carers Assessments and Support services for anyone, 18 years or over, who find themselves in a caring role. We provide Information, advice and guidance, practical and emotional support. The organisation was registered as a charity in 1994, to support adult carers in the Ashford and Shepway districts. In 2013 we were commissioned by KCC, under the East Kent Carers Consortium to provide Carers Assessments and Support services across Ashford, Shepway and Swale.
Available: 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Closed for bank holidays and Christmas through to New Year.

Eligibility Criteria: They must be 18 years or over (although our Young Adult Carers Team also support 16 year olds moving from Young Carers into adult services. The client must have a caring role for an adult.

Referral: Self-referrals accepted by phone

Further information: www.carers-ashford.org.uk

Carers Support - Canterbury, Dover and Thanet

Information, Support and Assessment for Carers (those who care for a relative or friend). Registered charity providing free support and information to Carers: A listening ear, information about and help to apply for benefits, drop in and outreach services, groups/activities/events, training, Carer’s Assessments and the Kent Carers Emergency Card.

Available: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 8:30 – 6.00pm, Tues & Thursday 9am to 5.00 pm

Eligibility Criteria: Those 16 or over caring for a relative or friend aged over 18 can access our services which are free.

Referral: Carers can contact us directly or be referred by a professional

Further information: http://www.carers-supportcdt.org.uk/

Involve Carers - Maidstone and Malling

Service Commissioned by KCC to provide a Carers Assessment and Support Service to Adult Carers living in the Maidstone and Malling area. Carers are people who look after a family member, partner or friend who needs support because of an illness, condition, disability, addiction or frailty.

The service provides; advice, information, and guidance, emotional support, connections with other Carers, health and well-being activities, a Carers' Forum, regular newsletters, a ‘Keeping in Touch’ service for isolated Carers, a free Caring with Confidence Course, a free Kent Carers Emergency Card Scheme, and Statutory Carers Assessments.

In addition, for eligible Carers, there is a brokerage service for alternative care to assist when the Carer’s health is being affected by their caring role, and a brokerage service to provide additional support for Carers for up to 2 weeks following discharge from hospital.
Available: Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm. In response to need, flexibility for appointments outside of usual working hours can be arranged.

Eligibility criteria: Any adult living in the Maidstone and Malling area who has a caring role for another adult can access the service. Young Carers who are at transition [16,17 and 18yrs] can also be supported.

Parent Carers who support a young person receiving a transition service can also be supported.

Referral: Referrals from all sources welcomed including self-referrals – the only proviso to accepting a referral from a third party is that the Carer must be both aware of, and in agreement with, the referral

Further information: www.involvekent.org.uk
Further support, information and advice

A wide range of early intervention support and support for adults diagnosed or undiagnosed is available across the County from a range of private, local authority, health and voluntary agency providers. This information is available on Kent.gov.uk and within the Local Offer.

The different types of support have been categorised below. Copy and paste the relevant website address into your web browser to get further details.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support category</th>
<th>Website link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities and events</td>
<td><a href="http://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?localofferechannel=0">http://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?localofferechannel=0</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice and support</td>
<td><a href="http://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?localofferechannel=0">http://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?localofferechannel=0</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respite care and short breaks</td>
<td><a href="http://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?localofferechannel=0">http://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/results.page?localofferechannel=0</a></td>
</tr>
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<td>Health and wellbeing</td>
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**Autism Pathway - Conclusion**

This document is intended to act as an initial guide to provision in Kent and is focused on adults aged 18 years and over with high functioning ASC.

Further guidance on the pathway for children and young people in transition is provided in the KCC Autism Pathway for Children and Young People.