MOUNTAIN EMPIRE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Disability Support Services

Documentation Requirements for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with disabilities are guaranteed certain protections and rights to equal access to programs and services.

*The following documentation requirements are provided in the interest of assuring that ADD/ADHD documentation is appropriate to verify eligibility and to support requests for accommodations, academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids.

I. A QUALIFIED PROFESSIONAL MUST CONDUCT THE EVALUATION

The usual level of acceptable training for an ADD/ADHD evaluation is a graduate degree. The report should include the name, title and professional credentials of the evaluator. The following professionals would generally be considered appropriate for evaluating ADD/ADHD:

Clinical or educational psychologists
School psychologists
Neuropsychologists
Physicians with comprehensive training and relevant experience

II. TESTING MUST BE CURRENT – it must have been completed within the last 3 years

Although ADD/ADHD may be life-long, the severity of the condition may change over time. Testing conducted in elementary school will not include recommendations that are appropriate for college. Therefore, it is in the student's best interest to provide recent and appropriate documentation.

III. DOCUMENTATION MUST BE COMPREHENSIVE

A handwritten note on a prescription pad is not sufficient.

A copy of the IEP or 504 plan is not sufficient.

A comprehensive assessment battery and the resulting report must include:

A. Evidence of early impairment

B. Evidence of current impairment

1. A statement of the presenting problem.

2. A diagnostic interview

   - A history of attentional symptoms including evidence of on-going impulsive/hyperactive or inattentive behavior that has significantly impaired function over time.

   - Relevant medical and medication history, including the absence of a medical basis for the symptoms being evaluated.

   - A thorough academic history of elementary, secondary and postsecondary education.

   - A review of prior psycho educational test reports to determine whether a pattern of strengths or weaknesses is supportive of attention or learning problems.

   - Description of functional limitations pertaining to educational settings that are presumably a direct result of problems with education.

C. Alternative diagnosis or explanations should be ruled out

The evaluator must investigate and discuss the possibility of dual diagnoses and alternative or co-existing mood, behavioral, neurological and/or personality disorders that may confound the diagnosis of ADD/ADHD.

D. Relevant testing information must be provided

The assessment must not only establish a diagnosis but must also demonstrate the current impact of the ADD/ADHD on the individual's ability to perform on the college level.

E. Identification of DSM-IV Criteria

The report should include a review and discussion of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-IV) criteria for ADD/ADHD both currently and retrospectively and specify which symptoms are present.

F. Documentation must include a specific diagnosis

Nonspecific diagnoses should be avoided. Individuals who report only problems with organization, test anxiety, memory or concentration in selective situations do not fit the prescribed diagnostic criteria. Given that many individuals have a positive response to medication by itself does not confirm a diagnosis, nor does

the use of medication in and of itself either support or negate the need for accommodations.

G. An interpretive summary must be provided.

IV. EACH ACCOMMODATION MUST INCLUDE A RATIONALE

Specific recommendations for accommodations as well as an explanation of why the accommodations are recommended should be included in the report. The evaluator should support recommendations with specific test results or clinical observations.

A prior history of accommodations, without documentation of a current need, does not warrant the provision of a similar accommodation.

V. AN INTERPRETIVE SUMMARY

A diagnostic summary based on a comprehensive evaluation process.

***This document was adapted from the Educational Testing Service (ETS) website (www.ets.org). The original document was developed by a group of professionals established by the Association on Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD).**