

How can I choose a service that is right for me?

A guide for autistic people, their families and supporters using our Autism Services Directory to find a service that is suitable for their needs.

This guide was created to help autistic people, their families and supporters to navigate our Autism Services Directory. Whether you're exploring options for support, therapy, education, advocacy or something else, this guide can support you to find a service that meets your needs.

Finding out more information about the service

- **Visit the service's website:** All the services and groups listed on our Directory have webpages or social media pages that can be viewed for further information. Explore this information to find out more about what they offer and whether they are an appropriate service for you.
- **Check for autism or neurodiversity-specific approaches:** Look for mentions of things like sensory-friendly spaces, communication preferences and inclusive policies.
- **Seek out reviews or personal stories:** Hearing directly from autistic people or others who have used the service can offer valuable insights. Sites such as Trustpilot or Google Reviews can be helpful when deciding which service meets your needs.

Checking professional certifications

- **Review their credentials:** Look for certifications or professional registrations. Not all services are regulated, but services such as diagnosticians, counsellors, therapists and solicitors are. Some professional regulators have searchable registers; you may like to check these to make sure the service you are using has the appropriate professional oversight. Some of the main ones are:
 - [Health & Care Professions Council \(HCPC\)](#) for psychologists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists and others, including those carrying out autism assessments
 - [British Psychological Society \(BPS\)](#) for psychologists with BPS membership
 - [British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy \(BACP\)](#) for counsellors and psychotherapists
 - [General Medical Council](#) for doctors
 - [Solicitors Regulation Authority \(SRA\)](#) for regulated solicitors and law firms in England and Wales
 - [Law Society of Scotland](#) for regulated solicitors and law firms in Scotland
 - [Law Society of Northern Ireland](#) for regulated solicitors and law firms in Northern Ireland
- **Understand the terms:** If you're unsure about specific qualifications, you could ask a trusted person or search online.

Contacting the service with questions

- **Choose your preferred contact method:** Email, messaging or phone, choose the method available that works best for you.
- **Prepare your questions:** You can ask about staff experience, accommodations or anything that matters to your comfort. You can ask about how the service works, what will happen during your meeting or visit or how they will communicate with you.
- **Observe how they respond:** Are they understanding, respectful and clear in their answers? If they are, the service may be appropriate to meet your needs. If they are not, please consider whether they are the best service for you.

You are the expert on you. Choosing a service should feel empowering, not stressful. Look for providers who listen, respect your individuality and offer support that meets your needs.