Support for Adults with Asperger’s Syndrome and High Functioning Autism (P33)

Photo: English Riviera Tourist Board

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About this information sheet

This is one of a series of regularly updated local information sheets that aim to meet the most common information needs of people with disabilities and carers in Torbay.

Where possible, we try to keep our information up to date. However, we cannot guarantee that all of our information is constantly up to date - details change often and there may be changes to services of which we are not aware. If you know of a change to any of the services listed please advise us of this so that we can amend the details.

The information should be used as a guide only, as it may not cover all the organisations that can help with your needs. Torbay Disability Information Service (part of Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust) cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information or the quality of service provided by the organisations. No liability can be accepted for loss, damage, or injury arising out of any contract made by a private individual with any of the organisations listed.

Details change often, so please make sure you are using the current edition. Latest copies of the sheets are published on the following website page:

www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/disinfosheets

If you do not have Internet access, you can ask for single copies from our office.

A full list of our other information sheet titles can be found at the end of this sheet.

Information can be made available in other formats and languages. Please let us know what your needs are.

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Introduction

What does this Information Sheet cover?
This information sheet covers support for adults (over 16) with high functioning autism and Asperger’s syndrome. It focuses on local support but also includes information about national support, such as national helplines and publications. It is intended to act as a basic guide and overview of sources of support available to get you started in the right direction when looking for services that may be able to help you.

Who will find this Information Sheet useful?
You will find this sheet useful if you are someone over 16:
• with Asperger’s syndrome or high functioning autism
• caring for someone with Asperger’s syndrome or high functioning autism
• working with people who have Asperger’s syndrome or high functioning autism

How do I use this Information Sheet?
This information sheet provides details about local and national support services and also signposts you to further sources of information. Please use it as a basic guide and contact services that are listed direct for support or further information.

Symbols
For ease of reading, the sheet includes the symbols below:
 = telephone
 = website
 = email
The Autism Act

There has historically been very little support for adults with Asperger’s syndrome and high functioning autism. However, since the introduction of the **Autism Act** in November 2009 and the ‘**Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives’ strategy** in March 2010, local authorities have a duty to provide appropriate support and services for people with autism (including Asperger’s syndrome). These expectations are reinforced by the ‘**Think Autism’ strategy’, introduced in 2014.

Some of the key aspects of the ‘**Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives’ strategy’ are improved training of frontline professionals in autism, the recommendation to develop local autism teams and actions for improving access to diagnosis.

The 2014 ‘**Think Autism’ Strategy’ is an update to the 2010 strategy, reinforcing the expectations and actions for local authorities and local NHS bodies that were set out in this. There are three new key proposals in this strategy, which are in addition to the existing duties of the 2010 strategy and are expected to make a big difference to the lives, services and support for adult with autism over the next few years. These are:

1. Think Autism community awareness projects will be established in local communities and there will be pledges/awards for local organisations to work towards
2. Autism Innovation Fund – funding for projects that promote innovative local services and projects, particularly for lower-level preventative support
3. Better data collection and more joined up advice and information services, including a new way of social care staff recording someone’s condition as autism, and a commitment to make it easier for people with autism to find information online about how their local authorities are performing.

The government has allocated £4.5 million towards the Autism Innovation Fund and autism aware communities programme. This funding has been announced for one year. There are some significant developments, including:

**Data recording:**
- Local authorities need to report on data about people with autism for the first time.

**Training and awareness:**
- The Royal College of GPs has made autism a priority for training and awareness over the next three years.
- Autism awareness training will be made available to all mainstream healthcare professionals.
- New autism training will hopefully be rolled out to all Disability Employment Advisers at Jobcentres.
In March 2015 the Government published new statutory guidance, which replaced the existing guidance from 2010. It clearly states that local authorities and the NHS:

- should provide autism awareness training for all staff
- must provide specialist autism training for key staff, such as GPs and community care assessors
- cannot refuse a community care assessment for adults with autism based solely on IQ
- must appoint an autism lead in their area
- have to develop a clear pathway to diagnosis and assessment for adults with autism
- need to commission services based on adequate population data.

The 2015 guidance includes much more information than the 2010 version, and there are five new chapters on:

- preventative support and safeguarding
- reasonable adjustments and equality
- supporting people with autism and complex needs
- employment
- criminal justice.

Some of the duties have been strengthened to things that local authorities and NHS bodies ‘must’ do. This is because new duties have been brought in by other laws (particularly the Care Act 2014). The new guidance gives more information about how these new duties can improve the lives of people with autism. This is especially true of duties around training, which now give much clearer guidance on which professionals should have what levels of training.

For further details about the Autism Act and adult autism strategies and guidance, including links to Department of Health documents, please visit the National Autistic Society website at: [www.autism.org.uk/autismstrategy](http://www.autism.org.uk/autismstrategy)

The Care Act 2014

Please be aware that the rules about getting and paying for social care started to change with the introduction of the Care Act in April 2015. To find out more about the Care Act and how it may affect you, please refer to the following pages on our Trust’s website: [www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/adult-social-care](http://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/adult-social-care) - these include a link to Independent Age’s information about getting help with your care needs. You can also call us on 0300 456 8373 to request further information.
Asperger’s Syndrome and High Functioning Autism

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability, and may also be referred to as autism spectrum disorder or an ASD.

This information sheet concentrates on Asperger’s syndrome and high functioning autism or high functioning Asperger’s syndrome, which are forms of autism.

The terms high functioning autism and Asperger’s syndrome are sometimes used interchangeably, but the main difference between the two is thought to be in language development: people with Asperger’s syndrome will generally not have had delayed language development when younger. To find out more about this, see information provided by specialist organisations, such as the National Autistic Society (page 14) and the Autism Research Centre (page 13).

Semantic pragmatic disorder, which affects the use of language in a social context, is also sometimes considered to be part of the autism spectrum.

What are the symptoms?
The three main areas of difficulty are:

- **Difficulty with social communication**
  People with autism have difficulties with both verbal and non-verbal language. Many have a very literal understanding of language, taking notice only of the words used by someone and not always picking up on facial expressions, tone of voice, jokes, etc.

  Some people with autism may not speak or have limited speech. In this case, they may prefer to use sign language or visual symbols. Others have good language skills, but may still find it hard to converse, possibly repeating what the other person has said or talking at length about their own interests.

- **Difficulty with social interaction**
  People with autism often have difficulty recognising or understanding other people’s emotions and feelings, and expressing their own, which can make social interaction difficult.

  Some examples of difficulty with social interaction are standing too close to other people, starting an inappropriate subject of conversation, appearing to be insensitive to how other people are feeling or preferring to spend time alone rather than in the company of other people.
• **Difficulty with social imagination**
  Social imagination is not the same as imagination. It enables people to understand and predict other people’s behaviour, make sense of abstract ideas and imagine situations outside of their immediate daily routine.

  Difficulties with social imagination mean that people with autism find it hard to: understand other people’s thoughts, feelings and actions; predict what could happen next; understand the concept of danger; cope in new or unfamiliar situations; prepare for change and plan for the future.

The above three areas of difficulty are known as the ‘triad of impairments’ and more detail about these can be found on the National Autistic Society website at [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

As well as the above, people with autism may also have other related characteristics, such as love of routines, sensory sensitivity and special interests.

Conditions associated with autism include ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder), Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Tourette syndrome, Fetal anti-convulsant syndrome (FACS), Hyperlexia, Pathological demand avoidance syndrome (PDA) and learning disabilities. Sections on ADHD, Dyslexia and Dyspraxia are included in this information sheet, but for further information about these or any of the other related conditions, see the National Autistic Society website at [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

**How is a diagnosis made?**
It is important to get an assessment and diagnosis of autistic spectrum conditions as early as possible. However, it is only in recent years that autistic spectrum conditions have become more widely recognised, and therefore many people do not realise that they may have an autistic spectrum condition until they are adults. Getting a diagnosis of high functioning autism or Asperger’s syndrome as an adult can be difficult, especially as these conditions aren’t always easily recognised. There are two routes to diagnosis: the NHS route and the private route.

**Diagnosis by the NHS**
Locally, the **Devon Adult Autism and ADHD Service** provides a diagnostic and advisory role for the assessment of high functioning autism/Asperger’s disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) for adults. Ask your GP to refer you to this service – it can be contacted at 2nd Floor, Forde House, Park Five, Harrier Way, Exeter EX2 7HU, telephone (01392) 674250, email dpn-tr.asc@nhs.net Further details and referral forms are available on the Devon Partnership Trust website at [www.devonpartnership.nhs.uk](http://www.devonpartnership.nhs.uk)
The Private Route to Diagnosis
The private route often involves the person referring themselves to the diagnostic service. The costs of assessment range from approximately £200 to over £1,000. The NAS Autism Services Directory, at www.autism.org.uk/directory has details of professionals all over the UK who have autism expertise. It’s important to note, though, that local service providers, such as social services, may not always accept private diagnoses and will insist upon you having an NHS diagnosis too.

Benefits of Diagnosis
Diagnosis in adulthood has advantages and disadvantages, and some adults may prefer not to ask for a formal diagnosis. However, for those who do get a diagnosis, there are a number of benefits, including the following:

- **Protection under the Equality Act 2010 (which replaced the Disability Discrimination Act 1995) from discrimination in employment.** Employers are legally bound to make reasonable adjustments to the person’s work to enable the person to be successful in their role.

- **Assessment and Support from local health and social care services** (for details about this, see 'Local NHS Care Assessment and Support', page 10).

- **Claiming Personal Independence Payment (PIP)** PIP replaced Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in April 2013 (June locally) and can be applied for without a diagnosis, but an adult’s application for this benefit would be much stronger with a clear diagnosis. An award of PIP is heavily dependant on how the applicant is affected by their condition. Seek specialist advice by contacting Torbay Disability Information Service on 0300 456 8373.

- **Claiming other benefits, including Employment and Support Allowance** A diagnosis provides a much stronger chance of meeting the criteria for other benefits, such as Employment and Support Allowance. Seek specialist advice by contacting Torbay Disability Information Service on 0300 456 8373.

- **Claiming Disabled Students’ Allowance** Students with disabilities can claim Disabled Students’ Allowances. A diagnosis would be needed in order to access this financial support.

- **Access to services for people with high functioning autism and Asperger’s syndrome** A diagnosis of autism or Asperger’s syndrome makes it easier to access support services, such as educational support (see pp.27-29), supported living schemes, (see pp.34-35) support in employment (see pp.30-33) and/or social groups (see p.11).
• **Understanding yourself**
  A diagnosis of high functioning autism or Asperger’s syndrome will explain difficulties that you have had, which so far have been unexplained, or may have been misdiagnosed as mental health problems.

• **Getting the understanding of others**
  If people close to you understand the reason for your difficulties it is much easier for them to empathise with your position.

**Local NHS Needs Assessment and Support**
Support from health and social care services is not dependent on diagnosis as help is needs-based, but a diagnosis can strengthen an adult’s claim. On receiving a diagnosis of Asperger’s syndrome or high functioning autism, adults should expect to be offered a free needs assessment. Carers are also entitled to a carer’s assessment. If the condition is severe enough it may fall within the national eligibility criteria (this was previously local criteria but changed with the introduction of the Care Act in April 2015) so that financial help towards support may be obtained.

**Who to contact for a needs assessment**
If you have Asperger’s syndrome or high functioning autism, and this is impacting on your ability to manage day to day living, you can contact Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust Customer Contact Centre on (01803) 219700 and ask to speak to someone in your Care Trust zone about a needs assessment.

**What treatment is available?**
There is currently no cure for high functioning autism or Asperger’s Syndrome, but there are many ways that people with these forms of autism can get help and support to manage their condition, often called ‘interventions’.

Because high functioning autism and Asperger’s Syndrome differs from person to person, the type of support needed will depend on the individual’s own circumstances. It will also depend on what support is available in the area where they live. There are a large number of interventions available and it is important to find out as much as possible about any particular approach before using it, especially as not all approaches have been evaluated on a long-term basis.

Medicines cannot be used to treat high functioning autism or Asperger’s syndrome. However, they may be used to control some of the additional symptoms, such as hyperactivity or obsessive behaviour. Some medicines that are used to treat the additional symptoms of Asperger’s syndrome or high functioning autism can cause side effects, so your GP will only prescribe them if the benefits outweigh the risks of taking them.
Local Support
As newly recognised conditions, support for Asperger’s syndrome and high functioning autism will vary from area to area. In Torbay and Devon areas, the following support is available.

Different Together (see also page 13)
http://www.different-together.co.uk

Holds meetings in the South West for partners of people affected by Asperger’s Syndrome. For further details, please contact Different Together via the website.

Dimensions for Autism (DFA)
Contacts:
Trish Darke: trishdarke.dimensionsforautism@gmail.com
Matt Grimsey: mglion82@yahoo.co.uk
Heidi Slatter (for Torbay group): advocate4autism@outlook.com
http://www.dimensionsforautism.life

NB. Due to coronavirus, group meetings at venues are suspended but are taking place online at the usual times – contact Trish Darke or visit the website for further details.

Social and support groups for autistic adults living in Devon or Torbay who don’t have a learning disability, including adults who have Asperger’s Syndrome. No referral is required. If you are interested in going along to a group meeting and have had (or are waiting for) an assessment please contact Trish to find out more or to be added to the DFA mailing list. NB. Two appointments per month are available for autistic adults and/or their carers to talk to Trish on the phone or online. If you don’t have access to email, please call the Disability Information Service for alternative contact details.

Torbay
Venue: Kinda Café, Preston Sands Hotel, Marine Parade, Paignton STQ3 2NU
Times: Last Monday of each month, 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm.

Devon
Venues:
The Burdett Building, Wolborough Street, Newton Abbot TQ12 1LJ
Exeter Phoenix, Bradninch Place, Gandy Street, Exeter EX4 3LS
Times: Thursdays 2.30 pm - 4.30 pm

The group meets at various venues for social events/activities on the second Thursday of the month. Meetings on other Thursdays are held in Newton Abbot.

New DFA groups in Exeter include an Exeter University group, a ladies’ group and an Intercom Trust group. Contact Trish Darke for further information.
Step One Enabling Services
Beaufort House, 51 New North Road, Exeter  EX4 4EP
☎ 07799 306577 (answerphone service available)
🌐 www.steponecharity.co.uk
✉️ enbling@steponecharity.co.uk (for further information)

Step One (formerly Community Care Trust (South Devon) Ltd. and St Loyes Foundation) provides individually-tailored support for people with autism spectrum conditions to gain independent living skills and achieve their aspirations. Referrals and self-referrals are accepted from people who are living in Devon (not including Torbay) who are assessed to have an autism spectrum condition or waiting for an assessment.

Vocal Independent Advocacy
Room DS034, Dartington Space, Dartington Hall, Dartington, Totnes TQ9 6EN
☎ (01803) 868300
🌐 www.vocaladvocacy.org.uk  ✉️ vocaladvocacy@btconnect.com

Vocal provides a free, independent advocacy service for adults with a learning disability or communication difficulty living in South and West Devon and Torbay. Subject to funding being in place, Vocal is able to provide advocacy for people who are not currently provided for under its current commissioning arrangements. Referrals may be via self, family, friends, public and voluntary organisations.
National Support and Further Information
The following organisations provide services and support to adults with Asperger’s syndrome and high functioning autism.

The Dyscovery Centre is independent, but it is included in the list below because it provides useful information. For other private centres, please see the NAS Autism Services Directory at www.autism.org.uk/services/autism-services-directory.aspx

Asperger’s Syndrome Foundation
C/o Littlestone Golding, Eden House, Reynolds Road, Beaconsfield HP9 2FL
✉ www.aspergerfoundation.org.uk ☎ info@aspergerfoundation.org.uk
NB. As this is a small charity, enquiries must be made by email or post only.

Provides support and services for adults and children who have Asperger’s syndrome. It provides a range of information sheets for adults, including ‘Diagnosis of Asperger’s Syndrome’, ‘Sensory Issues’, ‘Relationships’ and ‘Issues for Partners of Adults with Asperger’s Syndrome’. It also provides information sheets for adolescents and young adults with Asperger’s syndrome, including ‘Bullying’, ‘Motor Clumsiness’ and ‘University’.

Autism Research Centre
University of Cambridge Department of Psychiatry, Douglas House, 18b Trumpington Road, Cambridge CB2 8AH
☎ (01223) 603146
✉ www.autismresearchcentre.com ☎ admin@autismresearchcentre.com

The Autism Research Centre is part of the School of Clinical Medicine in the Department of Psychiatry within Cambridge University and is partnered with the Autism Research Trust, the National Autistic Society and the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Mental Health Foundation NHS Trust. The Centre seeks to understand the biomedical causes of autism spectrum conditions and to develop new and validated methods for assessment and intervention.

Different Together
✉ www.different-together.co.uk

Different Together is ‘a safe, supportive and understanding community for the partners of people affected by Asperger’s Syndrome’. It provides a forum, background stories, a range of advice and information, useful resources and opportunities to meet up to provide mutual support for the partners of those affected by Asperger’s Syndrome (there are currently meetings in the South West area – please contact Different Together via the website to find out more).
The Dyscovery Centre
Innovation House, University of South Wales
William Price Business Park, Treforest, Pontypridd CF37 1DL
☎ (01443) 654799
✉ http://dyscovery.southwales.ac.uk
dyscovery.centre@southwales.ac.uk

The Dyscovery Centre is an independent organisation that provides specialist services to children and adults with, or suspected of having, a developmental disorder or learning difficulty. It has an interdisciplinary team of health and educational professionals who provide assessments and support tailored to the needs of the individual. It also undertakes research in developmental disorders – for further details about this, visit http://dyscovery.research.southwales.ac.uk

Jessica Kingsley Publishers
73 Collier Street, London N1 9BE
☎ 020 7833 2307
✉ www.jkp.com  hello@jkp.com

Publishes a wide range of titles on autism and Asperger’s syndrome. The books are published for people with autism and Asperger’s syndrome themselves, as well as for their families, carers and the people who work with them. Titles include ‘The Complete Guide to Asperger’s Syndrome’ (Tony Attwood).

National Autistic Society
393 City Road, London EC1V 1NG
☎ Helpline: 0808 800 4104 (Monday to Friday 10.00 am - 3.00 pm)
✉ www.autism.org.uk

The UK’s leading charity for people affected by autism. The Society provides information, advice, advocacy, training and support for individuals and their families. It has a helpline, a website which provides a wealth of information and advice about autism and an Autism Services Directory.
Related Conditions

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in Adults
Experts used to believe children would grow out of ADHD by the time they were adults. In recent years, it's been recognised that ADHD can continue on into adulthood. In fact, research suggests that up to 60 per cent of child sufferers retain their symptoms into adulthood.

This relatively recent acceptance of adult ADHD means that many adults remain undiagnosed and aren't aware that their symptoms and behaviours are actually part of an identifiable condition.

What are the symptoms of adult ADHD?
Difficulties experienced by people with ADHD include:

- Concentration problems
- Forgetfulness and poor short-term memory
- Lack of organisation
- Problems with creating and maintaining routines
- Lack of self-discipline
- Impulsive behaviour
- Depression
- Low self-esteem
- Restless mind
- Restlessness
- Poor time-management
- Impatience and frustration
- Poor social skills and making inappropriate remarks
- Feelings of underachievement

How is a diagnosis made?
Between 2 and 4 per cent of adults in the UK may have ADHD, the majority of whom have not been diagnosed

To get a diagnosis of ADHD, you need to first visit your GP, and this may then be followed up by appointments with a psychiatrist or other specialist.

Diagnosis by the NHS
Locally, the Devon Adult Autism and ADHD Service provides a diagnostic and advisory role for the assessment of high functioning autism/Asperger’s disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) for adults. Ask your GP to refer you to this service – it can be contacted at 2nd Floor, Forde House, Park Five, Harrier Way,
Exeter  EX2 7HU, telephone (01392) 674250. Further details and referral forms are available on the Devon Partnership Trust website at [www.devonpartnership.nhs.uk](http://www.devonpartnership.nhs.uk)

To meet existing diagnostic criteria, your symptoms need to have been present since childhood and ongoing up to the present time. Obviously, this is more difficult to establish in adults, especially if parents aren't available to recall childhood behaviour.

To evaluate an adult who may be suffering from ADHD, doctors look at a range of factors, including:

- Scores on psychological tests
- Social and emotional functioning
- Details of leisure activities
- Employment history
- Ability to handle personal finances
- Driving records
- Details of past or current criminal behaviour
- Whether illicit substances have been used.

**What treatment is available?**

Treatment focuses on helping behaviour, emotional problems and social difficulties caused by ADHD. The main treatments for adult ADHD are:

- Behavioural therapy, eg. making lists and breaking down tasks
- Psychotherapy – this helps to treat emotional disturbances, and can be on a one-to-one basis with a professional or in a group.
- Medication – this is usually used alongside other therapies. The most common medication for adults is stimulants, related to amphetamines.

**Support and Further Information for Adults with ADHD**

**AADD-UK**

[www.aadduk.org](http://www.aadduk.org) via website

AADD-UK is a small charity that is working to raise the profile of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in adults. It runs several affiliated support groups as well as an interactive website and online community. The website provides information on symptoms, diagnosis and treatment, specialists, support and coaches as well as a Forum and list of useful websites and publications.

**ADDandADHD**

[www.addandadhd.co.uk](http://www.addandadhd.co.uk) via website

Website provides comprehensive advice on ADHD, including a section about ADHD in adults which includes advice about symptoms, diagnosis and managing the condition.
Adders

Website that promotes awareness of ADHD and provides a range of information, including information about books and resources, support groups, events, news and research.

ADDISS (The National Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Support Service)

Charity that provides information, training and support for anyone who is affected by ADHD and its related learning and behavioural difficulties. The charity holds a 3-day national conference each year and also has a book store providing a large range of books and DVDs covering all aspects of ADHD and related conditions.

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

NICE is an independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on promoting good health and preventing and treating ill health. It produces and publishes guidelines on numerous conditions, including ADHD. NICE Clinical Guideline 72 covers diagnosis and the care, treatment and support that children, young people and adults with ADHD should be offered and how families and carers can support people with ADHD.

Royal College of Psychiatrists

Publishes a range of information leaflets, including ‘Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in Adults’, which gives information and advice about diagnosis, causes, treatments, support and self-help, as well as useful links and further reading. Leaflets are available on the website or can be ordered from the Leaflets Department.
Dyslexia

Dyslexia is a specific lifelong learning difficulty associated with autism, which mainly affects the development of literacy and language related skills.

Dyslexia is characterised by difficulties with phonological processing, rapid naming, working memory, processing speed, and the automatic development of skills that may not match up to an individual’s other cognitive abilities.

What are the symptoms of Dyslexia?
Difficulties experienced by people with dyslexia include:
- Reading hesitantly or misreading
- Difficulty with sequences, eg. getting dates in order
- Poor organisation or time management
- Difficulty organising thoughts clearly
- Erratic spelling

Possible strengths are:
- Innovative thinking
- Excellent trouble shooting
- Intuitive problem solving
- Creative and lateral thinking

How is a diagnosis made?
There is an Adult Dyslexia Checklist on the British Dyslexia Association website at www.bdadyslexia.org.uk. This would not give enough information for a diagnostic assessment but is a useful tool for better self understanding and a pointer towards future assessment needs. Once you have completed the Checklist, you might consider a screening test for dyslexia as this is in more in-depth and can identify any weak areas you may have and also your strengths. Some specialist dyslexia teachers offer screening tests. If you are studying, visit the learning support unit at your college, and they may recommend a specialist teacher. Screening tests may take up to an hour. Costs vary, so find out in advance what the charge may be.

Dyslexia screening can often be conducted online, and some carry a small cost (from £20 - £50). Online screening tests are offered by various dyslexia organisations, including the British Dyslexia Association and the Dyslexia Association (mainly covers the East Midlands but anyone can access their online screening test). Free online tests are also available on other websites, including a free online screening test on www.beatingdyslexia.com
Following a screening test, you may decide to have an assessment. Adult assessments can be carried out by Chartered Psychologists specialising in adult dyslexia – contact the BDA (page 21) for further information. They may also be done by specialist dyslexia teachers with a Practising Certificate – refer to Patoss (page 22).

A GP can refer you to a chartered clinical psychologist if you consider your dyslexia is affecting your health, e.g. causing undue stress. However, dyslexia assessments are not normally funded by the NHS.

If dyslexia is an issue at work or when seeking a job, consult the Disability Employment Adviser at your local Job Centre (see page 31). He or she will advise you about any support available, and may also make a referral to a chartered occupational psychologist for an assessment. If you are a student, some universities and colleges may fund dyslexia assessments. College students, especially if they are applying for Disabled Students Allowance, may ask to be referred to a chartered educational psychologist, or a suitably qualified specialist teacher.

An assessment can take 3 to 4 hours, and the assessor will provide you with a report and some feedback about your strengths and weaknesses. Ask for the report to be written with recommendations for the workplace if necessary. Please note that if you are unable to get funding for a dyslexia assessment, a private assessment is likely to cost between £300 and £500 and can cost up to £1,000.

What treatment is available?
There are no medications to treat dyslexia. A person with dyslexia can be helped with a tailor-made treatment programme once the strengths and weaknesses of their learning ability have been identified via an assessment. The professional who carried out the assessment will be able to point you in the direction of specialist teachers and tutors who will be able to draw up learning and exercises related to your particular dyslexia problems. The length of treatment depends on the severity of your dyslexia.

There are many training programmes for those who have problems with reading and writing as a result of dyslexia or other associated learning problems, such as improving your numeracy skills. As well as specialised training programmes, you can also take advantage of some pretty basic and other modern technologies to enable you to cope better with your dyslexia in adulthood, e.g. online dairy planners, calculators, electronic organisers, individuali, memory telephones and voice activated computers with audio typing software.

As well as specialist teaching, there are a number of private centres offering specialist alternative therapy treatments for dyslexia, such as the David Mulhall Centre. However, the British Dyslexia Association urges caution in the use of alternative therapies to treat dyslexia.
Local Support

Read Easy Torbay
Telephone: Jane Macey, 07593 223600
Website: www.readeasy.org.uk  Email: jane@readeasy.org.uk

Read Easy is a flexible, confidential one-to-one scheme for any adult who either can’t read or who lacks confidence with reading. The scheme will provide all those who want to learn to read with a volunteer to help them, special books to teach them, a choice of quiet, discreet places to meet and a time to suit both the coach and the learner.

Read Easy coaches and their readers use the ‘Turning Pages’ manuals, a set of five friendly, structured manuals designed to help adults to learn to read, including those with dyslexia. Reading sessions last half an hour and take place twice a week at approved venues in Brixham, Paignton or Torquay. There is no pressure to complete the course in any particular time – everyone can work at their own pace without feeling rushed.

South Devon Dyslexia Association
A Saturday morning Dyslexia workshop for children and young students aged 7-17 who have literacy difficulties. The workshop has been held at the Courtenay Centre, Newton Abbot, since the 1970’s and was founded by the late Trevor Ford, an Honorary Fellow of the British Dyslexia Association.

At the workshop, each child is able to adapt to a way of learning that suits them. Much of their work is done in an exercise book, which can then be reinforced using the Association’s specially designed computer programme Dyspell, if they are happy to do so. The classes last for one hour and include the teaching of techniques and strategies as well as continuous encouragement. For further information or to book a diagnostic assessment email dyslexiatuition@aol.co.uk

Meeting venue: The Courtenay Centre, Kingsteignton Road, Newton Abbot
Times: Saturday mornings – contact Association for current times.
☎ (01803) 853190
✉ dyslexiatuition@aol.co.uk
National Support and Further Information for Adults with Dyslexia

BeatingDyslexia.com

A free dyslexia help website that is run by people who are dyslexic. The website offers advice and information to help people with dyslexia to beat their literacy problems and get the most out of life. It includes a range of tips and techniques for overcoming difficulties associated with dyslexia as well as an online dyslexia text.

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA)
Unit 6a, Bracknell Beeches, Old Bracknell Lane, Bracknell  RG12 7BW
☎ National Helpline, 0333 405 4567 (Tuesday, 10.00 am – 1.00 pm, Wednesday and Thursday 10.00 am – 3.00 pm)
✉ www.bdadyslexia.org.uk  ✉ helpline@bdadyslexia.org.uk

Provides a helpline, giving free and confidential advice and information to people of any age who are affected by dyslexia. There is also a lot of useful information on the British Dyslexia Association website, including an adult dyslexia checklist, how to get a full assessment for dyslexia, help in the workplace, help in finding a job and help available to dyslexics when taking a driving test.

The Dyslexia-SpLD Trust
C/o Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre, Arkell Lane, Frensham, Farnham, Surrey  GU10 3BL
☎ (01344) 381564
✉ www.thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk  ✉ info@thedyslexia-spldtrust.org.uk

A consortium of organisations involved in promoting improved practice and outcomes for individuals with dyslexia and specific learning disabilities (SpLDs). The organisations which form the Dyslexia-SpLD Trust include Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre, Patoss, Springboard for Children and Xtraordinary People.

Hands-Free Computing
The Courtyard, Holmstead Farm, Staplefield Road, Cuckfield, West Sussex RH17 5JF
☎ 0845 899 0880
✉ www.hands-free.co.uk  ✉ enquiries@hands-free.co.uk

Provides workplace IT assessments for people with dyslexia.
Helen Arkell Dyslexia Centre
Arkell Lane, Frensham, Farnham, Surrey GU10 3BL
☎ (01252) 792400
✉ www.helenarkell.org.uk ➤ enquiries@arkellcentre.org.uk

Centre that specialises in providing assessments and support for people with dyslexia of all ages. The Centre also provides a range of courses for those interested in acquiring the skills needed to work with dyslexic people.

Patoss
Evesham College, Davies Road, Evesham, Worcestershire WR11 1LP
☎ (01386) 712650
✉ www.patoss-dyslexia.org ➤ info@patoss-dyslexia.org

Professional association of teachers of students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), for all those concerned with the teaching and support of pupils with SpLD (including dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and ADHD). Patoss provides a range of publications, services and advice, including a Tutor/Assessor index. The index is a list of Patoss members willing to have their names given to those seeking tutors, assessment or advice.
Dyspraxia

Dyspraxia, also known as ‘Developmental Co-ordination Disorder’ (DCD), is a lifelong condition associated with autism, which affects a person’s movement and co-ordination.

What are the symptoms of Dyspraxia?
Difficulties experienced by people with dyspraxia include:
- Limited ability to concentrate
- Difficulty in picking up small objects
- Difficulty with throwing and catching games
- Inability to follow sequential instructions
- Difficulty in dressing or tying shoelaces
- Difficulty in holding a pencil or handwriting or/and using a knife and fork
- Confusion and changing between use of the right and left hand
- Inability to recognise danger
- Tiring easily
- General irritability or limited social skills
- Poor posture and spatial awareness
- Inappropriate verbal responses.

How is a diagnosis made?
If you think that you may have dyspraxia you should consult your GP in the first instance with a view to being referred to an educational or clinical psychologist, occupational therapist, speech therapist or counsellor. It’s advisable to write your symptoms down and take a friend or relation with you for support. You can also refer yourself to a private therapist or doctor.

What treatment is available?
There is no cure for dyspraxia but there are many strategies that can help. For example, an occupational therapist may suggest suitable equipment and strategies to help with household tasks and organisational skills. Speech therapists can help with speech and language problems and also, sometimes, with communication and social skills.

Activities that can help dyspraxia are relaxation exercises, such as yoga or the Alexander Technique; going to the gym to improve muscle strength and co-ordination and activities such as bowling, swimming, rock climbing and walking to improve co-ordination and manual dexterity.
Support and Further Information for Adults with Dyspraxia

The Dyspraxia Foundation
8 West Alley
Hitchin
Herts   SG5 1EG
☎Helpline, (01462) 454986 (Monday to Friday, 9.00 am – 1.00 pm)
✉️ www.dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk
✉️ info@dyspraxiafoundation.org.uk

The Dyspraxia Foundation is a countrywide charity which gives information and advice about dyspraxia to people of all ages affected by the condition and their parents, carers and families. It provides a helpline and a range of information sheets, including ‘Adults with Dyspraxia’, ‘Adult Diagnosis Factsheet’ and ‘Driving with Dyspraxia’, available to download from the website. It also has advice pages on its website for adults with dyspraxia, which include advice about symptoms, assessment and diagnosis, daily life, driving, and work. It also has an Adult Support Group, including an adult Facebook group page, and an online magazine, available to members only.

Books published by the Foundation include:
Living with Dyspraxia – A Guide for Adults, Mary Colley
Dyspraxia: Dyspraxic Adults Surviving in a Non-Dyspraxic World, Janet Taylor and Mary Morris
Caged in Chaos (a practical guide written by a teenager with dyspraxia), Vicky Biggs
Tourette Syndrome

Tourette Syndrome is an inherited neurological condition, which starts in childhood and sometimes continues into adulthood.

What are the symptoms of Tourette Syndrome?
The key feature is tics, involuntary and uncontrollable sounds and movements. In most cases, it is also linked to other behaviours, usually Obsessional Compulsive Disorder and Attention Deficit Disorder. Most people with Tourette Syndrome do not swear uncontrollably (coprolalia).

How is a diagnosis made?
For a diagnosis of Tourette Syndrome, you would need to visit your GP to discuss your concerns and ask for a referral. NB. Normally the Syndrome is not diagnosed until tics have been present for at least 12 months. It is helpful to keep a diary and/or a video of the different noises and movements and any other unusual behaviour, including when they occur, and take these to your GP when you visit them.

Some doctors may use various tests to rule out other conditions that might be confused with Tourette Syndrome such as epilepsy, autism, dystonia and Sydenham’s chorea. Tourette Syndrome can only be diagnosed by observing and evaluating the symptoms. There are rating scales to help with the assessment of tic severity.

For a list of consultants in the UK who are familiar with Tourette Syndrome, contact Tourettes Action (page 26). You can also download a guide to Seeing a Specialist from the Tourettes Action website.

What treatment is available?
There is currently no cure for Tourette Syndrome, although there are medications which can help control the tics when they cause problems. However, these don’t work for everybody, or they may have undesirable side effects (eg. weight gain).

Some types of therapy may assist people with Tourette Syndrome, including psychological therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. Some behaviour therapies can teach the substitution of one tic for another that is more socially acceptable or less painful. There have also been trials in the UK of a procedure called Deep Brain Stimulation in people with extreme cases of Tourette Syndrome, which has reduced instances of tics in some patients, although results so far are mixed. In addition, the use of relaxation techniques can help lower stress levels, which would otherwise make tics worse.
Local and National Support and Further Information for Adults with Tourette Syndrome

Tourettes Action
The Meads Business Centre
19 Kingsmead
Farnborough, Hants GU14 7SR
Helpdesk telephone: 0300 777 8427 (Monday to Friday, 9.00 am – 3.00 pm)
Helpdesk email: help@tourettes-action.org.uk

Tourettes Action works in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and is the leading support and research charity for people with Tourette Syndrome (TS) and their families. It provides a helpline and a large range of information and advice about Tourette Syndrome on its website, including advice about symptoms, causes, diagnoses and managing Tourette Syndrome. Support offered by Tourettes Action includes regional support groups. To find out about Tourettes Action support groups in South West England, or if you would like to set up a group, contact Emma on emma@tourettes-action.org.uk
Educational Support for Adults with Asperger’s Syndrome, High Functioning Autism and Related Conditions

Under the Equality Act 2010 (which replaced the Disability Discrimination Act), education providers have to make reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled people can access education and any related services. The provisions cover people with specific learning difficulties, such as autistic spectrum disorders, dyslexia, dyspraxia and ADHD: education providers must ensure that people with autism are given support to help them to access education on an equal basis to those students who do not have disabilities.

It is recognised that a range of provision needs to be available to provide for a wide spectrum of needs. This fits in with the broader framework of education legislation that makes it clear that young people with special educational needs should receive provision which caters for them as individuals. There is extra support available for students with disabilities, including those with autistic spectrum disorders.

For further information about the Equality Act, please see: http://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance

Support for Students in Further and Higher Education
There is a range of local and national support that covers students with Asperger’s syndrome or high functioning autism in further or higher education.

Local Support
CSW Group (formerly Careers South West)
Bridge House, Sherborne Road, Newton Abbot TQ12 2QX
📞 (01626) 367579
💻 www.cswgroup.co.uk  📧 newtonabbot@cswgroup.co.uk

CSW Group provides impartial careers information, advice and guidance services to help engage its customers in learning and work, raise aspirations, and improve life chances and personal outcomes. The service manages a variety of contracts across the whole of the South West region, which support both young people and adults’ transition between education, training and work, including those with special needs up to the age of 25. Please contact CSW Group to find out more about what services are available.
National Autistic Society Student Support Service (South West England)

Student Support Services, (01278) 760555
www.autism.org.uk swstudent.support@nas.org.uk

The NAS Student Support Service (South West England) is available to anyone in the South West area with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) who is attending further or higher education. Support currently offered consists of:

- **Specialist mentor** to assist with overcoming barriers to learning and develop strategies in areas such as time management and planning, prioritising and structuring workload, organisation, managing change, development of communication, social and interaction skills and managing anxiety.

- **Study assistant** to provide specialist enabling support and reassurance within and around the college environment, including at lectures and seminars, around campus, in exams, on trips, or for induction/Freshers’ Week as required.

The support offered by NAS is flexible and may be increased at times of change or potential stress, such as before and during exams or on field trips. The service is tailored to individual need so it’s advisable that the student themselves, or a representative, contact the service to discuss what support they need and whether the service is suitable.

The Student Support Service is funded by Disabled Students Allowance. This must be in place before the service can be offered unless funding is available from other sources. Students should contact the disability adviser at their place of study for help with applications for funding.

South Devon College – Additional Learning Support Team

Vantage Point, Long Road, Paignton TQ4 7EJ
Libby Richards, (01803) 540373 libby.richards@southdevon.ac.uk
Helpzone, Freephone: 08000 380123
www.southdevon.ac.uk enquiries@southdevon.ac.uk

South Devon College welcomes applications from people with autism spectrum conditions. The College plans and implements initial assessment processes and ‘taster’ days prior to enrolment in order to ensure that the applicant is placed on the most suitable programme of study, according to their individual needs. Once on a course, the student is provided with an appropriate and flexible programme of support – this may include accessing ‘The Lodge’, the specialist provision within the College for students with autism spectrum conditions. For students with dyslexia, support available includes Units of Sound, a structured, multisensory programme written by Dyslexia Action.
National Support

National Careers Service
☎ Helpline, 0800 100 900       Textphone, 08000 968 336 (8.00 am – 10.00 pm, 7 days a week)
✉️ www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk   ☏ via website

The National Careers Service gives advice and information to 13-18 year olds as well as to adults. It provides a helpline and webchat service as well as advice and information on its website, including job profiles, a Skills Health Check and a course directory.

Support for Students in Higher Education

In recent years there have been more university students with conditions such as Asperger’s Syndrome and dyspraxia. There is also more awareness of neurodiversity, partly through the work of bodies such as DANDA. This means that there are more resources and support available for university students with higher functioning autism, Asperger’s Syndrome and related conditions.

BRAIN.HE
Best Resources for Achievement and Intervention re. Neurodiversity in Higher Education
✉️ www.brainhe.com
✉️ j.aquilina@neuroknowhow.com or pollak1000@hotmail.com

The BRAIN.HE website is an independent information site for all university students with specific learning differences, such as Asperger’s Syndrome, ADHD, dyslexia and dyspraxia, and tutors in higher education. Information for students on the website includes learning strategies, online resources, and details about different types of neurodiversity.

Disabled Students’ Allowances (DSAs)
✉️ www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas

Disabled Students’ Allowances provide extra financial help for those who want to study a higher education course and have a disability, including Asperger’s syndrome, high functioning autism and/or related learning difficulties such as dyslexia.

To qualify for Disabled Students Allowance both the student and their course must meet certain conditions. The purpose of DSAs is to help disabled people to study in higher education on an equal basis with other students. They can help pay for specialist equipment for studying (e.g. computer software), extra travel costs, etc. For further information, please visit the above website.
Employment: Support for people with Asperger’s Syndrome, High Functioning Autism and Related Conditions

The National Autistic Society claims that only 16% of adults in the UK with autism are in full-time paid employment. This proportion is much lower than the general figures for the employment status of the 5.8 million people of working age with disabilities, where 46.5% were in employment in January 2016, compared with 84% of non-disabled people.

People with ASD have difficulties with communication, social interaction and social imagination. These difficulties can make it more difficult for people with ASD to find out about job opportunities, perform well at interviews and retain a job. In many instances ASD is a hidden disability, which means that other people may not be aware of the nature of the person’s disability and may easily misunderstand them.

The local and national organisations below are the main providers of employment support. Please note that this list is not exhaustive and support may also be offered by other agencies and organisations.

Local Support

CSW Group (formerly Careers South West)
Bridge House, Sherborne Road, Newton Abbot TQ12 2QX
📞 (01626) 367579
🌐 www.cswgroup.co.uk  📧 newtonabbot@cswgroup.co.uk

CSW Group provides impartial careers information, advice and guidance services to help engage its customers in learning and work, raise aspirations, and improve life chances and personal outcomes. The service manages a variety of contracts across the whole of the South West region, which support young people, adults and adults’ transition between education, training and work, including those with special needs up to the age of 25. Please contact CSW Group to find out more about what services are available.
Jobcentre Plus – Employment Support
Jobcentre Plus, Decca House, 28 New Road, Brixham
📞 (01803) 356025 – Disability Employment Adviser for Torbay

Jobcentre Plus, Regal House, Castle Circus, Torquay
📞 (01803) 356025 – Disability Employment Adviser for Torbay

To contact a Work Coach at either site:
📞 0845 604 3719 or 0345 604 3719

Help and advice for both customers and employers is available through local Jobcentre Plus offices. A Work Coach can give customers and employers advice on specialist support available to them. Work Coaches also have access to a Disability Employment Adviser for specialist knowledge and advice. For a person with an ASD, contact with the local Jobcentre Plus office is often the key to moving forward in training and job opportunities – they know the law about disability and some of the difficulties that all people with a disability face in looking for a job. For further information about the support available and more detailed contact information please visit www.gov.uk

National Careers Service – Local Office
Castle Circus House, 136 Union Street, Torquay TQ2 5QG
📞 (01803) 897150
✉️ omasters@westwardpathfinder.org.uk

The National Careers Service provides face to face careers advice in the community regarding information, advice and guidance for jobseekers and those in work aged 18 and older, and to help them manage their career and progress into learning, training and work opportunities. The Service is able to help adults with disabilities, including those with autistic spectrum disorders.
National Support

Access to Work
Access to Work Operational Support Unit, Harrow Jobcentre Plus, Mail Handling Site A, Wolverhampton WV98 1JE
☎ 0345 268 8489 or textphone (for deaf people): 0345 608 8753
✉ www.gov.uk/access-to-work  ⌐ atwosu.london@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Access to Work is a government-run programme delivered by Jobcentre Plus, which covers a wide range of support to help people with disabilities and health conditions to start and/or retain employment or move into self employment/start a business. Support available through the scheme includes special aids, equipment and support workers.

To be eligible for the Access to Work scheme, the applicant must be 16 or over, in a paid job, unemployed and about to start a job or work trial, self-employed, have a job interview or be starting work experience.

Applicants may refer themselves but their employer would need to be aware that they are having problems in the workplace and may also be asked to contribute so they would also need to be involved.

For people with autistic spectrum conditions, the kind of support that is generally found to be most beneficial is a job coach or mentor in the workplace, defined as a support worker. Access to Work can fund a person’s time to provide this type of support where it is needed. The support worker can work with the client to help them integrate in a new job or to try to resolve problems that may have arisen within the workplace as a result of the individual’s particular needs. The individual may have a different learning style or way of working that needs specialist support that is not generally available within the workplace. This type of support is generally short term for several weeks when the person starts work or spasmodically over a longer period, ie. a year, if this is needed.

Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)
FREEPOST, EASS HELPLINE FPN6521
☎ 0808 800 0082 (Monday to Friday, 9.00 am – 7.00 pm; Saturdays, 10.00 – 2.00 pm)
Textphone, 0808 800 0084
✉ www.equalityadvisoryservice.com  ⌐ via website

The Equality and Advisory Support Service gives information, advice and support on equality and human rights issues across England, Scotland and Wales. As well as a helpline, the Service provides useful information and advice on its website, including details of the Equality Act Codes of Practice, a summary guide to rights under the Equality Act and template letters for those wishing to raise a grievance.
Equality and Human Rights Commission  
www.equalityhumanrights.com

The Equality and Human Rights Commission website gives useful information, including Equality Act guidance, such as ‘Guidance for Workers’ and ‘Guidance for Service Users’. There is also a section on Disability Discrimination, and a Disability Advice and Guidance section, which brings together the Commission’s disability advice, guidance and news blogs from across the Equality and Human Rights website.

National Careers Service  
☎️ Helpline, 0800 100 900    Textphone, 08000 968 336 (daily 8.00 am – 10.00 pm)  
✉️ www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk ✆️ via website

The National Careers Service gives information, advice and guidance across England about learning, training and work to adults and young people. It provides a helpline and webchat service and face to face advice at local offices (please refer to page 31 for further details), as well as advice and information on its website, including job profiles, a Skills Health Check and a course directory.
Help to Live Independently for adults with Asperger’s Syndrome, High Functioning Autism and Related Conditions

Whilst adults with Asperger’s syndrome and high functioning autism may not need a lot of support with finding and maintaining their accommodation, there may in some cases be a need for some degree of support, eg. help with daily routines in the home or support in connection with contacts with authorities and other organisations in society. Floating support services, such as those detailed below, can provide this. There are also private organisations offering these services, which may be funded by the Trust following a needs assessment or otherwise privately funded.

For details of private outreach/enabling services please refer to our ‘Domiciliary (Personal Care) Agencies’ information sheet and Pinpoint Devon at www.pinpointdevon.co.uk

Please note that if someone is unable to live independently there are homes that specialise in providing care for people with autistic spectrum disorders. For information about these, see the Care Quality Commission website at www.cqc.org.uk

National Autistic Society (NAS) Community Support Services, Supported Living and Outreach (South West England)
☎ (01278) 760555
✉️ www.autism.org.uk/southwest  📧 sw.services@nas.org.uk

Community Support Services and Outreach
The NAS offers a flexible, tailored service that helps autistic adults and young people living in and around South Devon to build their confidence and develop independence. Staff who are trained in autism discuss the client’s needs with them and create a flexible, individualized package that suits them and can be used short or long-term. This support is usually funded by the local authority following a community care assessment, but can also be self-funded or commissioned by the NHS. The service includes support to maintain relationships with family and friends, support to take part in community activities and access facilities, and support with transition and developing independent living skills and employment skills.

Supported Living
Where someone may need an intensity of support which goes further than outreach visits, supported living may be considered. This lies somewhere between outreach and residential care, with the NAS taking more responsibility for managing the person’s life in the community. NAS is currently (in August 2017) able to convert properties to suit individual needs and thereby offer a more bespoke supported living package.
Step One Enabling Services
Beaufort House, 51 New North Road, Exeter EX4 4EP
☎ 07799 306577 (answerphone service available)
✉ www.steponecharity.co.uk
✉ enabling@steponecharity.co.uk (for further information)

Step One (formerly Community Care Trust (South Devon) Ltd. and St Loyes Foundation) provides individually-tailored support for people with autism spectrum conditions to gain independent living skills and achieve their aspirations. Referrals and self-referrals are accepted from people who are living in Devon (not including Torbay) who are assessed to have an autism spectrum condition or waiting for an assessment.
Other Titles in this Series
If you would like copies, please request no more than 5 titles at a time (see p. 3).

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Further Information and Advice

Torbay Disability Information Service
Torbay Disability Information Service has been providing comprehensive information and advice to people in Torbay for over 21 years and we are a founder member of the Torbay Advice Network (TAN). Our service is open to any resident of Torbay affected by any type of disability. We also provide information to anyone working or caring for people with disabilities.

No referral is necessary. Simply call us on 0300 456 8373 or email us at dis.torbay@nhs.net

We offer:
• An enquiry desk service covering a wide range of topics related to disability support and independent living.
• Advice and guidance on disability-related social security issues, including benefit checks.
• Over 40 web-based information sheets covering the questions that we get asked most frequently.
• Appointments for help with social security forms (PIP, ESA, etc.) for people with diagnosed mental health conditions.
• An access point for the Mental Health User and Carer Involvement Worker (appointments only).

Opening hours: Monday to Thursday, 9.00am to 4.30pm; Friday, 9.00am to 1.00pm only.

Signposts for Carers
Signposts for Carers is Torbay’s dedicated telephone support service providing specialist information and advice to unpaid carers in Torbay. Contact Signposts in confidence to find out about services, equipment, benefits and rights. Support is available on a short or long-term basis.

Opening hours: Mondays to Thursdays, 9.00am - 4.30pm. Fridays: 9.00am - 1.00pm.

Calls are diverted to a 24-hour staffed message taking service outside office hours. Your details and enquiry will be relayed to us and we will respond to your enquiry on the next working day.

☎ (01803) 666620  📧 signposts@nhs.net
Was this information sheet useful?

We are keen to ensure that this information sheet is relevant to your needs and clear. We would be grateful if you would take a moment to answer the questions below and send your response to us either by email at dis.torbay@nhs.net or by post.

Our address is:
Torbay Disability Information Service
4th Floor, Union House
Union Street
Torquay TQ1 3YA

Q: Where did you get this information sheet from?

Q: How old are you?

Q: Was the information easy to read and helpful? (Please tick one box only)

- Very Easy
- Fairly easy
- Undecided
- Fairly difficult
- Very Difficult

Q: How might we improve it?

Q: What local disability related support do you struggle to find out about?

Note: Please contact us on 0300 456 8373 if you need help or have questions about the contents of this information sheet.
This document can be available in other languages and formats. For more information telephone 0300 456 8373.