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Planning

Suffolk Neurodevelopmental Children and Young People's Assessment

NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-077440

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-05e9ac

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

County Hall,

Norwich

NR21NH

Email

Jo.Zenzer@nsft.nhs.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UKH14 - Suffolk

NHS Organisation Data Service

RMY

Internet address(es)

Main address

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

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Regional or local authority

I.5) Main activity

Health

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Suffolk Neurodevelopmental Children and Young People's Assessment

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 85100000 - Health services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

This will be an NHS Standard Contract Sub-contract for the provision of Neurodevelopmental Assessments (ADHD and Autism) to Children and Young People in Suffolk.

Demand for ADHD and Autism assessments have risen rapidly over the past 20 years. Investment in ADHD and Autism assessment capacity has not kept pace with this growth; demand now far exceeds available capacity. The global prevalence of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children is estimated to be around 5% and Autism in England is estimated to be approximately 1-1.8% of the population.

The Contractor will:

- Assess and diagnose ADHD and/or Autism
- identify differential needs and recommend appropriate support, including self-help tools and by accessing both services and universal provision

Through a multidisciplinary diagnostic and needs-led assessment process which is compliant with NICE Guidance and DSM-V or ICD-11 criteria.

ADHD Diagnostic Assessment

A diagnosis of ADHD must only be made by a specialist psychiatrist, paediatrician or other appropriately qualified healthcare professional with training and expertise in the diagnosis of ADHD

Autism Diagnostic Assessment

The Contractor will complete a full NICE-complaint needs-led diagnostic assessment for those with suspected Autism

When appropriate, joint ADHD and Autism assessments will be offered.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £700,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 85000000 - Health and social work services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKH - East of England

Main site or place of performance

Suffolk

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

NSFT has been commissioned to provide a CYP assessment, diagnostic and treatment service for ADHD and assessment and diagnostic for Autism. SNEE ICB has tasked NSFT with addressing the longest waits for assessment for both ADHD and Autism. The longest waits are between 3-4 years with the average over 2 years. This procurement aims by working with an external contractor to complete assessments, to reduce the wait for both ADHD and Autism assessment to under 2 years.

The aims and objectives of the service are to provide:

- A comprehensive and seamless needs-led assessment and diagnostic service that meets the needs of children and young people who may be neurodivergent and live with ADHD and/or Autism.

- A multidisciplinary needs-led model of assessment, which utilises a range of assessment methods and is adapted to the social, communication, intellectual needs of the children and young people being assessed
- A partnership approach to the assessment and treatment of ADHD and dual diagnosis with Autism:
 - o NSFT supporting confirmation of diagnosis of ADHD through a shared MDT
 - o With a smooth handover from contractor to NSFT services for treatment of ADHD, where clinically indicated, following a positive confirmation of diagnosis.
- A joint assessment and joint diagnosis route, where clinically indicated, for CYP who have waited the longest.
- Pre-assessment information and support to manage realistic expectations for CYP and families of the service offer
- Children, Young People and Families and referrer and/or GP post assessment feedback and report which:
 - o Provides an evidence-based diagnostic outcome
 - o Identifies differential (for those not meeting full diagnostic criteria) and ongoing needs for the child or young person
 - o Offers guidance and recommendations for how any needs can be met and appropriate signposting and warm handover to support services
- A service aligned to NICE, NHS England and Department of Health and Social Care guidance and
- A CQC registered and complaint service
- A diagnostic conversion rate aligned to the national average
- Excellent and responsive compassionate customer care and support to children, young people and their families, sending appropriate information and offering timely responses to queries they may have.
- Timely, accessible and inclusive assessment with additional adaptations for children, young people and families from diverse communities, including those with/from:
 - o Learning disabilities

- o Physical disability
- o Hidden physical or neurological health conditions
- o Lived experience of mental health difficulties and illness
- o LGBTQIA+ community
- o BAME communities

- For face-to-face assessments, in a setting that is within 60 minutes of the children or young person's place of residence, and which considers and appropriately meets their accessibility needs

The service will adopt a biopsychosocial model to assess ADHD and/or Autism through a holistic needs-led approach.

NSFT defined outcomes

- Reduced waiting times (under 2 years) for ADHD and Autism in Suffolk part of SNEE
- Improved psychological and emotional and wellbeing and health of children, young people and families accessing the service
- Reduced need for, and use of mental health services through:
 - o Timely assessment and diagnosis of ADHD and/or Autism
 - o identification of differential needs and referral
 - o Warm handover and signposting to appropriate sources of support.
- Reduced health inequalities for children and young people waiting for ADHD and/or Autism assessment through:
 - o Reducing waiting times
 - o Providing joint ADHD and Autism assessment
- Children, young people and families feel empowered and equipped with the tools to live well with neurodivergence and other needs following a needs-led assessment and diagnostic outcome
- High quality accessible and inclusive NICE-compliant evidence-based assessments

delivered, which provide confidence to children, young people and families and health and social care professionals, in diagnostic outcomes and identification of differential needs.

- High quality service delivery as evidenced by both quantitative and qualitative feedback from children, young people and their families through multiple feedback mechanisms e.g., Friends and Family Test.

Contractors handling NHS data are expected to:

- Be registered with the Information Commissioners Office (ICO)
- Have achieved a minimum of "Standards Met" level of compliance on the Data Security and Protection Toolkit - <https://www.dsptoolkit.nhs.uk/>
- Give assurance that they are complying with data protection legislation i.e. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018
- Must complete the Digital Technology Assessment Criteria (DTAC) form and meet the criteria to ensure clinical safety, data protection, technical security, interoperability and usability and accessibility standards are met
- Have a secure means of storing and transferring information
- Have clear IG policies and processes covering Information Security, Incident Reporting, Privacy Notices etc
- Keep and retain records for CYP in line with the NHS Code of Practice for records management
- Give assurance that all staff have received IG training in the last year
- Be able to provide details on any partners/subcontractors/3rd Parties be processing or storing Personal Confidential Data (PCD) in relation to this contract including the location of such data
- Keep all Personal Confidential Data (PCD) encrypted at rest and in transit
- Have a Business Continuity Plan that includes cyber security incident response
- Support with the completion of a Data Protection Impact Assessment
- The Contractor will ensure it meets the Accessible Information Standard which is a standard expected from NHS services. Accessible Information - NHS Standards Directory.

- Be registered with the CQC
- Have an indemnity scheme
- Ensure that all professionals are educated, trained and have assessed capability to conduct ADHD and / or Autism assessments with the required knowledge and skills and remain compliant with their relevant professional standards and bodies and be revalidated as required
- Ensure completion of appropriate training to meet the training and supervision needs of its staff. This should be checked through the accreditation process
- Have robust clinical and corporate governance systems to manage and learn from complaints and incidents and respond to service user feedback
- Ensure the workforce is educated to be responsive to changing service models, innovation and new technologies, with knowledge about effective and evidenced based best practice

The Contractor required to complete monthly quality audits, using an audit template co-designed with NSFT on 10% of completed assessments, to provide assurance that standards are being met in all areas of the assessments. In addition, the contractor will be required to complete monthly letter audits, using on a co-developed template on 10% of appointment and diagnostic outcome letters sent to CYP and families.

NSFT reserves the option to require the Contractor to complete additional audits should issues/ significant concerns be identified through the monthly auditing process

The Contractor will be required to produce reports for NSFT:

- Service quality performance report covering national and local quality requirements
- Quality audit reports (monthly)
- Safeguarding reports
- Complaints
- Incident reports
- Activity progress reports (monthly)
- Finance reports

The format and frequency of the required reports will be agreed between NSFT and the Contractor post award in the mobilisation of the service.

NSFT and the Contractor will co-develop template letters to children, young people and families, that meet quality requirements and align to NSFT values and customer service standards.

Contractor 'private' assessment, therapy and other services

The Contractor must not use its privileged access to NSFT (NHS) service users (CYP) and their families, for the purposes of neurodevelopmental assessment, to directly market or seek commission from them for private assessment and therapy services the Contractor might provide outside this contract.

The Contractor must alert NSFT if our service users or their families approach them through delivery of this contract, requesting information on, or access to the Contractor's private assessment, therapy and other services.

NSFT will work with the Contractor to agree an appropriate response and process that maintains appropriate boundaries and protects our service users and their families, whilst not restricting the right to exercise choice to access healthcare services and support.

II.2.14) Additional information

Indicative activity to be commissioned:

- 450 ADHD assessments
- 200 Autism assessments

x650 total assessments of which up to x70 could be joint assessments for ADHD and Autism.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

31 December 2025

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

This is a Provider Selection Regime (PSR) intended approach notice. The awarding of this contract is subject to the Health Care Services (Provider Selection Regime) Regulations 2023. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 do not apply to this award. The intention is to award a contract using the Most Suitable Provider process.

Decision makers include: Sarah Hedges, Elaine Deazley-Morgan and Terence Mahachi.

Representations and clarification requests should be made to Jo.Zenzer@nsft.nhs.uk copying in contractsteam@nsft.nhs.uk.