

Primary Care Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Toolkit

Enclosed is a packet offering supporting tools proven to be effective in the treatment of ADHD. The goal of MHS Health Wisconsin's ADHD toolkit is to support the screening for and treatment of ADHD in the primary care setting. ADHD is a behavioral disorder believed to affect up to 1 in 20 children in the US. People living with ADHD tend to have a lower occupational status, poor social relationships and are more likely to commit motoring offenses and develop substance use issues.

MHS Health recognizes that many of our health plan members feel most comfortable with their Primary Care Physician (PCP) as the initial point of contact for all health concerns. With that in mind, the significance of the role that PCPs play in identifying and referral for ADHD treatment cannot be understated. We hope you will have the opportunity to utilize and share this information with your patients.

What is ADHD?

It is common for people to feel anxious and nervous at times when faced with stressful situations in everyday life. There are three different types of ADHD, each with different symptoms: predominately inattentive, predominately hyperactive/impulsive and combined. As the most commonly diagnosed behavioral disorder in young persons, ADHD affects an estimated three to five percent of school-aged children. However, it does not only affect children. People of all ages can have ADHD and if undiagnosed, it can persist into adulthood and may cause significant impairment in functioning.

Symptoms vary depending on the type of anxiety disorder, but general symptoms include:

Adults

- Poor attention, excessive distractibility
- Physical restlessness or hyperactivity
- Excessive impulsivity, saying or doing things without thinking
- Difficulty getting started on tasks
- Difficulty completing tasks
- Frequently losing things
- Poor organization, planning, time management skills

- Excessive forgetfulness

Children

- Makes careless mistakes
- Has difficulty sustaining attention
- Does not appear to listen
- Struggles to follow through on instructions
- Has difficulty with organization
- Is easily distracted
- Is forgetful in daily activities
- Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in chair
- Runs around or climbs excessively
- Has difficulty engaging in activities quietly
- Talks excessively
- Interrupts or intrudes upon others

Screening Tools & Resources

Simple general screening tools that can be completed by the patient or administered during an office visit include:

- *The Vanderbilt Assessment Scale* - This is a 55-question assessment tool that reviews signs and symptoms of ADHD. It also screens for co-existing conditions such as conduct disorder, oppositional-defiant disorder, anxiety and depression and more.
- *Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC)* - This scale assesses such things as hyperactivity, aggression and conduct problems. It also addresses anxiety, depression, attention and learning problems and lack of certain essential skills.
- *Connors Rating Scales* - The Connors rating system collects answers from parents, teachers and adolescent patients themselves in order to create a comprehensive inventory of a child's behaviors. There are two versions of the tool, a short and long version, both comprised of multiple choice questions.

Best Practices

Interventions for the treatment of ADHD fall into two main categories: psychosocial and pharmacological. Psychosocial interventions such as behavioral therapy, teaching social skills, parent/child education about ADHD and appropriate school programming can be useful. Pharmacological management most often includes, prescribing stimulants and non-stimulants. A follow-up appointment should be scheduled within 30 days of initiating a prescription to treat ADHD in a child. Then two follow-up appointments should be scheduled in the following nine months to ensure efficacy of the medication.

For additional copies and information about ADHD screening tools, visit:

www.nami.org

www.nimh.nih.gov

www.iccmhc.org