Top Tips for Clinicians consulting with patients on the Autistic Spectrum

- Speak calmly and clearly in short sentences
- Ask direct and closed questions – avoid too many choices or too much information in one go
- Wait for responses to questions. Do not repeat yourself or ask in a different way
- No eye contact does not mean the person is not listening. Start a question by addressing them so they know you are speaking to them
- Language should be kept as literal as possible – jokes, metaphors or sarcasm can be confusing
- Check that the person really understands what you have said – the verbal skills or apparent agreement may not mirror actual understanding of the information

- Explain verbally and/or in writing the process of the consultation
- Demonstrate an action or intended procedure before starting it
- Recap and write down future plans. Try to give written information if possible
- Avoid diagnostic overshadowing. Co-morbidity is common and you should always consider a serious illness, particularly if the person's behavior changes.

- Consult family or carers, with permission, for more information and to establish if your patient has particular sensitivities
- But do not assume the person with Autism must have a carer present – they should be offered the same confidentiality as all

- Make sure the diagnosis is coded as a significant active problem on the computer
- Ensure reasonable adjustments needed to access your services are clearly recorded
- Referrals to other services should include clear instructions about any reasonable adjustments that may be needed
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