

Comments or complaints

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust listens to children, young people their relatives, carers and friends, and answers their questions and resolves their concerns as quickly as possible. If you have any comments or complaints then please contact them via:

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)
Tel: 0800 011 6113
Web: www.hct.nhs.uk



Positive behaviour, Autism, Learning disability and Mental health Service

Information for Professionals & Referrers

Hertfordshire Community NHS Trust

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If you would like a copy of this document in LARGE PRINT, Braille or audio tape, or would like this information explained in your own language, please contact 01707 388038

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PALMS works across the county providing a specialist multi-disciplinary approach to children and young people aged 0-19 who have a global learning disability and/or autistic spectrum disorder and their families.

PALMS is a community based team delivering a consistent service in a variety of settings.

PALMS aims to keep children and young people with their families within Hertfordshire thereby improving outcomes for all family members.

Who is in the team?

The PALMS team includes clinicians from a range of professions including:

- Clinical Psychology
- Learning Disability Nursing
- Positive Behaviour Practice
- Media Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Psychiatry
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Systemic Therapy
- Administration

What does PALMS offer?

The multi-disciplinary team provides individually tailored support to help manage a number of concerns experienced at home. This support can be offered on an intensive basis where required and children and young people can step up and step down within PALMS throughout their care journey.

PALMS provides a range of interventions including:

- workshops
- groups
- therapeutic work with children and young people, parents, carers and siblings
- consultation with professionals.

The Multi-Disciplinary Team also offers expert advice and close working with regards to second opinion in complex presentations and comorbidities in relation to ASD diagnosis to colleagues within Hertfordshire. A second opinion can be requested due to uncertainty around an ASD diagnosis **following** a full primary diagnosis assessment due to the presence of other complexities. Clarification is sought as to whether the presentation is an impact of complexities rather than a diagnosis of ASD.

Second opinion requests are referred in the usual way, triaged and then added to the second opinion pathway if this is agreed following triage.

Second opinion work will consist of either:

- consultation to the referring professional
- second opinion assessment process.

For both options, it is expected that the referring professional is present unless it is not appropriate.

Who can refer to PALMS?

PALMS accepts referrals from Health, Education and Social Care professionals involved in the young persons care.

Eligibility criteria for PALMS

A child or young person meets PALMS criteria if they:

- are aged 0-19 and registered with a Hertfordshire GP
- have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and/or a global learning disability, or are waiting for a diagnosis

and either

- show additional behavioural difficulties in the home, including challenging behaviour towards self, others and environment and/or sleeping, feeding or toileting difficulties which have not improved following standard community and paediatric interventions and advice

and/or

- show an emotional or mental health need that cannot be met by mainstream services including local CAMHS clinics with reasonable adjustments.



What indicators suggest a mainstream service is appropriate for a child/young person?

Broad indicators that reasonable adjustments can be made for children/young people with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and/or global learning disability include:

- the child/young person has a mild learning disability
- the child/young person has a diagnosis of high functioning autism or Aspergers syndrome
- the child/young person attends a mainstream school (attending a SEN school does not automatically exclude)
- the child/young person is able to express what happens to them when they experience strong emotions and/or they are able to identify what happens to their body and/or is able to identify their thoughts
- the child/young person is able to express themselves through verbal and/or non-verbal communication.

Clinical examples of reasonable adjustments include:

- Familiar setting
- Shorter sessions
- More sessions to allow engagement
- Using tools and activities.

Essential information required for referral

The referral must specify the following information to ensure it can be processed:

- a) how the child/young person meets the essential criteria for PALMS
- b) that consent has been obtained from the family and young person (if appropriate) for the referral
- c) the needs of the child/young person who is being referred (e.g. toileting, feeding, sleeping, challenging behaviour and/or mental health difficulties)
- d) how each need identified above presents at home, school, and in other settings
- e) how long the above difficulties have been identified (example: in weeks, months or years)
- f) the impact of these needs on the child and family
- g) the support and interventions already accessed by the family.

If there is insufficient information, we will be unable to accept the referral.

PALMS is unable to accept referrals where:

- the purpose of the referral is for a primary ASD and/or learning disability diagnosis
- the child/young person is experiencing difficulties which are principally education based
- the child/young person has specific learning difficulties and not a diagnosis of ASD and/or a global learning disability
- the child/young person is experiencing mental health concerns that with a reasonable adjustment could be met within mainstream specialist CAMHS
- the key concerns can be met within other specialist services e.g. Speech and Language Service/Occupational Therapy Service.

How to refer to PALMS

A referral can be made via a number of options, including:

- via Electronic SystemOne referral within Hertfordshire Community Trust
- via Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Trust Single Point of Access Service
- by PALMS Referral Form (which can be found on our website) or letter sent to:

PALMS

Referral Coordinator
St Albans Children's Centre
Church Crescent
St Albans
AL3 5JB

Where can I find out more or have my queries about PALMS answered?

If you have any questions about PALMS, please contact the team directly on 01727 891151.

Web: www.hct.nhs.uk

