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## **Hundreds of children and young people in West Wales to benefit from innovative new partnership boosting access to autism assessments**

Families in West Wales now have access to innovative online diagnostic assessments for autism which will help hundreds of children and young people thanks to a new partnership.

Digital mental health provider Healios has joined with the Hywel Dda University Health Board to support its Children Neurodevelopmental service to meet the rising demand for autism assessments across Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire.

Autism Diagnostic Assessments are being offered to 379 children and young people over a two year contract period as part of the new partnership, with over 100 referrals already having been accepted by the team since it launched in March.

The partnership means that Healios is now working with four out of the seven health boards in Wales to help transform the lives of children and young people.

Adopting a digital-first clinical approach, Healios has redefined the way mental health, autism and ADHD services are delivered in the UK since it was founded in 2013.

By teaming expert clinicians with innovative technology and a family-centred approach, Healios has enabled tens of thousands of children, young people and their families to access life-changing support from the comfort of their own homes, helping to reduce waiting times and improve outcomes.

Rich Andrews, Healios founder and CEO, said he was delighted to be able to provide services to a fourth health board in Wales and support even more children, young people and families.

He said: "This partnership with the team at Hywel Dda will see the provision of innovative services which will make such a positive difference to the lives of the children and young people that our clinicians will be working with over the next two years.

"We're delighted to be working with Hywel Dda and have already been struck by the team's passion and commitment to the vital role they play in improving outcomes for the families they work with and we are looking forward to working together and transforming young lives."

The Children's Neurodevelopmental service at Hywel Dda was established and launched in November 2015 under Welsh Government's Together for Children and Young People (T4YCP) framework and commissioned to undertake diagnostic assessment of autism in children and young people up until the age of 18.

Catherine Vaughan, Service Delivery Manager (Neurodevelopmental Services) at Hywel Dda said: “Hywel Dda University Health Board is committed to improving outcomes for children and young people and is only too aware of the importance of autism being identified in a timely manner.

“Given the increasing demand for diagnostic assessment for both children and adults seen across the health board, the team is delighted to have been given this opportunity to work in partnership with Healios to enable more children to be assessed and any additional needs identified.”

Angela Lodwick, Assistant Director of Mental Health and Learning Disabilities, Hywel Dda University Health Board said: “We are very pleased to promote this new and innovative Digital Assessment process with Healios to improve the timeliness of diagnostic assessments and reduce the impact of delayed diagnosis for young people and families in West Wales.”

## **ENDS**

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## **Notes to editors**

### **About Healios**

Healios is the leading digital provider of specialist mental health, autism and ADHD services for children and young people in the UK aged 25 and under. Healios is reimagining the care experience by optimally combining an expert multidisciplinary care team with evidence-based, family-centred approaches and great technology.

Proudly working in partnership with 62% of the UK’s NHS children and adolescent mental health services, Healios is the largest private digital provider of specialist mental health and neurodevelopmental assessment, diagnosis and intervention services for children and young people, supporting over 37,000 patients.

For more information visit: [Healios.org.uk](https://healios.org.uk)

### **Healios in Wales - facts and figures**

Healios currently provides a range of services to three other health boards in Wales: Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board and Swansea Bay University Health Board.

We’ve delivered 6,563 assessments or treatment interventions so far in Wales and we’ve accepted, to date, 7,415 referrals for Welsh children and young people.