

## **Service use and needs among people with ADHD and ASD during the transitional years from childhood to adulthood**

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### **Abstract:**

Both ADHD and ASD are developmental disorders with lifelong effects. They disrupt normal academic and social development and associated with serious co-morbid mental health problems such as drug abuse, anxiety, and obsessive compulsive disorder. Both are much more common than previously thought and are known to persist into adulthood in approximately two thirds of cases. Despite of this, many services 'stop' once the adolescent reaches 16-18 years of age, and many 'drop-out' and go untreated. Meanwhile, policy documents highlight the importance of continuity in transition from child to adult mental health services and of improving mental health in all age groups.

This study will be significant in adding to the (currently scarce) evidence base about service use and needs of this clinical group by providing knowledge about (i) specialist referral patterns and medication use amongst young people with ADHD and ASD. (ii) service use, met and unmet needs and associated demographic and medical factors among this group; and (iii) the experiences of moving from child to adult services, including the families role during this transition. The General Practice Research Database (GPRD) will be used to analyse trends in specialist referrals and patterns of psychotropic medication use and how these vary with age, sex and co-morbidities. Face-to-face interviews with young people aged 14-23 diagnosed with ADHD or ASD and their parent/partners will be carried out to assess to assess service use and needs (and experiences of transitioning from child to adult services).