

For Adults

ADHD Support Recommendations

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SECTION 1

Mental Health Support

It can be helpful to have a plan in place to support you through difficult times. Mind has a guide that explains how you can plan for a crisis, which could help you think about what you could do if you start to feel in crisis in the future, and what kind of support you think you might want.

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/crisis-services/planning-for-a-crisis/>

These services offer confidential support from trained volunteers. You can talk about anything that's troubling you, no matter how difficult. These services will only share your information if they are very worried about you or think you are in immediate danger.

Childline

If you're under 19, you can call 0800 1111. The number will not appear on your phone bill.

Shout Crisis Text Line

Text "SHOUT" to 85258. Text "YM" if you're under 19.

Samaritans

Email: jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours.

Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM)

Call 0800 58 58 58. Visit <https://thecalmzone.net>. Provides listening services, information and support for anyone who needs to talk, including a web chat.

Community Advice and Listening Line (C.A.L.L.)

Call 0800 132 737. Text "HELP" plus your message to 81066. Visit <https://callhelpline.org.uk>. Provides information and support for people experiencing a mental health problem in Wales.

Hub of Hope

Visit <https://hubofhope.co.uk>. UK-wide mental health service database. Let's you search for local, national, peer, community, charity, private, and NHS mental health support. You can filter results to find specific kinds of support.

Befrienders Worldwide

Visit <https://befrienders.org>. Worldwide directory of emotional support helplines.

Further crisis services

Please visit Mind's webpage on Crisis services and planning for a crisis for further mental health crisis services: <https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/crisis-services/useful-contacts/>

Domestic Abuse and ADHD Recommendations

Domestic Abuse

There is support available if you are experiencing domestic abuse:

- **Women** can call the National Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0808 2000 247 for free, any time, day or night. The staff will offer confidential, non-judgemental information and support.
- **Men** can call the Men's Advice Line on 0808 8010 327 (Monday to Friday 10am to 8pm) for non-judgemental support, or call ManKind on 0182 334 244 (Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm).
- If you identify as **LGBT+** you can call Galop on 0800 999 5428 for emotional and practical support.
- **Anyone** can call Karma Nirvana on 0800 5999 247 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm) for support around forced marriages or honour crimes. You can also call 0207 008 0151 to speak to the GOV.UK Forced Marriage Unit.

ADHD Recommendations

In addition to the knowledge you already hold about ADHD, it would be helpful for you to access positive resources which aim to empower neurodivergent individuals. This would support you to construct a positive self-image and improve your self-esteem. Resources which could be useful include:

- The 'How to ADHD website' has a range of videos and tips around understanding and managing your ADHD; <https://howtoadhd.com/>
- The book 'ADHD 2.0: New Science and Essential Strategies for Thriving with Distraction--From Childhood Through Adulthood' by Edward Hallowell.
- ADHD UK is a charity dedicated to providing information, support, and advocacy for individuals with ADHD and their families in the United Kingdom. <https://www.adhduk.co.uk>
- The Understood website is a good resource and allows you to filter for resources which are relevant to the difficulties you have; <https://www.understood.org/>

Psychological therapy

You may want to consider whether accessing psychological therapy might be helpful. It can be difficult for some people with ADHD, especially when diagnosed in adulthood, to cope and come to terms with their history of having undiagnosed differences. You could ask your GP about the services available, or your employer may also be able to help. Oakdale would also be happy to provide tailored support, if you are interested in this please call us to find out more.

Helpful **strategies** and resources

ADHD Recommendations — continued

General strategies which people with ADHD have found to be helpful include:

- Repetition of key material
- Being assigned simple, highly structured tasks
- Having support nearby
- Having verbal instructions broken down and simplified to promote memory retention
- Tasks should be given in 'bite-size' sections
- Asking the person to repeat back instructions to ensure that they have understood them
- Having memory aids, a structured diary or phone, where information can be recorded
- Using technology to assist with tasks
- Regular positive reinforcement and feedback
- A working environment with minimal distractions where possible.
- Allowing breaks or time to move around
- For information to be broken down into smaller chunks which are frequently repeated before moving on
- Additional time for work tasks if possible

Interesting Resources and Podcasts

- The ADHD Adults' podcast with James Brown and Alex Conner
- 'I have ADHD' podcast with Kristen Carder
- 'ADHD Rewired' podcast with Eric Tivers
- ADDitude magazine is the quarterly consumer publication about ADHD, created and distributed by New Hope Media in New York, NY. It contains features and service articles about ADD, ADHD and learning disabilities like dyslexia. A medical review panel summarised the pros and cons of these apps.
- Information and guidance for adults living with ADHD can be found on the AADD-UK website. Topics include organisation and time management, relationship and social skills, money management, university and college concerns and mental health support. <https://aadduk.org/living-with-adhd/>
- UKAAN offers various support groups around the UK for adults to provide support, education, research and training. A list of upcoming events can be found on their website. https://www.ukaan.org/ukaan_events.htm

College, university and sleep

College/University

Some adults may be undergoing academic studies which can be challenging with ADHD, as people with ADHD can find it hard to manage their time, organise, prioritise their deadlines and manage stress. The AADD-UK website has resources for students to support with:

- Learning and note taking, including examples of ways to organise notes: <https://aadduk.org/living-with-adhd/university-college-issues/academicstudy-issues/learning-and-note-taking/>
- Reasonable adjustments and support that academic staff can provide to students with ADHD: <https://aadduk.org/living-with-adhd/university-college-issues/academicstudy-issues/supporting-students-with-adhd/>
- Some individuals may struggle to retain information and find it hard to select relevant information when studying at university or when working. Dekko Comics creates fun, engaging comic strips that transform university research into colourful, accessible presentations that enable creative study skills. The comics can be found on a online-digital format: <https://dekkocomics.com/dekko-for-free>
- To support effective note-taking, assistive technology can be set up in formatting that suits your preference. Glean is a highly recommended note taking software: <https://glean.co/>
- Read and Write is a feature of TextHelp which is a global developer of assisted technology to support neurodiversity for people that find technology challenging while studying. Read and Write highlights spelling checks and asks the individual to recheck them before they submit an assignment: <https://academy.texthelp.com/read-and-write-education/check-it/>
- Student Minds works with students to develop their knowledge, confidence and skills to look after their own mental health. They have resources on challenges that student life can bring, including starting university, exam stress and mental wellbeing. They also offer peer support programmes and support finding on campus services: <https://www.studentminds.org.uk/>

Sleep

Sleep problems alongside ADHD are common. Management of this includes sleep hygiene and behaviour techniques such as CBT-I, relaxation training, biofeedback and medication.

Here are some useful website relating to ADHD and sleep:

<https://www.additudemag.com/how-to-fall-asleep-adhd/>

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/mental-health/adhd-and-sleep>

Employment and Workplace Support

If you feel comfortable to share your diagnosis with your workplace, we would recommend that you do so. You may find adjustments and flexibility at work helpful, for example, having regular breaks and highly structured, shorter tasks. It would be helpful to have a meeting with your workplace to discuss what might be helpful, or what might be unhelpful, at work. You could think about adaptations which might be beneficial for you prior to this meeting, and take a written list with you.

Reasonable adjustments can be made at work, including techniques to assist with self monitoring, modifying external and internal distractions and collaborating with team members. Some of the strategies listed in the general strategies section can be considered in the workplace (e.g. having support nearby, and the repetition of key material). Other strategies that may be helpful, include:

- Implementing systems, such as regular review meetings to assist with time management and task prioritisation, e.g. daily meetings
- Provision of structured feedback
- Providing information in written format with clear concise instructions, broken into steps (e.g. work is allocated by structured emails which includes detailed instructions and deadlines)
- A whiteboard above the desk to use as a timetable and planner with all tasks
- An agreement that emails and phone messages will be reviewed at set times only
- Focusing on a single task for short, regular periods with breaks
- Agreeing checklists for complex tasks
- Using a timer to manage daily schedules
- Access to a quiet space to assist in managing stress
- Written minutes of meetings with clear records of agreements, use a digital recorder in meetings and then write detailed notes of what was agreed
- Reducing distractions by: working in a quiet area; desk facing away from particularly busy areas; room divider to limit distractions
- Offers of flexitime or home working
- Provision of headphones to reduce external noise
- Use of an answer phone, regularly reviewed rather than responding to phone calls immediately.

When managing employees who have a diagnosis of ADHD, companies should be mindful of their legal obligations; under the Equality Act 2010 an employee with ADHD may be considered to have a disability if the condition has a "substantial and long-term negative effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". Cases depend on individual circumstance, that is severity of symptoms and context (Loch & McGregor, 2017).

Driving and Social Prescribing

Employment and Workplace Support — continued

It is important to frame ADHD as being a condition that you now have a responsibility for managing, by promoting a sense of personal agency. ADHD is a notifiable condition for the DVLA. It is your legal responsibility to inform the DVLA if your ADHD or ADHD medication affects your ability to drive safely.

Provisional licence applicants do not need to tell the DVLA about their ADHD unless it could affect their ability to drive safely. If already a licence holder, the DVLA needs to be notified if:

- there is a change to the condition that may result in unsafe driving
- medications are prescribed that cause side effects that will affect driving

A self-referral form is available on the DVLA website (form A1) <https://www.gov.uk/adhd-and-driving>

Social Prescribing

Social prescribing is often a helpful approach for people with ADHD. It is a key NHS approach to personalised care. You can ask your GP to refer you to a social prescribing link worker. Other local agencies can often refer directly too but this depends on the area you live in.

Social prescribing link workers are based in primary care networks either at GP surgeries or community venues. They give people time, focusing on 'what matters to me?' to coproduce a simple personalised care and support plan, and support people to take control of their health and wellbeing.

Find out about the NHS approach to social prescribing here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing/> and read their Frequently Asked Questions here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/personalisedcare/social-prescribing/faqs/>



Medication

For people who are suitable for medication, there is evidence that it can help with:

- Difficulties concentrating
- Hyperactivity and impulsivity
- Restlessness and inattention

There are different types of medication available to support with ADHD. Usually, the first type that people try would be a stimulant medication (e.g. methylphenidate and dexamphetamine). There are also non-stimulant medications available (e.g. atomoxetine). A qualified prescriber would assess and find the most suitable type of medication.

Medication is not suitable for everyone

ADHD medication is not suitable for everyone and there can be many reasons for this, some of the main ones are covered below:

- It is not usually advisable to commence ADHD medications when trying to conceive, during pregnancy or breastfeeding. Risks versus benefits of medication would need to be considered.
- As ADHD medications can have an effect on a person's pulse and blood pressure, for people with a history of heart problems or high blood pressure, further tests are usually required to confirm it is safe to prescribe these medications. Please discuss this with your Cardiologist or GP when referring.
- If you are currently using illicit substances on a regular basis then ADHD medications are unlikely to be suitable.

People taking ADHD medication must have their health regularly and carefully monitored. This includes monitoring side-effects.

All medication can have side effects. The most common side effects with ADHD medication are difficulties sleeping or eating, headaches and increased anxiety. Some people have regular breaks from their medication (e.g. at weekends, or school holidays) to try and reduce any side effects.

If you are considering ADHD medication, you should discuss this further with your GP, or your chosen ADHD medication prescribing service. There are currently differences in local funded NHS pathways for medication and wait times across the country. Your GP or chosen ADHD medication prescribing service will be able to provide more information regarding your local area.

You can find out more about Oakdale's ADHD Medication Service on [our website](#).

You can also get reliable information from:

- <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder-adhd/treatment/>
- <https://www.choiceandmedication.org/swyp/condition/attention-deficit-hyperactivity-disorder/>
- <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng87/chapter/Recommendations#medication>

Eating and further information

Eating

Around 1.25 million people in the UK experience disordered eating, many in secret. They are all ages, genders and backgrounds – eating disorders do not discriminate. Eating disorders include bulimia, binge eating, avoidant / restrictive food intake (ARFID), other specified feeding or eating disorder (OSFED) and anorexia.

Support is available from Beat:

- Website: <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/>
- Telephone: 0808 801 0677
- Email: help@beateatingdisorders.org.uk

More questions?

If you have any questions about these recommendations, please get in touch — we are happy to help.

Contact Us ↗