

Accessing Psychotherapy Services

Respond provides specialist psychotherapy services for people with learning disabilities and autistic people who have experienced trauma. Our services include funded and self-funded therapy options.

Please note that not all services are free at point of access. Below is an overview of how to access our services and key information about funding.

1 Funded services

“Funded services” are either commissioned or supported through specific grant funding. They are free at the point of access.

Psychotherapy (therapy) services free at the point of access include:

- Survivors of sexual violence and domestic violence (up to 6 months of therapy, including 1-2 assessments). These are pan-London services only.
- Young people’s services (limited funded spaces).
- Therapy within three special educational needs (SEN) schools – often delivering longer-term therapy in the school setting. See FAQs for more information.

2 Additional funding through an IFR

- Some psychotherapy services may require full or partial payment.
- One possible route is an Individual Funding Request (IFR) to the Integrated Care Board (ICB). An IFR can be made when the therapy required is not routinely funded or commissioned, but there is a clear case that the person’s needs are exceptional and that the therapy is likely to be beneficial.
- The success of an IFR depends on clinical justification and local policies. Support from a GP or another healthcare professional is often required.

Individual funding requests (IFR)

An Individual funding request (IFR) is a formal application for funding where the above funding options do not cover the therapy required. IFRs are typically used when:

- A person does not meet the criteria for existing funded services.
- There are no available grant-funded therapy spaces.
- The person requires longer-term, or specialist therapy not automatically covered by existing funding streams.

Who can apply for an IFR?

An IFR can be submitted by a healthcare professional such as a GP, social worker, or other professional involved in the person's care.

If the person has already been assessed by Respond, we can assist by providing a structured template for the application. This includes a clinical report outlining the person's needs and how Respond's services can help.

If the person has not been assessed by Respond, they will need to apply for an IFR through their GP, social worker, or another healthcare provider. Information about making an Individual Funding Request is available on the [NHS website](#).

Right to choose

Under [NHS England's Right to Choose policy](#), individuals in England may be able to request therapy with Respond instead of using a local NHS service, provided:

- They have a diagnosis that aligns with our specialist areas (for example, trauma, learning disabilities, autism).
- They would prefer to receive therapy from a specialist provider like Respond rather than the service offered locally.

To explore this option, individuals can speak to their GP or referring professional and ask to be referred under Right to Choose. This is different from an Individual Funding Request (IFR), which is used in more exceptional circumstances.

3 Self-funded

If you are not eligible for a funded service, and an individual funded place is not available, you may choose to self-pay for therapy.

Please get in touch in touch with us to talk through the options to find out about the costs involved.