

# The Keston Unit at Priory Hospital Hayes Grove

Specialist autistic spectrum  
disorder unit, working with  
psychiatric co-morbidity



# The Keston Unit provides assessment and treatment for males and females who are on the autistic spectrum.

The team has specialist expertise in:

- **Managing and treating the complex presentations of co-occurring psychiatric disorders**
- **Evidence-based psychiatric treatment and psychological approaches for those with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)**
- **Manifestations of ASD and discrimination from personality disorder**
- **The particular challenges experienced by those with ASDs in inpatient treatment settings**

The Keston Unit has nine en-suite bedrooms and is embedded alongside broader services at Priory Hospital Hayes Grove. This includes inpatient wards for general psychiatry and eating disorders, and a day care hospital which offers both individual and group programmes.

We make optimum use of the attractive and peaceful hospital environment. Our facilities include communal dining areas, recreation areas, gardens and an occupational therapy room. We also help to promote patient skills through access to the wider community.



## Our multidisciplinary team (MDT)

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The ASD-sensitive ward environment and routines are created by a team of nurses (RMNs and RNLDs) and healthcare assistants with specialist training in managing ASD and other co-morbidities. They are supported by a speech and language therapist (SaLT) and physiotherapist, as required.

The core MDT also includes a consultant psychiatrist and ward doctors, specialist clinical psychologist, an occupational therapist who is an expert in sensory assessment, a dietitian and a clinical pharmacist.

The Keston Unit also benefits from access to our eating disorder MDT, and a wide range of therapies, including those focused on addiction.

We are supported by Priory Clinical Governance structures and care is provided in line with National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) Clinical guideline [CG142]. All treatment is evidence-based and patients are included in the decisions that are made about their care. The unit is also in the process of accreditation with the National Autistic Society.

## A focus on making a lasting difference

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Since opening in 2009, the majority of admissions (approaching 40) have been from inpatient units. Approximately half have been transferred under a Section of the Mental Health Act (Sections 2 / 3), and around 25% have been treated under the Mental Capacity Act with Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

Diagnoses have included co-morbid psychosis, and severe affective, anxiety spectrum, adjustment and eating disorders. Mostly, there have been multiple co-morbidities associated with high levels of functional impairment and often with a high risk of serious self-harm.

The goal of any admission is:

- **To enable patients to live with contentment**
- **For patients to live as independently as possible, in a community setting**
- **To make a real and lasting difference in their lives**

Lengths of stay have varied from six months to two years depending on the clinical needs of the patient. Discharge delays are primarily due to difficulty finding appropriate community placements. We work with a number of providers to support successful discharges to residential and supported living settings. Thus, the MDT encourages close links with the care co-ordinator and commissioning teams, with six-monthly Care Programme Approach (CPA) meetings and Care and Treatment Reviews (CTRs).





## Specialist services at a glance

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The Keston Unit offers:

- Treatment of psychiatric conditions in an ASD-sensitive environment
- Cognitive assessments e.g. Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale - Fourth UK Edition (WAIS-IV), Behavioural Assessment of the Dysexecutive Syndrome (BADS), etc.
- Occupational therapy assessments e.g. activities of daily living (ADL)
- Comprehensive reports with recommendations
- Specialist psychiatric nursing
- Post-diagnostic support for ASD
- Psycho-educational sessions
- Psychotherapeutic interventions, for example, modified trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- Speech and language therapy
- Family support groups
- Sensory assessments

## Eligibility criteria

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- Both males and females
- Aged 18 years and over
- An actual or suspected diagnosis of ASD

## Exclusion criteria

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- Learning disability



## Patient story

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# Our daughter Hannah\* was admitted to the Keston Unit at Priory Hospital Hayes Grove in a desperate condition, and only days from losing her life.

She was suffering from severe depression and psychosis, combined with a late diagnosis of high functioning Asperger syndrome. She had been in the care of the local NHS mental health services for several years but her condition had continued to deteriorate.

We came across the Keston Unit almost by chance and had been advised they would probably be able to help Hannah. On the night she arrived at the unit she was non-verbal and in a psychotic state. They had pre-assessed Hannah and decided that they could help. Her admittance was the start of a two-year journey from near death, to wellness and the ability to continue her studies. We should state that at the time of her crisis Hannah was a fourth year medical student.

From day one Hannah, and for the first time 'we' (her parents) were treated with great respect, courtesy and a determination to be helped. Hannah was put under the care of her consultant and this proved to be a turning point. As someone who understood ASDs, along with a highly dedicated and skilled team, he was able to get to the root of Hannah's condition – something previously never achieved or, in our view, attempted. We will always remember the consultant telling us that he wanted to understand how Hannah had gone from being in the top 10% of her medical class, to where she found herself on arrival at the unit.

Through dedication, patience and excellent diagnosis, combined with extraordinary care from all the staff at the unit, including the non-clinical staff, Hannah began the road to recovery. After some two years, she emerged from the unit well enough to convince the 'medical fitness to practice board' that she could take up her medical studies again if she so wished.

Hannah has gone from strength to strength and, on the one occasion where she faltered (not an unusual event for cases like hers), the Keston Unit was there to help and aid her swift recovery to the previous level. Hannah is now back to the beautiful daughter and person that she was before her mental health crisis and we shall be forever grateful to the Keston Unit, the consultant and wider team, who not only made Hannah well again but helped us so much too.

### Former patient's parents



\*Patient name changed

“ The Keston Unit has provided me with a safe and accepting environment to not only recover within, but also act as a platform from which I can build the rest of my life. The support offered here is unique in both its specialism and high level of quality, namely the clinical psychologist and psychiatrist.

Their experience in autism is invaluable and with it they have helped me to develop skills and techniques to manage specific difficulties that others know little about. They have not focused on my autism at the expense of the rest of me though, and have acknowledged all aspects of my past, present and future.

Unlike many psychiatrists I have known, I have always felt like part of the team at the Keston Unit, and have been involved in all decisions. Their approach has been key in getting me to the positive position that I am in now, which is beyond many people's expectations. They refused to settle for second best, even when the alternative was not quick or easy.

There has also been some incredible nursing staff here throughout my stay. The unit's small size allows nursing staff to really get to know everyone and to treat us as individuals, adapting their approach accordingly. I couldn't be more grateful to whoever referred me here, and for the help I have received during my admission. ”

**Patient**



## An MDT perspective

A 19-year-old woman diagnosed with depression, emergent borderline personality disorder and ASD, was transferred to the Keston Unit following seven months of general psychiatric inpatient care. There had been multiple episodes of serious self-harm (cutting to the bone and overdoses), which backdated eight years.

Following assessment, a psychiatric reformulation was made, which included bipolar II affective disorder (which had rapid cycles with antidepressant exposure), chronic post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) related to sexual abuse which had not previously been fully declared, and poor coping mechanisms in the context of an ASD.

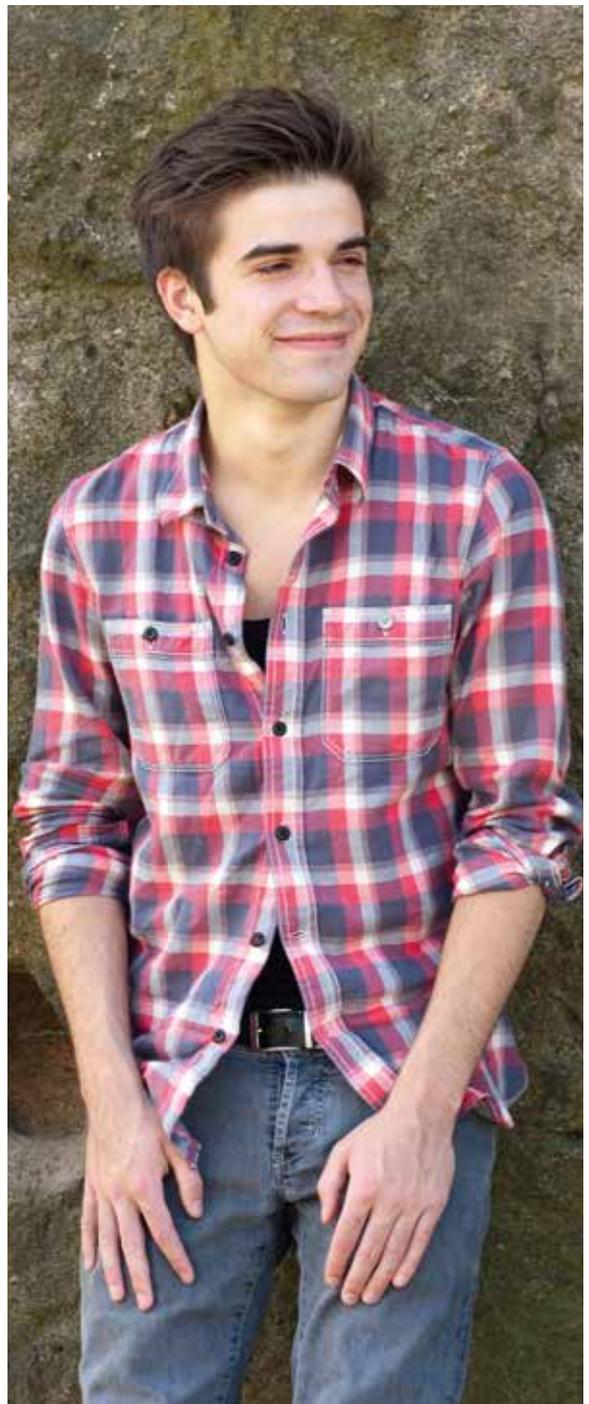
With mood stabilisation and ASD-modified trauma therapy, along with stress management skills and post-autism diagnosis counselling, the self-harming stopped. The patient was subsequently transferred to a supported community placement.



## Admission process

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- 1.** If you are interested in making a referral to the Keston Unit, please call the hospital directly on **0208 462 7722**. Your enquiry should be addressed to the director of clinical services (or the Keston Unit manager in their absence). In order to conduct a 'desktop' review and give an informed opinion as to suitability, up-to-date clinical information is required, including:
  - **Recent Care Programme Approach (CPA) or Mental Health Review Tribunal (MHRT) reports**
  - **Current Historical Clinical Risk Management-20 Version 3 (HCRv20) or Short-Term Assessment of Risk and Treatability (START) risk assessment/management documents**
  - **Current and recent ward notes (ideally 3 months' worth)**
  - **Copy of current medication administration record**
- 2.** If the desktop review indicates possible suitability, a face-to-face MDT assessment will be booked and carried out by members of the Keston Unit team. In our experience, this may require considerable planning in order to involve family and appropriate professionals, and can take more than one visit
- 3.** If an offer of an admission is made, funding will need to be arranged and agreed before an admission date is agreed and admission planning is started
- 4.** The Keston Unit will work closely with the referring unit to plan and implement a successful transition. This may include a visit to the Keston Unit by the patient and family, if appropriate



## Referrals

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To make an enquiry and for further information please contact Priory Hospital Hayes Grove directly:

Call: 0208 462 7722 (enquiries should be directed to the director of clinical services, or to the Keston Unit manager in their absence)

Email: [hayesgrove@priorygroup.com](mailto:hayesgrove@priorygroup.com)

Visit: [www.priorygroup.com](http://www.priorygroup.com)

To make a referral or for further information about Priory's services, please contact our Central Enquiries Centre:

Call: 0800 090 1356

Email: [prioryenquiries@nhs.net](mailto:prioryenquiries@nhs.net)



## How to find us

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**The Keston Unit**, Priory Hospital Hayes Grove, Bromley, Kent, BR2 7AS

For more detailed directions on how to find us, please visit [www.priorygroup.com](http://www.priorygroup.com)



Telephone: 0208 462 7722

E-mail: [hayesgrove@priorygroup.com](mailto:hayesgrove@priorygroup.com)

Web: [www.priorygroup.com](http://www.priorygroup.com)

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