

# Clinical Perspectives on the Assessment and Diagnosis of Social and Neurodevelopmental Conditions in Children

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## Summary

Making sense of developmental differences in children can be challenging. Two critical nodes in the assessment pathway are identification and formal assessment. The research was designed to reflect a child's path through services starting with a query of autism and moving to differential conceptualisation of ADHD and attachment difficulties. My dissertation attempted to draw out some of the different types of knowledge and information that contribute to these assessment practices. To this end, I used multiple methods, including reviews, interviews, and network analysis of electronic healthcare records. My research showed that General Practitioners use various forms of knowledge when making decisions, and yet to date, most research has focused predominantly on explicit knowledge. Also, the research showed some of the pragmatic considerations that contribute to diagnostic decisions in formal assessment services. Finally, my research showed the overlap and divergence in symptom profiles in children with these conditions. Recommendations include expert statements to clarify conceptual issues regarding neurodevelopment and attachment, and integrating electronic healthcare records across services.

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