

## Primary Care Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Enclosed is a packet offering supporting tools proven to be effective in the treatment of ADHD. The goal of the ADHD toolkit is to support the screening for and treatment of ADHD in the primary care setting. The prevalence of children with an ADHD diagnosis continues to increase, from 7.8% in 2003 to 9.5% in 2007 and to 11.0% in 2011 (1). People living with ADHD tend to have a lower occupational status, poor social relationships and are more likely to commit motoring offences and develop substance use issues (2).

Primary Care Physician (PCP) as the initial point of contact for all health concerns. With that in mind, the significance of the role that PCP's play in identifying and referral for treatment of ADHD cannot be understated. Along with childhood obesity and asthma, the CDC indicates that attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is one of the top three chronic conditions among children.

This toolkit is intended to provide a basic understanding of ADHD by assisting PCP's in recognizing signs of ADHD in patients, utilizing a reliable screening tool, initiating treatment and where to refer the member for additional treatment and support.

We recognize that many of our health plan members feel most comfortable with their

### 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. The most commonly diagnosed behavior disorder in young persons, ADHD affects an estimate of 3% to 5% of school-aged children. However, it does not only affect children. People of all ages can suffer from ADHD and if undiagnosed can persist into adulthood and may cause significant impairment in functioning for some.





### general symptoms

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

#### Adults

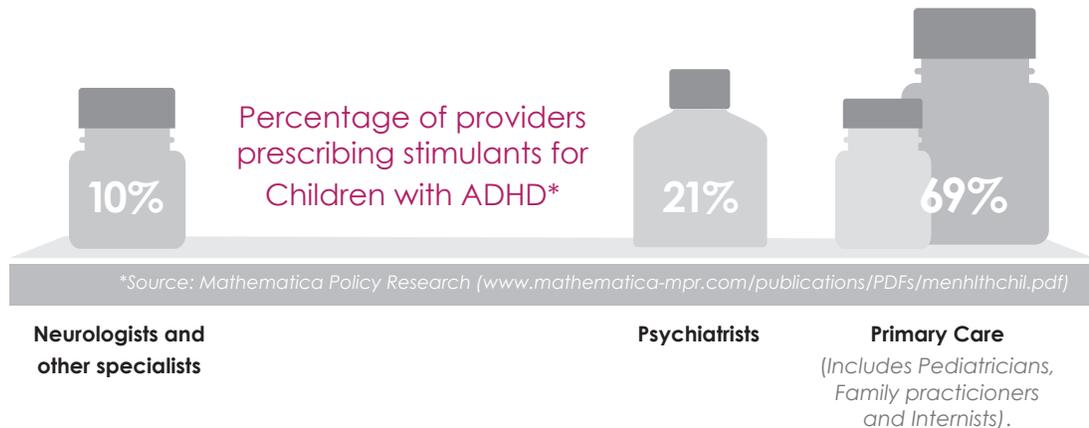
- Poor attention, excessive distractibility
- Physical restlessness or hyperactivity
- Excessive impulsivity, saying or doing things without thinking
- Excessive and chronic procrastination
- Difficulty getting started on tasks
- Difficulty completing tasks
- Frequently losing things
- Poor organization,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



According to NAMI (2009) approximately five million children in the United States require ADHD-related behavioral health services, the majority of which received a diagnosis and ongoing treatment services from their primary care physician.



## 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.



**Conners Rating Scales:** The Conners 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: Pharmacological and psychosocial. 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 9 months to ensure efficacy of the medication.

For additional copies and additional information about the ADHD Screening tools and other resources go to:

[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)  
[www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)

[www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov](http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov)  
[www.iccmhc.org](http://www.iccmhc.org)

HaveQuestions?  
Call us at 1866.433.6041

[absolutetotalcare.com](http://absolutetotalcare.com)