

Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule Second Edition (ADOS-2)

I am a Registered Mental Health Nurse and BABCP Accredited CBT Therapist working within a Youth Justice Service. My role is to assess young people coming into the justice system, and then provide intervention, or signpost/refer as appropriate.

My assessment is holistic looking at physical, mental health and neurodevelopmental needs. Prior to receiving this grant and taking this course, if there was a concern about neurodevelopment then that would require a referral into mainstream CAMHS. This often resulted in a long wait (between 12 and 24 months) for assessment. Due to that length of wait it was common for the young person to have gone through the justice service without their needs being fully accounted for. Furthermore, the delay in assessment meant a delay in appropriate intervention putting the young person at risk of further justice system contact.

I was given a grant from the FPSA to attend an Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule 2 (ADOS-2) course to be able to diagnose autism conditions in this population. Furthermore, the course also gave me further insight into how Autism affects young people allowing me to tailor any psychosocial education or CBT intervention more appropriately.

The course took place online, using Zoom, between 28th and 30th September 2021. This was a convenient way for me to attend as usually courses of this nature are in London (or other big cities) which then require accommodation costs and also trying to find someone to look after my children!

Although video conferencing can often come with difficulty (i.e. connection issues, speed of internet etc) this course ran flawlessly. The training itself was very well delivered and it was a small group allowing ample time to talk through our own thoughts and scenarios with the facilitator. It was a very practical course, watching several videos of full ADOS assessments, which I found a very good way to learn. Course administration was done well, with packs being sent out ahead of the course, and the course administrator, Carla, was always on hand whenever I had some questions about the content of the course (and I had a lot!).

I am very grateful to the FPSA for giving me the opportunity to complete this course, and it is having a massive impact on young people in our service every day.

Thank you.

Registered Mental Health Nurse and CBT Therapist.