



## ADULT ADHD ASSESSMENTS AND MEDICATION

Clinical psychologists and psychiatrists can both diagnose adult ADHD. Only psychiatrists can prescribe stimulant medication as these are controlled substances and must receive a special authority code from a psychiatrist.

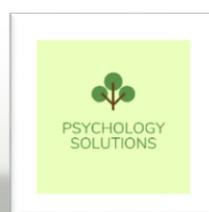
In Auckland, a psychologist's assessment is not accepted for the prescription medication as psychiatrists are required to undertake their own assessment for this purpose. If you are seeking an assessment in view of accessing medication only, I recommend you make an appointment with a private psychiatrist.

## WHY GET ASSESSED BY A CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGIST

A psychiatrist often performs briefer assessments than a psychologist, and their reports will also be briefer. A psychiatrist may be less likely to talk to other family members about a client's current childhood symptoms. A psychiatrist may feel comfortable prescribing a medication at the end of an assessment appointment. A psychiatrist may manage a person's prescribing or pass this on to the GP and work in a consultant fashion. A psychiatrist is unlikely to offer therapy for ADHD. A psychiatrist is likely to charge a lower fee for the assessment than a psychologist.

Psychologists generally performed more extended assessments that include psychometrics and talking to other people in a client's life to ask about symptoms. Assessments also screen for common co-existing areas of neurodiversity, including sensory processing difficulties, autism, dyspraxia, dyslexia and auditory processing disorder. If you have any of these other underlying difficulties, you may find medication is not as helpful as you had hoped. The report you receive will give more explanation and information to help you better understand your neurodiversity experience. The psychologists' report will need to be reviewed and agreed on by a psychiatrist, following their own assessment, to prescribe stimulant medication. A psychiatrist or GP will then manage your prescription medication. A psychologist may offer therapy for ADHD management. A psychologist is likely to charge a higher fee for the assessment than a psychiatrist.

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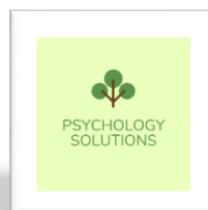
## ASSESSMENT OF ADHD IN ADULTS

- The average age of adults with ADHD getting a diagnosis is 32. Often professionals don't pick up on the signs of ADHD due to many misconceptions, such as ADHD is a disorder that people grow out of.
- In adulthood, many people have made accommodations to compensate for their ADHD symptoms through hard work, which means professionals see your success, not your challenges.
- At this point, you may have found yourself feeling challenged and wondering if ADHD is getting in the way or wonder why your ADHD medication is not as helpful as you had hoped despite having had it reviewed by your psychiatrist.
- People with ADHD often experience several other symptoms of neurodiversity. For example, up to 50% of people with ADHD may also experience auditory processing disorder, while many others also experience anxiety, depression, autism and bipolar disorder.
- These alternative or co-existing disorders can influence symptom severity and the type and subsequently related impairments. They are important to identify to get the proper treatment for your needs.
- The assessment process for ADHD will assess you not only for ADHD but also for other potential co-existing disorders.

## STEPS OF THE ASSESSMENT OF ADHD IN ADULTS

- *Step 1:* You will receive several screening questionnaires and instructions via email. Answer the questionnaires at home and email them before your first appointment, along with relevant documents and school reports (if available).
- *Step 2:* An interview for about (90 mins) in which we talk through your past and present experiences, assess for ADHD symptoms, take a developmental history, and ask questions on specific areas on how you function in your daily life and your relationships.
- *Step 3:* It is beneficial to have a parent/partner/or friend who has known you well during your childhood or now as an adult present for this part of the assessment. They will be asked to

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comment on child and adulthood information and complete a questionnaire. If they are not able to attend, a phone/zoom call can be arranged.

- *Step 4:* A follow-up session (up to 90 mins) in which we discuss other potential mental health problems that someone might have, in addition to/or that might explain difficulties with inattention, disorganization, hyperactivity and impulsivity symptoms.

*Step 5:* I will then score all of the questionnaires and write up the report with the information gathered and if someone warrants a diagnosis of adult ADHD

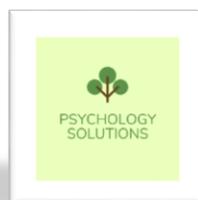
Your GP can then send it onto the public system for a psychiatrist to review or you can approach a private psychiatrist. A psychiatrist will need to grant your GP special authority to prescribe a medication trial. Report writing and information collection can take up to 4- 8 weeks from the initial assessment.

*Note: Sometimes, a person's problems are complicated, and the above process may not be appropriate; in these cases, I would recommend that someone see a private consultant psychiatrist for further assessment.*

#### TO PREPARE FOR THE ASSESSMENT

- Complete the questionnaires emailed to you and return as per instructions.
- Invite someone who knows you well and has known you for most of your life, for example, your mother, father, partner, brother, sister, friend, to be part of the assessment.
- Please find, scan, and email any medical or other reports or notes that offer information related to your development during your childhood and adolescence.
- Please find, scan and email any school reports from aged 5 to 18years.

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## FEES PAYABLE

- Assessments for ADHD are charged as \$1400-1800 depending on complexity. This cost includes up to 3 hours of face to face/ online assessment, psychometric administration, scoring and interpretation, cost of test materials, administration and report writing, plus a feedback session if desired.
- A 40% deposit (\$640) is required before the initial session, and the remainder must be paid before the final report is released. An invoice for the remainder of the assessment will be sent following the final assessment. All fees noted include GST.
- If someone does not look as though they are going to meet the criteria for ADHD, they will not be charged for report writing. Instead, they will be charged for the initial assessment sessions and any time spent looking through measures and/or contact with relatives - approximately \$600 to \$800 (usually the initial deposit indicated above).
- Please deposit a 40% (\$640) into account:  
Solution Focused Ltd  
ANZ 06-0115-0333390-00  
Ref: Surname
- Please deposit at least two days before your assessment date.
- Further sessions for individuals \$195.50 (incl. GST) per 50 min consultation.

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