

Summary of Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, Second Edition: ADOS-2 – Training: Introduction to ADOS-2 Course

I currently work as an Assistant Psychologist within a developing CAMHS Neurodevelopmental Service. I am most grateful for The Foundation for Professionals in Services to Adolescents (FPSA) for enabling me to attend the two-day course on 29th March – 30th March 2022 to help develop my knowledge and skills in the clinical assessment of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Presently our waiting times are stretched and part of the difficulty in decreasing waiting times is the level of expertise needed to complete Autism assessments. We aspire to reduce the wait times for families in order for them to get the support they need with the correct diagnosis. As with many services, resources are limited; but by carrying out the completed training, I am now in a position to help support my service and the families that we work with by carrying out these assessments to speed up the process and improve the young person's journey.

The Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) is a semi-structured assessment of communication, social interaction, and play (or imaginative use of materials) for individuals suspected of having autism. This has proven to be a valuable diagnostic tool which adds quality and evidence to the assessment process. The completed training has allowed me to enhance my skills in order to recognise traits of Autism in addition to giving me the ability to identify when traits may be explainable by other Neurodevelopmental Conditions or when other hypotheses may explain the young person's difficulties better.

The training was facilitated virtually by Marianne Murin (Clinical Psychologist) to a small group of clinicians. The clinicians were from a wide range of backgrounds which was favourable as it allowed for a more diverse and varied learning experience. Marianne was considerate and compassionate when delivering training and encouraged clinicians to use this space as a reflective space for open discussion. The course was presented in a practical format which involved watching several videos of full ADOS assessments and individually coding each assessment. We then came back together as a team to discuss our responses and receive informal feedback. This was a helpful way to learn virtually and allowed sufficient time for sharing our own thoughts, opinions, and questions. I was provided with resources prior to the course which have been helpful to refer to since.

I am grateful to the FPSA for providing me with the opportunity to complete this course, as it will help to support the young people, families, and the service during the assessment process.