

# Cambridge Lifespan Asperger Syndrome Service (CLASS)

A national diagnostic centre for adults with Asperger Syndrome

September 2013



## The CLASS clinic

- Offers a specialist diagnostic assessment for adults who may have Asperger Syndrome or High-Functioning Autism.
- Assessments are free of charge for patients who live in the Cambridgeshire area. The CLASS clinic is part of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust's (CPFT) Specialist Services Division. A charge is made for out-of-area referrals.
- CLASS was set up in 1999 and has assessed more than 700 patients.
- CLASS has been at the forefront of developing new assessment methods for adults with Asperger Syndrome who were historically often overlooked.

## Asperger Syndrome (AS) and High-Functioning Autism (HFA)

- These are medical conditions that involve a different pattern of brain development and brain activity.
- They are caused by genetic factors.
- They affect males more often than females.
- They occur in as many as one in 100 people.
- They lead to difficulties in social and communicative development and unusual, strong, narrow, repetitive interests.
- They have average or above-average IQ and excellent attention to detail.
- In HFA, there is a history of language delay. In AS there is not.
- Both AS and HFA are sub-groups on the autistic spectrum.



## Clinic procedure

- Referral must come from a GP or health professional
- Screening questionnaires are sent to the patient and their informant. The informant is someone who can provide a reliable developmental history, such as a parent or sibling. If patients come without an informant, we cannot guarantee a definitive diagnosis.
- Once the completed questionnaires are returned, we review the information and send an appointment date to the patient if appropriate.
- Prior to the assessment, we write to the patient's GP to request any relevant medical notes.
- The assessment itself lasts up to three hours and consists of an informal interview with the clinician.
- A diagnosis, if appropriate, is given at the end of the assessment. Occasionally this is not possible due to insufficient information.
- The report, with recommendations, is sent to the patient's GP. Other professionals involved in their care may receive a copy with the patient's consent. The patient also receives a copy.
- As we are a primary diagnostic clinic only, we are unable to offer follow-up consultations.
- If your GP is not in the CPFT catchment area, there will be a cost to your Primary Care Trust (PCT). Please contact the clinic administrator to discuss this.



## General information relating to referrals

- If referrals are initiated by family members, it is essential the patient is a willing participant in the assessment process.
- The patient should be free of any general learning disability. If they have a learning disability, a referral to the Learning Disability Partnership is more appropriate.
- Patients whose first language is not English can contact the NHS interpreting service so that an interpreter can attend the appointment with them.
- All information remains confidential to the patient, the referrer and their GP, except where there is information suggesting there is significant risk to the patient or to others.

## Additional information

- There is free parking at the Brookside Clinic site. There are also disabled parking spaces available. Please inform us beforehand if you require a disabled parking space. Please note our office is in Douglas House, but our clinic takes place next door in the Brookside Clinic.
- Occasionally patients are seen at other venues, details of which will be given in the appointment letter.
- Missed appointments carry a cost to the clinic. Please therefore contact the clinic if you are unable to attend.
- All patients are invited to take part in research studies. These take place at the Autism Research Centre (ARC), Cambridge University, with whom CLASS is linked. Taking part in research is voluntary and does not affect your status as a CLASS patient. If your diagnosis is confirmed please register at [www.autismresearchcentre.com](http://www.autismresearchcentre.com)

## Staff

The CLASS clinic was set up in 1999 by the Three Guineas Charitable Trust and Clare Sainsbury and the Sainsbury Foundation. CLASS is now fully supported by the NHS. Our team is led by Professor Simon Baron-Cohen, Consultant Clinical Psychologist. Its members include psychiatrists and psychologists and is supported by admin staff.

## Contact us

### **CLASS clinic**

The Chitra Sethia Autism Centre  
The Gatehouse  
Fulbourn Hospital  
Fulbourn  
Cambridge CB21 5EF

**T** 01223 218903

**E** [class.clinic@cpft.nhs.uk](mailto:class.clinic@cpft.nhs.uk)

[www.cpft.nhs.uk](http://www.cpft.nhs.uk)



**Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ-10):** A quick referral guide for adults with suspected autism who do not have a learning disability.

*Please tick one option per question only*

	Definitely agree	Slightly agree	Slightly disagree	Definitely disagree
1. I often notice small sounds when others do not	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I usually concentrate more on the whole picture, rather than the small details	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I find it easy to do more than one thing at once	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. If there is an interruption, I can switch back to what I was doing very quickly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I find it easy to 'read between the lines' when someone is talking to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I know how to tell if someone listening to me is getting bored	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. When I'm reading a story I find it difficult to work out the characters' intentions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I like to collect information about categories of things (eg, types of car, types of bird, types of train, types of plant, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I find it easy to work out what someone is thinking or feeling just by looking at their face	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I find it difficult to work out people's intentions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Scoring:** Only 1 point can be scored for each question. Score 1 point for Definitely or Slightly Agree on each of items 1, 7, 8, and 10. Score 1 point for Definitely or Slightly Disagree on each of items 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9. *If the individual scores more than 6 out of 10, consider referring them for a specialist diagnostic assessment.*

## What helps

Diagnosis helps people access different services, as appropriate:

- Relevant information
- Social support groups
- Advice to employers, partners and carers
- Supported employment
- Sheltered housing
- Social skills training
- Anger and anxiety management
- Disability benefits
- Advocacy and mentoring

There is no specific medication for Asperger Syndrome or Autism.

## Relevant links

National Autistic Society  
[www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)

University students with Autism and Asperger Syndrome  
[www.users.dircon.co.uk/~cns/index.html](http://www.users.dircon.co.uk/~cns/index.html)

Autism Research Centre, University of Cambridge  
[www.autismresearchcentre.com](http://www.autismresearchcentre.com)

National Autistic Society Cambridge (NAS)  
[www.cambridge-autism.org.uk](http://www.cambridge-autism.org.uk)

Disability Resource Centre, University of Cambridge  
[www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/disability/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/disability/)

Red2Green - a Cambridgeshire charity that provides disability services  
[www.red2green.org/](http://www.red2green.org/)

If you wish to make a donation, any income funds research at the Autism Research Centre (ARC) at the University of Cambridge. Donations can be made via [www.justgiving.com/autismresearchtrust](http://www.justgiving.com/autismresearchtrust)

If you have any concerns about any of CPFT's services, or would like more information please contact: Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on freephone **0800 376 0775** or e-mail [pals@cpft.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@cpft.nhs.uk)

Out-of-hours' service for CPFT service users

**0800 052 22 52**

Mondays to Fridays from 5pm to 10pm;

Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays from 8am to 10pm.

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Next review date: September 2014

**FOR MORE  
INFORMATION:**

**HQ** Elizabeth House, Fulbourn Hospital, Cambridge CB21 5EF.

**T** 01223 726789

**F** 01480 398501

[www.cpft.nhs.uk](http://www.cpft.nhs.uk)