



Why did Sue have to wait such a long time for her autism diagnosis?

Sue was aware that she had some autistic traits, and because she needed support with her university studies she wanted an official diagnosis. However, it took two and a half years and a second opinion before she got the correct diagnosis.

We use people's stories to highlight problems, and encourage the NHS to change and improve its services.
Tell us your story today.

Sue approached her GP to request a referral for a diagnosis of autism as she wanted some support while she did a university course. Funding was approved for her assessment but then she found out she would have to wait about 12 months for an appointment. She was extremely upset because she couldn't get the correct support at university or reasonable adjustments at work without an official diagnosis.

She was finally seen a year later, but was told that she did not meet the diagnostic criteria for autism, so she decided to ask for a second opinion. She was then told that funding for a second opinion would not be granted which made her feel very stressed and upset and resulted in her having to take time off sick from work.

Her GP then helped her to challenge the funding decision and she was awarded funding for a second opinion. She finally received an autism diagnosis in August 2016, but it had taken a full two and a half years to get. Having the autism diagnosis meant she could now access the correct support at university, but the long struggle to get it had caused her a great deal of psychological distress, loss of earnings and put her into debt.

If Sue could have been diagnosed sooner it would have saved her a great deal of stress and allowed her to get the support she was entitled to when she needed it. Relying upon getting a diagnosis to get support in your workplace or educational establishment often means that people with autism struggle for extended periods of time when there is support and adaptations available that would make working life more straightforward.



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