

Information on ADHD (Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)

A person with ADHD finds it very hard to concentrate for any length of time. They are often impulsive and excessively active. Some people have a major attention problem without being hyperactive – this is called ‘ADD’ or ‘attention deficit disorder’. ADD/ADHD is not just a childhood disorder. Symptoms can actually get worse as children grow into adulthood and face life’s increasing pressures and demands.

Adults with ADD/ADHD have problems including:

- Poor concentration and inattention - difficulty getting organised, starting and completing tasks, easily distracted, tendency to tune out or drift away while reading or during a conversation.
- Impatience – easily frustrated or bored.
- Impulsiveness - difficulty in curbing first reactions and not thinking before changing plans, embarking on new schemes or making career plans.
- Hyperactivity - restlessness like not being able to still for long periods.
- Low self-esteem or a sense of underachievement.
- Mood swings.

The chaos of living with unrecognised and untreated ADD/ADHD can take its toll - The never-ending to-do lists, stress of missed deadlines and forgotten appointments, aggravated friends and family members who just don’t understand why someone can’t pull it together and self-recrimination over a lack of accomplishments.

Treatment of ADD/ADHD can include medications and/or therapy, coaching, etc.

Ways staff can assist:

- Create an environment where students are encouraged to disclose their needs and seek appropriate support as required.
- Provide a clear structure for the course with explicit information about assessment, dates, and resources.
- Provide a safety net for students unable to attend or concentrate on lectures by making lecture material available on Cecil or in the Department.
- Flexible assignments (provide students with a range of ways to show their understanding and grasp of material).
- Flexible deadlines, or a system for extensions which reduces the amount of self-advocacy that the students need to undertake (with documentation of the impairment and possibly for the life of the subject).
- Know relevant support services on campus and in the community, and where appropriate, seek advice from them or encourage students to ask for help.

Available support services for staff and students

- Disability Services: Ph: 09 373 7599 ext 82936
Email: disabilities@auckland.ac.nz
- Student Learning Centre: Ph: 09 373 7599 ext 88850
Email: slc@auckland.ac.nz
- Student Health & Counselling: Ph: 09 373 7599 ext 87681
- Useful Website: www.flexiblelearning.auckland.ac.nz/calm

Disclosure is voluntary

Students may choose not to disclose their disability because they:

- Don't want special treatment, or want to see if they can cope alone.
- Fear discrimination.
- Feel embarrassed about asking for help.
- Want to get to know staff first, and then decide whether to disclose.

Information has been sourced from:

- Mental Health Foundation of New Zealand: www.mentalhealth.org.nz
- Hollowell, E. & Rafey, J. (1994). Driven to distraction: Recognizing and coping with Attention Deficit Disorder from childhood through adulthood.
- Adult ADD/ADHD: Recognising the signs, symptoms, and effects.
http://www.helpguide.org/mental/adhd_add_adult_symptoms.htm

The University of Auckland encourages partnerships between Faculties, student services and students, to support students achieve their academic potential.

CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION OR SUPPORT

Disability Services

Room 036 Basement

ClockTower Building

22 Princes Street

Auckland

Ph: 09 373 7599 ext 82936

Fax: 09 308 2354

www.eo.auckland.ac.nz

www.disability.auckland.ac.nz

disabilities@auckland.ac.nz

University Medical Services

City Campus Clinic

Level 3, Student Commons Building

2 Alfred Street

Ph: 373 7599 ext 87681

Grafton Campus Clinic

The "White House"

151 Park Rd

Ph: 373 7599 ext 86962

Tamaki Campus Clinic (Registered Nurse Clinic only)

Building 730.110

Morrin Road

Ph: 373 7599 ext 86677

Epsom Campus Clinic

R Block, Gate 4

60 Epsom Avenue, Epsom

Ph: 373 7599 ext 48526

Student Learning Centre

Ph: +64 9 373 7599 ext 88850

slc@auckland.ac.nz

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