NHS
Hampshire and Isle of Wight

ADHD and Autism Single Point of Access – Right to Choose referrals and provider selection

Following the introduction of the All-Age Autism and ADHD Single Point of Access (SPoA), we would like to clarify the referral process where a patient wishes to exercise their Right to Choose (RTC).

We recognise that previous communications may have caused some confusion about the role of the SPoA in Right to Choose referrals and apologise for any uncertainty. The SPoA does not recommend, select or identify providers on behalf of patients. If a patient wishes to use their Right to Choose, their preferred provider must be identified and recorded on the referral before it is submitted to the SPoA.

We are receiving a number of referrals where Right to Choose has been selected, but no preferred provider has been identified. The SPoA does not select a Right to Choose provider on behalf of the patient. Therefore:

- where a patient wishes to exercise their Right to Choose, the patient's chosen provider must be clearly identified on the referral form;
- referrals indicating Right to Choose without a named provider will need to be returned to the referrer so that the patient's choice can be confirmed; and
- patients continue to have the right to choose an eligible provider where the relevant legal requirements for patient choice apply.

Important: Choosing a provider based on waiting times

When discussing options with patients, it is important that Right to Choose is not presented as a route that will necessarily result in faster access to assessment.
The ICB's commissioning approach is intended to support greater consistency in access across locally commissioned and Right to Choose provision. Waiting times can vary between providers and over time, and choosing a Right to Choose provider does not in itself guarantee that a patient will be assessed sooner than through a locally commissioned service.

Patients should therefore be supported to make an informed choice of provider based on the factors that are important to them, rather than being directed towards Right to Choose solely on the assumption that it represents a faster pathway.

This does not restrict or remove an individual's legal Right to Choose. The purpose is to ensure patients understand their options and do not make a provider choice based on an assumption about comparative waiting times that may not reflect the position when their referral is processed. National guidance confirms both a patient's right to make relevant choices about NHS care and their right to information to support those choices.

Action for Primary Care:

Please ensure that, before submitting a referral to the SPoA, any patient requesting Right to Choose has identified their preferred eligible provider and that this is recorded clearly on the referral form.

In addition, please ensure patients understand that the SPoA cannot select, recommend or identify a Right to Choose provider on their behalf, and that provider choice must be confirmed before referral submission.