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Documentation Guidelines for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

In order for Student Access and Accommodation (SAA) to evaluate requests for accommodations and/ or auxiliary aids and to determine eligibility for services, appropriate disability related documentation is needed. The documentation submitted should include an evaluation by an appropriately licensed professional and should demonstrate the current impact of the disability as it relates to the accommodations requested. The documentation should also include a description of any and all relevant functional limitations.

The following guidelines are designed to provide students and medical providers with a common understanding and knowledge base of the components of documentation aligned with an Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder diagnosis, the functional limitations presented for a particular student, and information necessary to assist the university in making appropriate accommodations in a post-secondary setting.

A Qualified Professional Must Conduct the Evaluation

The professional conducting the evaluation and making the diagnosis must be qualified to make the diagnosis and recommend appropriate accommodations for adult students. Documentation must be completed by a licensed psychiatrist, psychologist, or other appropriately licensed practitioner who is qualified to assess individuals with ADD/ADHD. The documentation must include the name, title, and professional credentials of the evaluator, including information about licensure and/or specialization. (Note: It is *not appropriate* for professionals to evaluate relatives or family members.)

Testing Must Be Current

Because reasonable accommodations and services are based upon current impact of the individual disability and a student's academic performance, current documentation must be submitted. Documentation is considered current within the last three years and with adult normed testing.

History of Accommodation

A high school plan such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 plan, or history of accommodations provided on the ACT or SAT is insufficient documentation in and of itself. However, **in addition to** current comprehensive documentation, it can be helpful in determining reasonable accommodations and services. **SAA recommends providing this information when available. A prior history of accommodations without demonstration of a current need does not in itself warrant the provision of like accommodations.**

Comprehensive Documentation

ADHD documentation must be thorough, giving a holistic picture of the individual, not simply a diagnosis. A complete

psychoeducational or neuropsychological report is preferred in order to demonstrate that the diagnosis rises to the level of a disability. Documentation validates the functional limitations, which allows consideration for accommodation requests. Each request will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Documentation should include the information as outlined below.

Documentation Must Substantiate the ADHD Diagnosis

- A complete *DSM* diagnosis must be provided with an accompanying description of symptoms the student experiences.
- The date of the diagnosis and last contact with the student.
- A **comprehensive clinical interview** which meets mental health service provider standards of care in length (50 min.) and focus (complete developmental, familial, psychological, social, and medical history) is required.
- Indicate all instruments and procedures used to diagnose ADD/ADHD (clinical interview, behavioral rating scales, psychoeducational testing, etc.)
- The clinician must provide evidence that this diagnosis does not rely solely on self-report in establishing developmental history, current symptoms, and evidence of clinically significant impairment
- Documentation should explain how symptoms have manifested across **various settings over time**, how the student has coped, and what success the student has had in their coping efforts.
- Discussion of steps taken to **rule out** other disorders with similar presenting characteristics should be included.

Significant functional limitations of the disability must be identified

- Based on most **current DSM criteria**, the documentation must substantiate that the disability **significantly limits cognitive or academic functioning**.
- Psycho-educational testing can help to determine current levels of ADHD **severity** and **to quantify the impact** of the disorder. We recommend diagnostic instruments to assess for ADHD and closely related conditions. These would include measures of aptitude and achievement, memory and processing speed, continuous performance, attention or tracking test, and diagnostic checklists and rating scales to assess psychological and learning disorders.
- Please describe how the diagnosis impacts this student in an educational setting? What are the functional limitations experienced?
- A complete description of the functional limitation/s as they impact the student's academic functioning in the classroom (i.e. description of impact upon study skills, classroom behavior, test taking and organizing materials would be examples of academic functioning).
- The ADHD diagnosis does not automatically presume a disability. Not all students with ADHD have functional limitations to the level of a significant limitation in learning.
- Accommodations are not granted on the basis of a diagnostic label.

Other Relevant Information

- Describe treatment recommendations, including medication. If medication has been recommended, state the type of medication, the dosage, frequency of use and any side effects that the student may experience.

Student Access and Accommodation will make the final determination as to whether appropriate and reasonable accommodations are warranted and can be provided to the individual. All documentation submitted to SAA is considered to be confidential under FERPA guidelines and as outlined by University policy.