

# ADHD Presentations by Heidi Bernhardt RN

## General ADHD

### ADHD Treatment

ADHD treatment should always be multimodal with the psychoeducation being the initial treatment offered. Different treatments such as lifestyle changes, accommodations in the home, school and workplace; and therapies such as, CBT, Mindfulness, relaxation exercises, relationship and anger management as well as tutoring and coaching will be reviewed. The dilemma of medication will be discussed. How medication actually works, different types of medication, potential side effects and alternative treatments will also be covered.

### The Impact of ADHD on the Child, Parents, Siblings and the Family as a Whole

Parents whose child has been diagnosed with ADHD commonly transition through emotional stages while working their way to acceptance of the disorder. Parents and caregivers as well as those who work with families dealing with ADHD can benefit greatly if they know what these stages look like. How ADHD impacts the individual child with ADHD and other family members will be reviewed as well as what research tells us about how ADHD can impact family functioning as a whole. The question of how and when to inform a child about their ADHD will also be discussed.

### Psycho-educational Reports, what they tell us about students with ADHD

This workshop will outline problems that occur when we solely rely on psycho-educational reports to develop learning profiles and individual education plans for students with ADHD. Psycho-educational testing, while helpful in ruling in or out specific learning disabilities, are not comprehensive or accurate when assessing for learning and self-regulation impairments caused by ADHD.

New CADDAC tools that have been developed to assist in the documentation of ADHD impairments in the education environment will be presented. In addition, this presentation will also summarize why psycho-educational testing can be a human rights violation and detrimental to a student with ADHD in the post-secondary setting.

## **ADHD in Canadian School Systems**

This presentation will cover topics on; provincial special education systems, is yours one of exceptionality or inclusion; is there an ingrained fear of labeling within your system; how do third party reports impact a student's right to receive special education resources; how to become a better advocate and ADHD students' rights in elementary, high school and post-secondary systems. Preparing adequate post-secondary documentation for a student entering college or university will also be covered. The session will include an open discussion allowing time for questions on individual cases.

After this presentation, participants will be better able to:

- Understand how ADHD is recognized or not recognized in special education systems and become aware of the difficulties this may cause in accessing resources
- Document impairments to better secure resources
- Recognize when students' rights are not being met within a school system

## **The Socioeconomic Cost of ADHD**

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) impacts Canadian society well beyond its significant effect on individuals and their families. This presentation will discuss some of the current costs of ADHD on our healthcare, education, justice and social service systems and its impacts workplace productivity. Left untreated, ADHD impedes an individual's ability to attain human and social capital and thereby impacts the Canadian economy. In contrast, if the Canadian and provincial governments invest in the provision of adequate diagnostic, treatment and effective intervention services for the prevention of additional disorders, for ADHD, substantial economic and social benefits will follow.

## **Understanding ADHD as a Disability in the Post-Secondary Environment**

This presentation covers an overview of the CADDAC's policy paper on ADHD in the post-secondary environment, appropriate medical documentation required to request accommodations at the post-secondary level, common impairments seen in students with ADHD linked to appropriate accommodations and what psychoeducational testing can and cannot tell us about a student's impairments.

## **ADHD in the Justice System**

Incident rates of ADHD seen in the correctional population are 5 times that of adults, and ten times that of youth in the general population with prevalence rates within Canadian jail systems of 33%. Research studies have clearly indicated a significant reduction in recidivism rates when ADHD is treated. When ADHD is left untreated additional mental health disorders, suicidality and substance abuse frequently occurs. Early assessment and intervention can change the trajectory of a youth going down this path. Yet, most judicial and correction systems do not screen for, diagnose or treat ADHD. This presentation will cover the benefits to individuals, correction facilities, society and government in doing so.

What ADHD Medical Professionals Need to Know About ADHD in Canadian School Systems

Understanding your Province's Special Education system and how ADHD is recognized within that system is paramount when reporting, advising and advocating for students with ADHD. This presentation will cover topics on; provincial special education systems, is yours one of exceptionality or inclusion; is there an ingrained fear of labeling within your system; how do third party reports impact a student's right to receive special education resources; ADHD students' rights in elementary, high school and post-secondary systems. Preparing adequate post-secondary documentation for a student entering college or university will also be covered. The session will include an open discussion allowing time for questions on individual cases.

#### Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Understand how ADHD is recognized in their province's special education system and become aware of the difficulties this may cause in accessing resources
- Document their patient's impairments to better secure resources
- Recognize when a patient's rights are not being met within a school system

#### **Report Writing on Students with ADHD Made Easy for the Busy Medical Professional**

This workshop will outline problems that occur when physicians and schools rely solely on psychoeducational reports to develop learning profiles and individual education plans for students with ADHD. Schools at all levels are becoming aware that psychoeducational testing, while helpful in ruling in or out specific learning disabilities, are not comprehensive or accurate when assessing for learning and self-regulation impairments caused by ADHD. In addition, few students with ADHD are able to access this type of testing. Educators have shared their need for medical reporting on a student's impairments caused by ADHD in order to implement teaching strategies and classroom accommodations suited to individual students. Without reports from medical professionals, students with ADHD are unable to access the support they require and deserve.

A tool outlining typical learning and self-regulation impairments caused by ADHD tied to appropriate accommodations will be reviewed and demonstrated during this workshop. This tool has been designed for physicians and other medical professionals to use while interviewing the parent and/or patient and reviewing feedback from the school. The tool can then be used to easily develop a report for the school so they may use it when developing an individual educational plan for the student.

#### Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Recognize why psychoeducational testing can be problematic if solely relied on to develop an ADHD impairment profile for a student
- Learn to use an ADHD education report writing tool
- Better document their patient's impairments to secure educational resources

## **Comparing Canadian and US Requirements for ADHD Accommodations**

This presentation will discuss why most Canadian post-secondary institutions have now recognized that demanding neuropsychological or psycho-educational testing to determine the severity of ADHD and to quantify the impact of ADHD on cognitive or academic functioning is not reasonable or valid. Requiring that testing results demonstrate below “average” functioning in other areas than attention regulation for a disability to be recognized and for the student to qualify for services and accommodations is currently considered to be discriminatory in Canada.

A tool outlining typical learning and self-regulation impairments caused by ADHD tied to appropriate accommodations will be reviewed during this workshop

### Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Recognize why psychoeducational testing can be problematic if solely relied on to develop an ADHD impairment profile for a student
- Recognize typical impairments demonstrated by College students with ADHD
- Become familiar with a new tool aligning impairments with appropriate accommodations