

OASIS · AT A GLANCE

Finding Adult Doctors Who Understand Autism

How to vet a primary-care practice, pin them down on accommodations in writing, and walk in with a one-page passport that does the work of a long conversation.

BY JIM PALASTY · OASIS FOR AUTISM · 9 MIN READ

1

PAGE PASSPORT

A medical home is a relationship, not a building. Build it on one page that any clinician can read in ninety seconds.

How it works

THREE STEPS

Screen the practice

Three calls. Three questions. Note who picks up, who calls back, and who asks what your adult needs.



Meet the doctor

Twenty minutes, no exam, no script. You are hiring a clinician. Treat it like the interview it is.



Get the passport in the chart

Ask the office to scan it into the EHR and tag it. Every visit, every clinician, every time.

What to ask before you book

New patients	Are you accepting new adult patients age 21+ this quarter?
Visit length	Can a visit be scheduled at 40 minutes instead of 20?
Quiet waiting	Is a quiet room available, or first/last slot?
Communication	Will you accept and read a one-page medical passport?
AAC support	Will the clinician communicate through AAC if needed?
ADA contact	Who is the practice ADA accommodation contact?
Referrals	Specialists familiar with autistic adults on the referral list?

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

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We made eleven calls. Eleven. Practice number ten said no without asking what we needed. Practice eleven scheduled a forty-minute meet-and-greet, and the doctor walked in holding a printed copy of our passport. He had read it. We cried in the car.

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What matters, at a glance

Three-call screen

Ask each practice the same three questions. The variance in their answers tells you everything you need to know about their adult-care infrastructure.

The one-page passport

Identity, sensory profile, communication style, consent steps. Tape it to the front of the chart. Scan it into the EHR. Make it follow your adult.

The "we don't take new adults" wall

Many pediatric practices stop taking patients at 21. Many adult practices quietly close their panel to new adults with disabilities. Ask before scheduling, not after.

The new-patient gap

A new-patient appointment can be ninety days out. Bridge that gap with a meet-and-greet. Most offices can do one in two weeks if you ask.

Quiet waiting, longer slots

Twenty extra minutes is reasonable. The first or last slot is reasonable. A quiet room is reasonable. Ask in writing. Save the reply.

Specialty referrals on file

A real medical home knows which neurologist, GI, dentist, and gyn will take time. Ask for the names. Note which the practice keeps on hand.

BRING THESE · CHECK AS YOU GO

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Three-call screen results, dated | ☐ Practice manager name and email |
| ☐ Written accommodation request sent | ☐ Meet-and-greet date booked |
| ☐ Passport sent ahead of visit | ☐ Specialist referrals received |
| ☐ DOJ complaint number, if filed | |

YOUR MOVE

When the front desk says they "don't really do that"

- 1 Ask to speak to the practice manager, not the scheduler.
- 2 Send a written accommodation request by email with a deadline.
- 3 Call the insurance member services line and ask for ADA-accommodating providers in network.
- 4 File an ADA Title III complaint with the U.S. Department of Justice.
- 5 Pivot. The next practice is the next practice.

A good medical home is a thing you build, not a thing you find.

RESOURCES NAMED IN THIS POST

oasisforautism.com · <https://oasisforautism.com>

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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