



National  
Autistic  
Society

# Autism Support Plus

**Partnering for inclusivity: Tailored support for every autistic journey  
with the National Autistic Society's Autism Support Plus programme**



## Who we are

The National Autistic Society is the UK's leading charity for the 700,000 autistic adults and children in the UK, as well as their three million family members and carers. For over 60 years we have fought for the rights of autistic people.

**We believe the role of the National Autistic Society is to...**

**support all autistic individuals and their families to live a fulfilled life on their terms**

**influence and collaborate with others to improve standards and adjustments**

**transform society by building understanding, acceptance and respect for all autistic people.**





## The need



Autistic people face discrimination and barriers throughout their lives, across all sectors of society – in education, employment, health and social care systems and everywhere in between.

**Only one in four parents are satisfied** with the special educational needs support their child receives (National Autistic Society, 2021).

**70% of autistic young people have mental health problems**, compared to 13% of their non-autistic peers (Simonoff et al, 2008; NHS Digital, 2017).

Just **30% of autistic people are in employment** (The Office for National Statistics, 2023). This is one of the lowest rates for disabled people.

Autistic people are **four times more likely to experience loneliness** and social isolation than non-autistic people and are nine times more likely to consider suicide (Autistica, 2016).

These shocking statistics highlight how vital it is that autistic people and their families/carers can: access tailored information, guidance and support to overcome barriers; have the opportunities they deserve to live happy and fulfilled lives; and that we fight to create change in the systems that continue to exclude them.

## Summary – Autism Support Plus programme



We recognise that many organisations share our dedication to inclusivity and providing meaningful support to all autistic people. Partner with us through our Autism Support Plus programme and we will provide tailored support to your clients, their families and carers. Our programme will provide your clients with a personalised support framework and access to vital services that support in key areas, including diagnosis, education and employment.

### How it works:

#### Partner organisations will:

- talk to the Autism Support Plus team about how Autism Support Plus can be optimised to benefit your organisation and your clients
- harness our customisable service, designed to complement your existing support offerings
- provide your clients with access to a range of core Tier 1 and Tier 2 services that make up our Autism Support Plus programme, and look to support in areas including education and diagnosis.

#### Your client will then:

- speak to a National Autistic Society advisor
- be referred to services that are of the most value to them
- receive a high standard of tailored support.

#### Benefits to your organisation:

In addition to the support we can offer directly to your clients, we can also ensure your organisation gains access to an array of exclusive virtual training, awareness raising and support services including:

- bespoke training sessions delivered by our experienced team - perfect for "lunch and learn" events
- access to online training to equip your staff with essential knowledge to support autistic people
- PR support to enhance your reputation as an inclusive organisation
- monthly impact reporting on outcomes achieved for your clients and your organisation
- dedicated account management to optimise your partnership.

This support will ensure that your organisation and clients can fully benefit from our Autism Support Plus programme and our vast expertise.

The following pages provide an overview of the services included in both Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the programme.

## Autism Support Plus - Tier 1 package



### Initial advisory call and service referral management

Each client will begin their journey with the National Autistic Society through a scheduled advisory call with a member of our dedicated Autism Support Plus team to discuss their needs and preferences and identify the specific areas where support is required. We tell clients about the services we can offer them through the Autism Support Plus programme and help them decide which services they want to be referred for.

Following the initial advisory call, we make referrals to each of the services the client selected. We monitor the delivery of each service and provide you with a monthly update on the status of all referrals made for your clients.

**Why it's unique:** Unlike services offered to the general public, every client receives these bespoke advisory calls, allowing us to thoroughly understand their needs and create a tailored support package. Each member of the Autism Support Plus team has a wealth of experience in supporting autistic people and family members, meaning our support is not only informed and empathetic but also highly effective.

**“Thank you so very much for all you have done for us as a family. We are really blown away and overwhelmed by the support you have given us.**

**The care and the way you have listened and tailored everything towards our child's needs is completely appreciated. Thank you for the updates, the links. The hard work you have done for us is amazing.”**



### Helplines Standard 2022-2025

The National Autistic Society is pleased to hold the Helplines Standard from the Helplines Partnership (HLP). This is a membership body for organisations that provide helpline services via phone and multi-channel methods in the UK, the Republic of Ireland and internationally.

## National Diagnostic and Assessment Service (Lorna Wing Centre)

This service is provided by clinicians from our National Diagnostic and Assessment Service. Each specialist has extensive knowledge and expertise in how to diagnose autism and support autistic people.

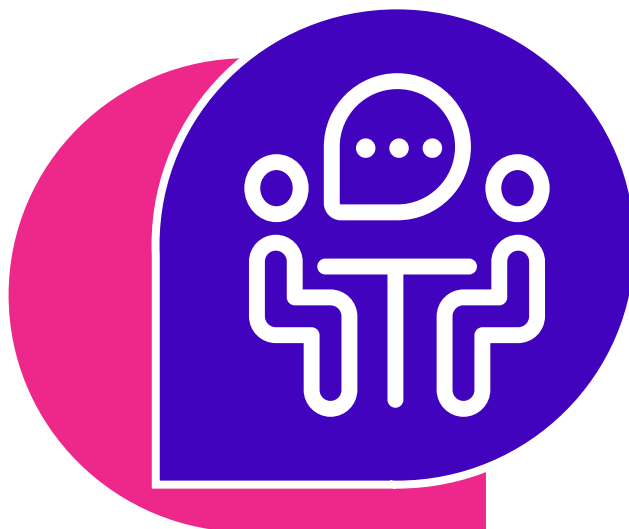
### 1. Pre-Diagnostic Consultation Screening

The client completes a detailed referral form to provide key information about themselves and/or their child and their current situation. The client is also invited to send in any relevant health, education or social care reports. Clinicians from our National Diagnostic and Assessment Service review the referral form and any additional information shared. They can confirm that the client either has a pre-diagnostic consultation or would benefit from a neurodevelopmental assessment for autism.

This diagnostic assessment is available as a Tier 2 service subject to funding being confirmed by the referring organisation. The clinician may recommend that neither a pre-diagnostic consultation nor a neurodevelopmental assessment is the right path for a particular client at that time.

**“Can we say a huge thank you to Dr Sarah Lister Brook. She was so sympathetic, professional and knowledgeable... Truly we can’t thank her enough. This is so emotive, so empowering and life-changing.”**

Client of our National Diagnostic and Assessment Service





## 2. Pre-Diagnostic Consultation

A pre-diagnostic consultation is a one-hour meeting with an autism expert who will listen to a client's concerns and recent experiences. These clinicians from our National Diagnostic and Assessment Service will consider how likely it is that the client is autistic. This is not a full autism assessment but can help clients decide if they want to pursue one. It can also give them a better understanding of their needs and how to support them by signposting to relevant services.

**Why it's unique:** Our pre-diagnostic consultations are offered exclusively to people referred via the Autism Support Plus programme. Our specialist clinicians will help your client or their child to efficiently navigate the diagnostic pathway and understand their options. For Autism Support Plus clients, we aim to provide pre-diagnostic consultations within six weeks of being added to our waiting list. National Diagnostic and Assessment Service times for a full diagnostic assessment can be up to ten weeks. Your organisation will have the unique opportunity to access a specific number of pre-diagnostic consultations for your clients each year, enabling the client to quickly progress to the next stage of an autism assessment.

Further information on our diagnosis service can be found here:

[autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/diagnosis/pre-diagnosis](https://autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/diagnosis/pre-diagnosis)

**“The conversation yesterday has without a doubt been one of the most constructive and productive conversations in the past 18 months to date inclusive of medical professionals and multiple charities.”**

**Emily**, 26, who was advised by her GP to seek an autism assessment



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### Five-Year Membership of the National Autistic Society and associated benefits

Provides clients with five years of membership, which includes access to the following:

- **Your Autism magazine:** every quarter, each client will receive our award-winning magazine packed with expert advice, real-life stories of the challenges and triumphs, and features to support the autistic community (posted to UK residents only or online for international clients).
- **Access to a Facebook group for members:** each client will gain access to our peer support network, which is a great way for autistic people, parents, carers and professionals to connect and share advice.
- **The opportunity to attend our Annual General Meeting:** The client will get updates on our work and campaigns. There will be a Q&A session with our Leadership team and an opportunity to vote on our future work.

**Why it's unique:** This will give your client the benefit of membership, at no cost to them, for five years. It will provide community, support, advice, and peace of mind that this valuable resource will be there for years to come.

**“The five-year membership of NAS is a great benefit and will provide ongoing information and support over the years ahead.”**

Mum of an autistic son from Derby

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### Parent to Parent Emotional Support Service

This bespoke service connects parents of autistic children and adults with other parents who have personal experience, ensuring empathetic and relatable support. It offers parents a listening ear, empathy and an opportunity to discuss their feelings and experiences. Support calls are carried out by highly trained and experienced parent peers who, due to their experience with their own families, can relate to what other parents are going through. They can help the parent identify key issues and possible support strategies.

**Why it's unique:** Clients referred via your partnership with the Autism Support Plus programme will have an exclusive, fast-tracked, scheduled call with our Parent to Parent team. All clients will also receive a follow-up email with bespoke resources and information.

**“Thank you for holding space with me. I truly came away from our conversation feeling empowered.”**

Mum of a 13-year-old son who received support from our Parent to Parent Service



## 5. Education Advice Service

Our Education Advice Service offers expert advice and guidance on educational rights and entitlements for school-age children. Our trained education advisors have extensive experience in helping parents ensure their autistic children get the educational support they need. This includes specialised advice on topics such as getting extra help in school, assessments, education plans, reviews and school transport.

**Why it's unique:** This is a bespoke service to the Autism Support Plus programme. The calls will ensure access to vital education advice tailored to the child's / young person's needs. All clients receive a follow-up email summarising their discussion and providing specific guidance and useful resources.

**“We are incredibly grateful to you and your colleagues for your excellent advice recently. We have been feeling alone in this, but over the past two weeks, we have let out a huge breath and really feel supported.”**

Email from the mother of a ten-year-old autistic child, after she received support from our Education Advice Service

## 6. Behaviour Advice Service

Our Behaviour Advice Service provides a compassionate and supportive space for parents of autistic children and young people to talk about any concerns related to their child's behaviour. Our experienced advisors work with parents to understand the underlying causes of their child's difficulties and empower them with strategies to help reduce distressed behaviour. While our behaviour advisors are not clinically nor medically trained and are unable to provide clinical and medical advice, they can offer practical advice on managing issues such as anxiety, masking, demand avoidance, sensory issues and more.

**Why it's unique:** Our bespoke Behaviour Advice Service is offered exclusively to clients of the Autism Support Plus programme. Clients receive the best possible advice tailored to their specific circumstances, plus a follow-up email with bespoke resources and information.

## 7. Transition Advice Service

Our Transition Advice Service is designed to support the parents of young autistic people navigating the critical transition from school to adult life. We understand that this period can be particularly challenging, and our service offers tailored advice to help families plan effectively for the future. By engaging early in the planning process, parents can help ensure that decisions made are in the best interests of the young person.

**Why it's unique:** Our bespoke Transition Advice Service is offered exclusively to clients of the Autism Support Plus programme. Clients receive the best possible advice tailored to their specific circumstances, plus a follow-up email with bespoke resources and information.

**"I can't tell you how helpful this conversation is and that you have listened to me and I can start to see a way through. My goodness, that has been amazing."**

Mum who used our Transition Advice Service

**Further support from our Education, Transition and Behaviour Advice Services:** We strive to create an environment where parents feel supported, understood and heard. While our team brings extensive knowledge of autism, we recognise the invaluable expertise and insight that parents have about their children's lives. Our goal is to empower them with the knowledge and tools they need to advocate effectively for their children's needs.

## 8. Online training (five online training modules)

Our five specially selected online training modules, written and designed by autistic people and other autism specialists, will provide your clients with knowledge and understanding of autism at their own pace and convenience. These modules take 40-90 minutes to complete and will help your clients recognise and respond to the unique strengths, challenges, communication differences, sensory experiences and stress responses of autistic people. They will also help them understand how to create supportive environments, provide effective support and reduce barriers to communication. The five modules included are: Understanding autism; Autism and communication; Autism and sensory experiences; Autism, stress and anxiety; Women and girls on the autism spectrum.

**Why it's unique:** This bespoke online training product offers a simple and effective way of enhancing autism understanding.



## 9. Wills and Trusts Service

For parents, family and carers of autistic individuals, it is important to consider how you can provide for your loved one if you are no longer there to care for them yourself. Having an up-to-date will in place goes some way to protect them, but in many cases, it has the potential to create further problems.

Our Wills and Trusts Service provides legal advice and resources to help parents, family and carers plan for the future care of their autistic loved ones, improving their financial and personal wellbeing. Clients will have a 30-minute consultation with a qualified solicitor who can discuss their options, answer their questions and provide the information they need before making their arrangements. This service is currently only available to clients living in England or Wales.

**Why it's unique:** This bespoke service addresses the unique challenges of planning for the future of an autistic loved one, offering specialised legal support and resources. Referrals typically take ten working days to complete. Please note that, unfortunately, we cannot currently offer appointments for those permanently living outside England or Wales. However, we are working on plans to extend the service to cover residents of Scotland and Northern Ireland.

**“I am grateful to Ms M for her invaluable help this morning. I am now much clearer about my future plans for my daughter... The organisation answered a lot of my queries and I feel better directed having an appropriate will set in place. Thank you for making a valuable service available.”**

Parent who used our Wills and Trusts Service

## 10. Employment Advice Service

Employment can be difficult for anybody but for autistic people there are particular challenges associated with their autistic characteristics and how these are perceived by others, or impacted by environmental factors. Our Employment Advice Service offers clients a scheduled one-hour conversation with an employment advisor who can provide support and advice on seeking employment and interview preparation. They can also help clients to optimise the support they get in their current job, by guiding them to create an autism profile to help identify strengths and discussing how to request reasonable adjustments. We can provide advice about clients' loved ones who are seeking support with employment, as well as clients themselves.

**Why it's unique:** This is an exclusive service to the Autism Support Plus programme and is designed to support autistic adults seeking employment or those who are working. The service aims to help clients succeed in the workplace.

## 11. Annual Professionals' Conference

Our Annual Professionals' Conference runs live online each March. It offers a programme focused on increasing understanding of autism, sharing best practice and providing insights from specialists. The conference aims to share the latest developments in autism practice or research with professionals working in health, social care, education and other sectors. The day is aimed at professionals; however, we know the programme may also interest autistic people and their family members. Delegates have the option to attend live online or can catch up on any of the sessions for up to three months afterwards. In addition to the live programme, there are bonus sessions for delegates to watch at their own convenience.

**Why it's unique:** This conference runs once a year in March. It provides clients with the latest developments in autism practice and research, available live or on-demand for flexibility.

## Autism Support Plus - Tier 2 package

### 1. National Diagnostic and Assessment Service, (Lorna Wing Centre)

In addition to the pre-diagnostic consultation service delivered in Tier 1, we can also provide neurodevelopmental assessments for autism. Our assessment model is based on the Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders (DISCO) in combination with clinical observations and other formal assessments. The assessments are personalised for each individual. We support individuals and their families throughout the process and provide a detailed report summarising the assessment findings and specific recommendations.

**Please note:** All referrals to our service undergo an initial triage, and cases are reviewed within two working weeks. Current waiting times for assessments are up to ten weeks. Please follow the link to find out more - [autism.org.uk/what-we-do/diagnosticservices](https://autism.org.uk/what-we-do/diagnosticservices)

### 2. Understanding autism training

This service is for organisations that want their staff to feel confident in implementing reasonable adjustments and positively interact with autistic visitors and customers. Training is particularly helpful for customer-facing organisations such as shopping centres, museums, public transport, visitor attractions, telephone customer support services (eg energy companies) or council staff. It is an ideal addition to any induction training package.

Training will include our Understanding autism course, delivered virtually by a National Autistic Society Training Consultant and an autistic co-facilitator. This is a three-hour course delivered virtually via Microsoft Teams for up to 15 people. To ensure engagement, we can deliver it in two x 1.5-hour sessions with a long break in between. This course aims to introduce autism by discussing the main areas of difference and providing increased awareness of how autistic people may experience the environment or service and what adjustments might be needed. Please follow the link to find out more about the course - [autism.org.uk/what-we-do/professional-development/training-and-conferences/understanding-autism](https://autism.org.uk/what-we-do/professional-development/training-and-conferences/understanding-autism)



## Further information

### Overseas clients\*

Although some services operate only within the UK due to nation-specific support requirements, we can extend the following Tier 1 services to your overseas clients\*:

- Pre-Diagnostic Consultation
- Five-Year Membership of the National Autistic Society. Please note that while members who are UK residents receive printed copies of our quarterly magazine by post, overseas members will receive a PDF version via email.
- Education Advice Service
- Behaviour Advice Service
- Transition Advice Service
- Online Training Modules
- Annual Professionals' Conference.

**Please note:** Our advisors can only suggest what is considered good practice or legal in the UK. They cannot provide specific advice on resolving issues or recourse options in other countries.

**\*The National Autistic Society will discuss how we will adapt our safeguarding procedures for your overseas clients.**

### Scheduling calls

If we can't reach your client initially, don't worry, we will make several attempts to contact them before closing the service referral. Our contract will establish clear lead times and guidelines for each service.

### Autism expertise

Our Autism Support Plus team brings together over 30 years of combined experience, offering a unique blend of professional expertise and personal insight. Each member has not only honed their skills through years of dedicated work in the field but also has personal connections to autism, giving them a deep, empathetic understanding of the challenges and triumphs faced by individuals and families. This dual perspective enables us to provide comprehensive, compassionate support which is tailored to meet the diverse needs of those we serve. Our commitment is rooted in both our professional knowledge and our personal journeys, making us a trusted resource for autism-related guidance and care.

### Suggestions and feedback

We are committed to providing bespoke and personalised support and are continually exploring other Tier 1 services. If you have suggestions for other services or feedback, please get in touch with us.

## Pricing

### Tier Level 1

The table below gives a detailed breakdown of the services from Tier 1. It also outlines the associated costs included in Tier 2.

The National Autistic Society recommends an annual one-time payment as the foundation of our partnership. An annual one-time payment will cover Tier 1 services only and will start from £10,800. This is in line with a purchase of a minimum of 40 service referrals totalling £10,800, with each service referral costing £275 per client. Should you require additional referrals throughout the year, you can make extra payments to top up the number of referrals available to you. Additionally, there is an annual management fee of £5,000 at the start of the contract to cover education, awareness-raising and support resources provided.

**Please note:** Tier 2 services will incur extra fees, which will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Tier Level	Services
1	Initial Advisory Call and Service Referral Management
1	National Diagnostic and Assessment Service (Lorna Wing Centre) Pre-Diagnostic Consultation Screening
1	National Diagnostic and Assessment Service (Lorna Wing Centre) Pre-Diagnostic Consultation
1	Five-Year Membership
1	Parent to Parent Emotional Support Service
1	Education Advice Service
1	Behaviour Advice Service
1	Transition Advice Service
1	Online Training Modules
1	Wills and Trusts Service
1	Employment Advice Service
1	Annual Professionals' Conference



## Tier Level 2

This is a higher-level service, and some services have a waiting list, as mentioned above. These services will only be charged for as they are used. Each requested service will be passed on to the relevant team and only charged once the referral is completed.

Tier Level	Services	Unit	Cost per a referral
2	National Diagnostic and Assessment Service (Lorna Wing Centre) Neurodevelopmental Assessments for autism	One client / per assessment	<b>Children and young people</b> £3,300 - £3,880 - confirmed after review of referral  <b>Adults</b> £2,290 - £3,880 - confirmed after review of referral
2	Autism virtual training - eg understanding autism, understanding autism in the workplace	15 clients from one company	The cost for 15 delegates is £1,210

We are happy to regularly review the tier level associated with your organisation and can adapt the number of tiers used for each client as you need. Please get in touch with Gaby Sealy with any questions or for further information.

### Gaby Sealy

Corporate Partnerships Manager



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**“At Naval Children's Charity, we believe in supporting the unique journeys of naval children, including those with autism. Through our collaboration with the National Autistic Society, we are dedicated to providing tailored resources and assistance to naval families with autistic children. By understanding and addressing their specific needs, we can work with families, schools and other outside agencies to ensure that every child can thrive in the naval community. Together with the National Autistic Society, we strive to create an inclusive environment where all children receive the support and opportunities they deserve, enabling them to reach their full potential.”**

**Sara Smith MIW**, Head of Welfare - Naval Children's Charity

**The National Autistic Society is  
here to transform lives, change  
attitudes and create a society  
that works for autistic people.**

Find out more at [www.autism.org.uk](http://www.autism.org.uk)



**National  
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