

Documentation Guidelines for Attention Deficit Disorder and/or Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Note: Although the more generic term Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) is frequently used, the official nomenclature used in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th edition (DSM-IV), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), will be used in this document.

Students requesting support services from Student Disability Services at Drake University are required to submit documentation of their disability to verify eligibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Drake's policies. ADA defines a disability as a substantial limitation of a major life function. The diagnostic report must document a disability.

Submission of documentation is not the same as the request for services. Students must initiate request for services and/or reasonable accommodations once their admission is confirmed. The student must schedule an intake appointment with a Student Disability Services staff so that we may discuss available support services and the process for requesting accommodations and/or classroom adjustments. Reasonable accommodations cannot be implemented until the student's documentation is complete.

A school plan such as an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan may be insufficient. Sufficient documentation must include:

Currency of Documentation

Since reasonable accommodations are based on the current impact of the disability, documentation must be current, preferably within the last three years.

Qualifications of the Diagnostician

Professionals rendering a diagnosis of ADHD must have comprehensive training in differential diagnosis and direct experience working with adolescents and adults with ADHD. The following professionals are considered qualified to evaluate and diagnose ADHD as long as they are not related to the student: clinical psychologists (Ph.D.), neuropsychologists, psychiatrists, and other qualified medical doctors.

Criteria for Comprehensive Assessment

The following criteria are based on guidelines from the Association of Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) on ADHD Documentation:

1. Evidence of Early Impairment

Because ADHD is, by definition, first exhibited in childhood and manifested itself in more than one setting (school, home and social), historical and academic information must be gathered by the evaluator.

2. Evidence of Current Disabling Condition

Diagnostic assessment should include evidence of ongoing impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behavior that has significantly impaired functioning over time. Additionally, neuropsychological or psychoeducational assessment is critical in determining the current impact of the disorder on the individual's ability to function in a variety of settings.

3. Alternative Diagnoses and/or Explanations

Diagnostic assessment should examine the possibility of co-existing diagnoses. This process should explore possible alternative diagnoses including medical and psychiatric disorders as well as educational and cultural factors which impact the individual and may result in behaviors mimicking ADHD.

4. Diagnostic Battery

Diagnostic assessment should consist of more than a self-report. Assessment must include standardized measures for inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity as delineated in the DSM-IV.

Diagnostic Report & Summary

The diagnostic report must be a comprehensive interpretive summary synthesizing the evaluator's judgment for the diagnosis of ADHD. The report must include:

- Official letterhead with names, titles, professional credentials, addresses, and phone/fax numbers of the evaluator as well as the date(s) of testing;
- All quantitative information in standard scores and/or percentiles; all relevant developmental, familial, medical, medication, psychosocial, behavioral and academic information;
- A specific diagnosis of ADHD based on the DSM-IV diagnostic criteria. In clear, direct language, the report must identify the substantial limitation of a major life function presented by the ADHD;
- Specific recommendations for reasonable accommodations. Recommendations must be based on significant functional limitations and must be supported by the diagnostic assessment. Disability Services will make the final determination of reasonable accommodations.

Mitigating Measures and Treatment

Since reasonable accommodations are based on the current impact of a disability, documentation must address the effects of treatment and/or medication on the individual's present functioning.

All documentation is confidential and should be submitted to:

Drake University
Student Disability Services
107 Old Main
Des Moines, Iowa 50311
Phone: 515-271-1835 FAX: 515-271-2376