

ADHD Consensus Statement on behalf of patients calling for urgent action to increase provision for ADHD services and prevent a public health crisis

Today, ADHD patient groups from around the country, leading ADHD service providers, clinical and academic healthcare providers and educational specialists, are calling on the UK Governments for urgent action to create and introduce a legislative 'ADHD Act' similar to that provided for children and adults with autism. We also call for the availability of ADHD services to be a requirement of the UK healthcare regulators in both child and adult mental health services.

Patients have reported waiting years to access services with implications for their physical and mental health. This has become an important public health issue and there is concern among healthcare practitioners and expert clinicians as well as patient groups, that individuals with ADHD are being stigmatised and discriminated against by the commissioning of ADHD services that are either inadequate or unavailable in many regions.

ADHD is a serious condition with major costs to both individuals and society which have been unequivocally proven by research reports over the last two years. Due to significant under recognition and misperceptions of ADHD, both children and adults are often undiagnosed or given the wrong diagnosis and treatments.

The long-term outcome of untreated ADHD has been well documented. These include self-harm, suicide, drug use, drug addiction, obesity and road transport accidents. Educational and employment failure is a considerable cost to society and can be a tipping point that increases the risk of substance misuse and criminality. Around 15% of people with serious addictions and 26% of prisoners have lifelong problems with ADHD.

Despite advances in scientific research informing our knowledge and understanding about ADHD and accessibility of the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines and the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN), there remains a continued lack of awareness by many healthcare practitioners of ADHD and the potential benefits early identification can have, both to the individual and society.

Great efforts have been made to educate healthcare practitioners and clinical commissioning groups about this evidence, but in many cases this does not appear to disseminate to those

working in primary and secondary care services. There are concerns that GPs are not trained to recognise ADHD, yet they are usually the first point of contact for the patient, while specialist services are often not readily accessible leading to significant delays in diagnosis and effective support. We welcome the Government's Long Term Plan for the NHS, such as NHS England's ten year plan, and forthcoming Green Paper on prevention by Public Health England, that will reflect the evidence for a national strategy for ADHD in the UK.

We make this statement on behalf of patients around the country who face the consequences of these discriminatory practices on a daily basis and call on all four UK Governments and regulatory bodies, including the Care Quality Commission, to act urgently on this important public health issue.

On behalf of

All ADHD patient-led groups and charities (names and signatures)

Royal College of Psychiatrists England

Dr Tony Lloyd, ADHD Foundation

Dr Ruairi Gallagher, ADHD Foundation

Andrea Bell, ADHD Norfolk

Janine Harris, ADHD UK Wise

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Emma Weaver, Adult ADHD Northern Ireland

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Clair Hodgson, Clair's Parent Meeting Parent ADHD Support Services

