ADHDaptive Ltd
Neurodiversity Illuminated

ADHD SUPPORT IN ENGLAND

NHS waiting lists, funding and a support-first pathway

A visual briefing

803,658

open referrals that may have been for an ADHD assessment in England in March 2026

£164.3 million

projected overspend on ADHD assessments across 32 Integrated Care Boards in 2025/26

Why must people wait for diagnosis before receiving practical support?

This briefing brings together current NHS referral data, funding figures and a proposed pathway in which appropriate support can begin while clinical assessment continues.

Andrew Lambert
Founder, ADHDaptive Ltd
September 2026

adhdaptive.org/adhd-support-england-nhs-waiting-lists-funding/

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ADHD Support in England: Demand, Funding and a Case for Practical Support

Demand for ADHD assessment is rising. NHS budgets are under pressure.
Practical support can start sooner

Estimated number of people with ADHD in England:
2.492 million

Open ADHD assessment referrals March 2026:
803,658

New referrals in March 2026:
32,375
(+29.5% year-on-year)

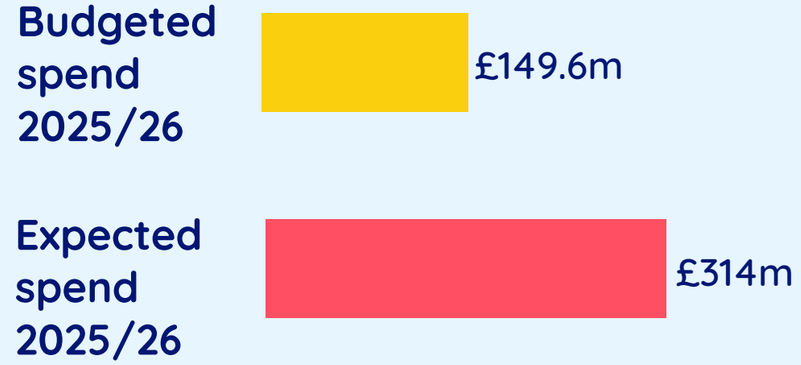
Adults with ADHD estimated to receive medication
15%

Estimated annual economic cost of unsupported ADHD:
£17 billion

Source:
NHS England (May 2026), NHS ADHD Taskforce (2025)

NHS ICBs' ADHD budget 2025/26
£149.6m

Predicted ADHD spend 2025/26:
£314m (+110%)



£164.3m
over budget (+110%)

Source:
Centre for Health and the Public Interest (CHPI), 2026.

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£164.3 million is equivalent to approximately 219,000 six-session ADHDaptive coaching packages



219,000

people could each receive a six-session ADHDaptive coaching package at £750

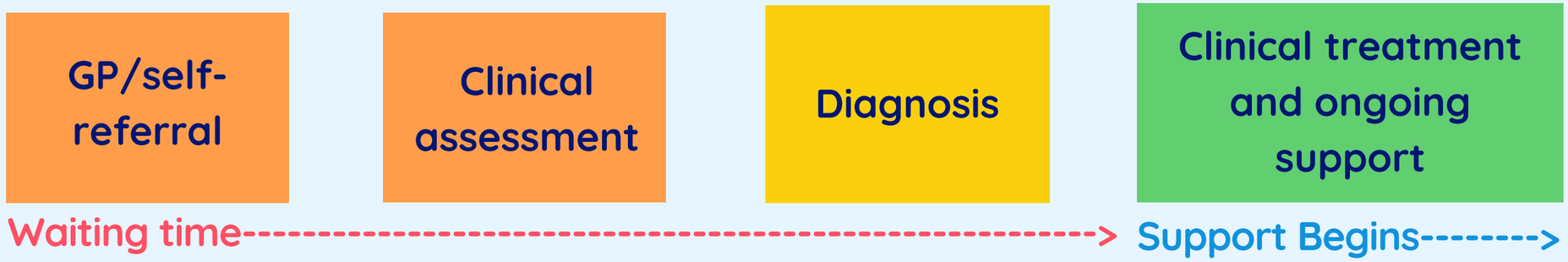
illustrative only: Coaching and clinical assessment are different services

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Two pathway models for ADHD support

Current system: diagnosis first

Practical support typically starts after diagnosis.



Proposed model: support starts first

Practical support is available early. Practical support does not require a clinical assessment.

