

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Introduction

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterised by inattention, hyperactivity, and/or impulsivity demonstrated across two or more settings (such as home and school)^{1,2}. Symptoms usually begin in early childhood but often persist into adult life.

Clinical features of the condition may differ depending on patient demographics, such as gender and age group^{3,4}. Those with the condition have a 75% chance of having a co-existing mental health condition, and they are at increased risk of adverse life events^{1,2}.

There is recognition that this can be a challenging area to manage in general practice, with service demand challenges for diagnostic assessments and patient expectations. The Scottish ADHD coalition has declared 'a state of emergency' in ADHD services across Scotland, due to the waiting times for ADHD assessments and the impact of this on people's wellbeing with ADHD. Whilst the module cannot resolve these challenges, consideration of management options are presented to allow consideration of the needs of this patient group.

The module has been developed based on discussions within a PBSGL focus group consisting of multidisciplinary primary care professionals.

After studying this module, you will be able to:

- Recognise the key features used to diagnose ADHD, and the impact of the condition
- Understand the therapeutic use and monitoring requirements for ADHD medication
- Gain awareness of the non-pharmacological options available for patients with ADHD

The cases below are designed to illustrate the problems described in the aims of the module. They are real cases but are **not** meant to be the focus of the group's discussion. Instead, PBSGL groups are encouraged to think of similar cases in their own place of work.

Studying all the cases is not compulsory. If the group runs short of time, and completing the group feedback is still to be done, it is better to leave out a case completely. The feedback, where group members say what changes they will make in practice as a result of the meeting, is an essential part of the learning process – more important than "completing the cases".