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Tender

## **Norfolk Autism Adult Assessment with Navigation Service**

NHS Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care Board

F02: Contract notice

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-030872

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-048456

Published 26 September 2024, 5:35pm

### **Section I: Contracting authority**

#### **I.1) Name and addresses**

NHS Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care Board

County Hall, Martineau Ln

Norwich

NR1 2DH

#### **Email**

[david.bailey1@nhs.net](mailto:david.bailey1@nhs.net)

#### **Country**

United Kingdom

#### **Region code**

UKH15 - Norwich and East Norfolk



## **Internet address(es)**

Main address

<https://www.improvinglivesnw.org.uk/about-us/our-nhs-integrated-care-board-icb/icb-contact/>

Buyer's address

<https://www.improvinglivesnw.org.uk/about-us/our-nhs-integrated-care-board-icb/icb-contact/>

## **I.3) Communication**

The procurement documents are available for unrestricted and full direct access, free of charge, at

<https://health-family.force.com/s/Welcome>

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

<https://health-family.force.com/s/Welcome>

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted to the above-mentioned address

Electronic communication requires the use of tools and devices that are not generally available. Unrestricted and full direct access to these tools and devices is possible, free of charge, at

<https://health-family.force.com/s/Welcome>

## **I.4) Type of the contracting authority**

Body governed by public law

## **I.5) Main activity**

Health



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## Section II: Object

### II.1) Scope of the procurement

#### II.1.1) Title

Norfolk Autism Adult Assessment with Navigation Service

Reference number

NW202470

#### II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 85100000 - Health services

#### II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

#### II.1.4) Short description

NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board is inviting suitably qualified and experienced providers to express their interest in delivering a Norfolk Autism Adult Assessment with Navigation Service.

The successful Provider will be responsible for the delivery of a safe and appropriate NICE compliant assessment and navigation service with requisite levels of safety, comfort, privacy, and dignity to be fully compatible with the needs of adults suspected of having autism. It shall offer a range of ways to engage with people accessing the service, to ensure that it is autism friendly.

The service will:

- screen for autism providing written validation of difficulties associated with autism along with a reasonable adjustment letter.
- offer a Norfolk Autism Adult Navigation Service (see section 4.3 below) to reduce the drive and need for an adult autism assessment, through offering interventions in a timely manner.
- as required accurately manage and maintain an adult autism assessment waiting list.
- have a clear and transparent adult autism spectrum disorder (ASD) pathway for assessment

The Contracting Authority will be using an eTendering system for this market testing exercise. Further information and the expression of interest documentation can be found via the 'Live Opportunities' list on the e-procurement system at the following link: <https://health->



[family-contract-search.secure.force.com/?searchtype=Projects](https://family-contract-search.secure.force.com/?searchtype=Projects). You can search for the opportunity by entering the following contract ref CC309304

The proposed contract will be for a period of 2 years with the option to extend for up to an additional 1 year. The annual contract value is £481,000 per annum.

### **II.1.5) Estimated total value**

Value excluding VAT: £1,443,000

### **II.1.6) Information about lots**

This contract is divided into lots: No

## **II.2) Description**

### **II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)**

- 85323000 - Community health services

### **II.2.3) Place of performance**

NUTS codes

- UKH1 - East Anglia

Main site or place of performance

Norfolk and Waveney

### **II.2.4) Description of the procurement**

The successful Provider will be responsible for the delivery of a safe and appropriate NICE compliant assessment and navigation service with requisite levels of safety, comfort, privacy, and dignity to be fully compatible with the needs of adults suspected of having autism. It shall offer a range of ways to engage with people accessing the service, to ensure that it is autism friendly.

The service will:

- screen for autism providing written validation of difficulties associated with autism along with a reasonable adjustment letter.
- offer a Norfolk Autism Adult Navigation Service (see section 4.3 below) to reduce the drive and need for an adult autism assessment, through offering interventions in a timely manner.
- as required accurately manage and maintain an adult autism assessment waiting list.



- have a clear and transparent adult autism spectrum disorder (ASD) pathway for assessment

The service will accept a historic autism assessment where there is no confirmation of autism, but only with a distinct change in presentation that builds on the original assessment with a need to further explore autism.

The Provider shall offer electronic autism and functional analysis screening.

This shall include but not limited to:

- NICE compliant electronic screening tools such as the Autism Quotient (AQ), the Empathy Quotient (EQ) and the Relatives Questionnaire (RQ) along with any background questionnaires.
- A functional analysis screening tool (such as FAST) to support identification of those most at risk and vulnerable. The screening tool should be used along with other triage methods to identify those who would benefit from an assessment to improve communication, behavioural and sensory outcomes for onward support.
- If the score indicates autism the person is provided with written validation that they experience difficulties associated with autism and offered a reasonable adjustment letter. This validation will include any rationale identified from the scoring that evidences the challenges the person is experiencing, indicating their strengths and difficulties with advice and guidance with regards to onward support from the navigation service.
- If the score is classified as non-autism the person and their GP is advised in writing. The document will include any rationale identified from the scoring for the challenges the person is experiencing, indicating their strengths and difficulties with any advice and guidance with regards to other services that might be able to support.
- The Provider shall, where appropriate, onward refer to other assessment services (e.g. ADHD). They will work with the existing ADHD service to ensure when people are referred to their service, they are slotted in from the date of referral to the ASD service and vice versa. This is to ensure that those with a dual neurodevelopment assessment need are not disadvantaged by long waits.

The service shall offer up to 12 weeks light touch support for those not on the autism assessment pathway. Light touch is defined as following the person's lead and gathering enough information to be satisfied that the self-advocacy passport is working effectively and as intended.

Coaches will use their knowledge and training to enable adults to reduce specific difficulties associated with autism, they will also support Autism Peer Support Workers.

The service shall:

- offer non-judgemental support to resolve current problems adults are experiencing in their day-to-day life, to build confidence and independence that can lead to a better life. This could cover aspects of daily living, but also anger management interventions and coping skills training, and developing problem solving skills.
- offer co-development of an 'Self Advocacy Passport' a personalised plan that takes a Quality-of-Life approach to overcome specific issues. It will consider the person's strengths, skills, mental and/or physical impairment, family and social context. The plan will detail



approaches the person has chosen to adopt now and in the future such as coping strategies or when to ask for help.

- work with adults and where appropriate their informal support, partners/families to understand the difficulties they are experiencing that are associated with autism to put in place strategies that help.
- offer opportunities for autistic adults to connect with other autistic adults to benefit from peer contact and support. Offered by Autism Peer Support Workers who use their experience to support autistic adult or those who suspect they are autistic. Offering emotional support, sharing experiences, education and practical activities, one to one support such as mentoring or befriending. This could include modelling, peer feedback discussion and decision making, explicit rules and strategies for dealing with socially difficult situations.
- work with the Norfolk Autism Partnership to connect people with other social groups to develop a positive autistic self-identity and foster connections with other autistic adults and wider involvement opportunities. The Norfolk Autism Partnership coproduced accredited autism awareness e-learning programme that shall be offered to the person, their partner, family, any informal and formal carers.
- bridge to other existing services that can help (such as the living well with autism course or the Norfolk Autism Adult Support Service for those with emerging social care needs), highlight reasonable adjustments that can help and advocate where barriers exist.
- explore and understand adults' motivation for an autism assessment. What outcomes they wish to achieve, along with the opportunities and challenges of an autism confirmation.
- provide a closure summary that details the outcomes achieved from the service. It will also detail any ongoing significant challenges and difficulties to access services that result in financial, legal or health issues that cannot be resolved through reasonable adjustments, for consideration at triage.

The Provider shall only triage for assessment those who continue to experience significant challenges and difficulties to access services and will benefit from an autism assessment. It will be clinically determined that the person needs an assessment to recommend evidence-based interventions to improve communication, behavioural and sensory outcomes for onward support.

All other adults who complete their support to access things that help will be discharged back to their GP

The Provider shall deliver a fully NICE compliant formulation autism assessment service using NICE approved assessment tools, conducted by a multi-disciplinary team (MDT). Where there is insufficient evidence to recommend a definitive confirmation of autism a working hypothesis will be offered as an alternative.

For all outcomes, the Provider shall deliver a comprehensive report that will include risks and the formulation around needs that offers evidenced based recommendations for onward support. The assessment report will adhere to NICE guidance and clinical practice guidelines.

The autism assessment report shall enable another clinician to clearly see the analysis and



rationale for the outcome should a second opinion be required at a later date.

Where the assessment indicates traits of other neurodevelopmental conditions, the Provider shall onward refer with the analysis and rationale from the assessment copied to the appropriate service(s) and GP.

Where autism is confirmed, an abridged report shall be provided. This will detail their autism confirmation and any evidence-based recommendations that can be shared easily with their onward support.

For all outcomes, the Provider shall inform the GP. The GP will be sent a copy of their autism assessment report, with a request that any reasonable adjustments and if autism is confirmed coded on the GP medical record.

### **II.2.5) Award criteria**

Price is not the only award criterion and all criteria are stated only in the procurement documents

### **II.2.6) Estimated value**

Value excluding VAT: £1,443,000

### **II.2.7) Duration of the contract, framework agreement or dynamic purchasing system**

Duration in months

36

This contract is subject to renewal

No

### **II.2.10) Information about variants**

Variants will be accepted: No

### **II.2.11) Information about options**

Options: No

### **II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds**

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No



## II.2.14) Additional information

The Contracting Authority will be using an eTendering system for this market testing exercise. Further information and the expression of interest documentation can be found via the 'Live Opportunities' list on the e-procurement system at the following link: <https://health-family-contract-search.secure.force.com/?searchtype=Projects>. You can search for the opportunity by entering the following contract ref CC309304

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## Section IV. Procedure

### IV.1) Description

#### IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Open procedure

#### IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

### IV.2) Administrative information

#### IV.2.1) Previous publication concerning this procedure

Notice number: [2024/S 000-023105](#)

#### IV.2.2) Time limit for receipt of tenders or requests to participate

Date

1 November 2024

Local time

12:00pm

#### IV.2.4) Languages in which tenders or requests to participate may be submitted

English



#### **IV.2.6) Minimum time frame during which the tenderer must maintain the tender**

Tender must be valid until: 31 January 2025

#### **IV.2.7) Conditions for opening of tenders**

Date

1 November 2024

Local time

1:00pm

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### **Section VI. Complementary information**

#### **VI.1) Information about recurrence**

This is a recurrent procurement: No

#### **VI.4) Procedures for review**

##### **VI.4.1) Review body**

NHS England

7&8 Wellington Place

Leeds

LS1 4AP

Country

United Kingdom

Internet address

<https://www.england.nhs.uk//>