

**Bath, North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) Integrated Care Board
Position Statement on Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA)**

Professionals within Bath, North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) Integrated Care Board (ICB) do not use the label of Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA) as it is not recognised or included in the current international diagnostic classifications used by clinicians. These include ICD 10 (and ICD 11, which is in draft) as well as DSM 5.

Services across BSW ICB, for children and adults, recognise that some people experience high levels of anxiety which can lead to withdrawal, demand avoidance, or a need to control their environment. The type of support that people who demonstrate demand avoidance varies and depends on the individual and their circumstances. There is not one “set” of strategies or a specific intervention that will fit every person who presents in this way, but might include adaptations to the environment, learning new skills and building confidence so situations are less challenging (and anxiety provoking) and finding ways to soothe heightened arousal levels. We understand that for some people, these high levels of anxiety can also be linked to core difficulties associated with an autism spectrum condition (ASC). We also recognise people without a diagnosis of autism spectrum condition can experience similar emotions and behaviours.

Across BSW ICB there are clear pathways for the assessment and diagnosis of autism spectrum conditions and other neurodevelopmental conditions for children and adults. In line with NICE guidance, and with consultation, updated clinical guidelines reference demand avoidance behaviour as one type of behaviour profile or a ‘sign or symptom’ of autism, without the need for an additional diagnostic label.

Referrals can be made through your usual community learning disability/ASC OR neurodevelopmental conditions pathway as well as mental health teams for assessment of the factors contributing to this, which would inform recommendations about services/interventions that can best offer support.

Many individuals who have been through the assessment process are happy with this outcome. You should not need to pursue a separate specialist assessment for PDA in order for you and others to understand these difficulties.

ASD Diagnostic Services

Referral Route	Contact
Children’s Neurodevelopmental Conditions Pathway Swindon	BSWICB.RMC@nhs.net Referral Support Centre, BSW ICB, The Pierre Simonet Building, Latham Road, SWINDON, SN25 4DL
Children’s ASD assessment BaNES	vcl.bathnescliniccoordinator@nhs.net Child Health Dept, St Martin’s Hospital, Ground Floor, Midford House, Kempthorne Lane, Bath, BA2 5RP Tel: 01225 394514

Children's ASD assessment Wiltshire	Wiltshire Autism Assessment service http://vccl.wiltshirespa@nhs.net
Adult ASD assessment Wiltshire	Wiltshire Autism Diagnostic Service http://www.awp.nhs.uk
Adult ASD assessment Swindon	Specialised Community Learning Disability and Autism Diagnostic Service. Telephone: 01793 715 000

Community Learning Disability and Mental Health Teams

Referral Route	Contact
CAMHS and Child LD Swindon	Refer via GP or professionals 01793 464049
CAMHS and Child LD BaNES	Online referral : https://secureforms.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/ Tel: 01865 903889
CAMHS and Child LD Wiltshire	wiltsCAMHSSPAinfo@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk Tel: 01865 903330 Refer via GP or professionals
CTPLD Swindon	Refer via GP or Specialised Community Learning Disability and Autism Diagnostic Service. Telephone: 01793 715 000
CTPLD BaNES	Refer via GP.
CTPLD Wiltshire	Refer via GP or Wiltshire Council Adult Care: 0300 456 0111
Adult Swindon Community Mental Health Services	Refer via GP
Adult BaNES Community Mental Health Services	Refer via GP
Adult Wiltshire Community Mental Health Services	Refer via GP

For more information on your local ASC and mental health pathways and support that is available please visit your Local Offer Website for your local area.

Bath & North East Somerset: <https://livewell.bathnes.gov.uk/special-educational-need-or-disability-send>

Swindon: <https://localoffer.swindon.gov.uk/content/send-local-offer/landing-pages/swindon-send-local-offer/>

Wiltshire: <https://localoffer.wiltshire.gov.uk/>

